



Outcome Agreement 2019-20

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Funding and Priority Outcomes

Funding

North East Scotland College will receive £32,258,272 core teaching funding and £2,309,000 capital and maintenance funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for Academic Year 2019-20, to plan and deliver 133,070 credits worth of further and higher education in the region. Core student support funding for AY2019-20 is £8,998,667. In addition, the College will receive £626,683 in European Social Fund (ESF) grant through the SFC to deliver 2,420 further credits to eligible learners. The total credit target for AY2019-20 is therefore 135,490.

This funding is on the condition that the College's Regional Board signs and commits to deliver the Priority Outcomes detailed below.

Priority Outcomes

One: Accessible and diverse learning opportunities will enable people in the North East of Scotland of all ages, communities and backgrounds to learn, to succeed and to progress.

Two: More learners from disadvantaged backgrounds will be able to access learning and achieve nationally recognised awards.

Three: Successful outcomes for all learners will be improved, increasing the number of learners achieving positive destinations to employment or further study.

Four: A greater contribution will be made to regional economic growth and prosperity.

Five: Learners will be skilled, qualified and well prepared for the world of work.

Six: Effective governance arrangements will ensure continuous improvement in the quality of governance and will promote equality and diversity.

Seven: The principles of sustainability will be embedded in the College's planning cycle with particular emphasis on ensuring financial sustainability and demonstrating best practice in estates planning and achieving environmental targets.

Eight: A College culture in which innovation can flourish and economic growth is supported will be developed and embedded.

Introduction

Outcome agreements were first introduced in AY2012-13 and are intended to enable colleges and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to demonstrate the impact of the sector and its contribution to meeting Scottish Government priorities.

This Outcome Agreement is for AY2019-20 and will be adjusted on an annual basis for the period AY2020-21 to AY2021-22.

It should be noted that this Outcome Agreement is supported by the College's Strategic Plan and a number of key College Strategies.

North East Scotland College (NESCol)

Aberdeen College and Banff & Buchan College merged on 01 November 2013 to form North East Scotland College. North East Scotland College is the only further-education college located within the North East of Scotland, and provides a wide range of education and training opportunities across the region to meet the needs of individuals, communities and employers.

The College's main (College-owned) centres of delivery are in Aberdeen (three sites), Fraserburgh and Peterhead with a number of leased community based learning centres across the region.

NESCol serves an extensive geographical area (Aberdeen City: 186 sq km, Aberdeenshire: 6,313 sq km), with its two main centres of delivery, Aberdeen and Fraserburgh, located 41 miles apart. College services are also provided in a number of the region's main centres of population outwith Aberdeen City: Ellon, Inverurie and Peterhead.

The origin of students who attend North East Scotland College is relatively even with AY2017-18 figures showing that 44% reside in Aberdeen City and 39% in Aberdeenshire with the remainder coming from outside the area, relatively evenly spread from 16 other Scottish local authority areas.

Our Vision is:

North East Scotland College will, through the delivery of high quality education and training:

- drive and support innovation and economic prosperity,
- raise aspiration,
- create success, and
- promote diversity, fairness and opportunity for all

providing individuals, businesses and communities in the North East of Scotland with 21st century skills.

Values

The College's values shape our work, influence our behaviours and apply to everyone who comes to the College to learn or work.

Commitment and Excellence

- Understanding and responding to the needs of our students, staff, key stakeholders and customers;
- Being business-like and professional;
- Maintaining a clear focus on our goals and ensuring that these are achieved through effective planning and organisation;
- Achieving excellence by continually evaluating and improving our services;
- Ensuring our processes are consistent, accessible, effective and efficient.

Empowerment and Engagement

- Creating an environment where innovation and creativity are encouraged and can flourish;
- Providing clear direction, information and communication;
- Providing development opportunities to ensure that we have the skills, knowledge and confidence to perform to the best of our ability;
- Giving recognition and praise;
- Encouraging and supporting collaboration.

Respect and Diversity

- Valuing the experience and talent of all;
- Treating others with dignity and respect;
- Creating an accessible, inclusive learning and working environment;
- Being fair, open and transparent to ensure a culture of mutual trust and integrity.

Part 1 – The Regional Context

The following section provides the regional context for the ambitions set out in our agreement.

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>of the Review, the College will pay particular attention to areas where demand appears to be falling such as engineering and care, and programmes delivered at the Fraserburgh Campus.</p> <p>As part of the review, in AY2018-19, a new approach to understanding unmet demand with partners such as schools, SDS and local employers will be developed which analyses applications against offers made and enrolments, and identifies the destinations of learners who were not offered a place. This new approach will be used to analyse unmet demand for AY2018-19 and then further developed to inform planning for AY2019-20 and beyond.</p> <p>The curriculum planning arrangements for AY2019-20 will continue to ensure that the College maintains a fully integrated regional curriculum and continues to identify opportunities for increasing subject choice and progression for students.</p> <p>During the planning period, the College will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the right learning is available and accessible in the right place and that it is being delivered efficiently to the highest possible standards; • Ensure that all programmes are placed on the SCQF Framework and that routes towards recognised qualifications and SCQF pathways continue to be promoted in College publications and are well understood by prospective students, advisors and employers - North East Scotland Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Pathways • Undertake a review of the College’s portfolio in relation to programme design; • Embed its commitment to the dissemination of good practice approaches to curriculum delivery through its Learning & Teaching forum. • Enhance existing key regional curriculum strategies and policies to support high quality delivery and current and emerging skills shortages; • Continue to explore opportunities to introduce new provision through partnership working; • Continue to offer a range of part-time SFC-funded vocational courses, while seeking additional opportunities to increase income by offering more part-time courses at full cost; • Maintain effective Schools-College Links and continue to play a key role in the implementation of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence, the Learner Journey review which was published in May 2018, and in addressing the recommendations of the Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce; • Continue to equip learners with essential and digital skills for learning, life and work, with increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship, enterprise and sustainability, and to develop those aptitudes that lead to successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens; • Consider further opportunities to meet demand for upskilling for those already in employment through the offering of advanced part-time provision; • In relation to specific curriculum areas, the College will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ consider new opportunities to expand and grow provision in areas where growth in the labour market has been predicted e.g. Health Care, Social Care, Social Sciences, Computing, Business and Performing Arts, Music and Media in response to demand and in line with available funding 	<p>In AY2017-18, the volume of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19 was 66,752 – a proportion of 49%. In AY2019-20, the targeted volume of Credits to be delivered to those aged 16-19 is 67,749 – a proportion of 50%.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, the volume of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24 was 27,483 – a proportion of 20.2%. In AY2019-20, the targeted volume of Credits to be delivered to those aged 20-24 is 26,422 – a proportion of 19.5%.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ consider predicted declines in the labour market ○ seek to increase participation in STEM subjects in line with our STEM Strategy and STEM Manifesto. <p><u>Access and Inclusion</u></p> <p>North East Scotland College is an inclusive college which is committed to offering a curriculum that provides opportunities for those who can benefit from education and progress onto further education and/or employment. The College seeks to provide opportunities that are accessible to people irrespective of socio-economic status and the various protected characteristics. Providing access includes the provision of dedicated courses where appropriate (e.g. learners with additional needs) and/or providing additional tailored guidance and other support (e.g. care experienced). Consideration is given to meeting the needs of specific groups of learners (e.g. hard to reach, additional needs, care experience) when planning the curriculum offer.</p> <p>The College's Access & Inclusion Strategy identifies a number of policy priorities as being integral to the College's strategy for widening access and promoting inclusiveness and progression. The Strategy also details key access and inclusion-related improvements the College is committed to: improved success for students declaring a disability; improved monitoring and data capture for young carers; improved positive destinations for care experienced students; improved gender imbalance in specific curriculum areas, and improved use of data to measure the impact of equalities mainstreaming across the College and against sector benchmarks.</p> <p>The College's Equality Action Team (EAT) has oversight and responsibility for the ensuring that the aims of the Access and Inclusion Strategy are met. During the course of AY2018-19, the EAT has developed a single Equality Enhancement Plan (EEP) for the whole College, inclusive of actions specific to the College's Access and Inclusion Strategy and ambitions. In addition, representatives of the EAT have presented the plan to the College's Leadership Team and in order to ensure that clarity is provided on the required action, leadership and collective accountability for the satisfactory progress needed in meeting the aims of the EEP. The Access and Inclusion Strategy is to be fully reviewed by the end of AY2018-19.</p> <p>During AY2018-19 Leadership Team members, in conjunction with other College managers, have continued to review and improve the College's approach to admissions through the work of the Admissions Improvement Group (AIG). The activities of this group aim, on an on-going basis, to evaluate and amend, where required, the admissions approaches of the College lead to greater accessibility and fairness for prospective learners. As such, some of the changes evoked during this academic year have seen applicants are selected for courses on merit and allocated to a course that best suits their needs, abilities and aspirations. The College, through its work with Community Planning partners in both Aberdeen City and Shire, is also actively developing ways in which it can increase interest and applications from those from socially, economically and/or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds and areas. The provision of a guaranteed interview scheme, along with improved funding support approaches has seen applications and enrolments increase for certain group of learners from disadvantaged or vulnerable backgrounds. Whilst, for the period AY2014-15 to AY2017-18, NESCol's credit activity related to learners from MD10 areas reduced, it increased, over the same period for learners declaring themselves disabled or care-experienced.</p> <p>The College remains committed to improving access for those residing within areas of multiple deprivation and is working closely with</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the volume of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas was 2,928. This was a proportion of 2.1%. In AY2019-20, the targeted volume of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcodes is 4,065 – a proportion of 3.1%.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, the proportion of enrolled SIMD10 students achieving a recognised qualification via full-time study was 75.8% for FE and 66.7% for HE. For AY2019-20, the targeted proportion for this group is 73.2% for FE and 78% for HE. In AY2017-18, the proportion of enrolled SIMD10 students (i.e. learners from the 10% most deprived postcodes) successfully achieving a recognised qualification via part-time study was 45.2% for FE and 100% for HE. For AY2019-20, the targeted proportion for this group is 72.5% for FE and 83% for HE. These targets</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>partners to ensure that a greater awareness of the opportunities available through the College for such learners. Such work has led to the dissemination and discussion of both the College's Strategic Plan 2018-21 and its Outcome Agreement with all partners working within Community Planning Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. This is helping to shape collaborative activities of the College and its community planning partners in satisfying the aims and objectives contained within various local outcome improvement, and locality plans – Community Planning Aberdeen LOIP 2016-2024 and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Through its Equality Outcomes the College is committed to enhancing equality of opportunity by minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to a disability. Baseline data collected for AY2015-16 showed evidence of an attainment gap of almost 10% for those full-time students with declared disabilities. This data represent students with a range of disabilities and apply to those who self-declared at enrolment, other students with disabilities are identified subsequent to enrolment but are not captured in the data. The data is for a very wide spectrum of disabilities, including learning difficulties, mental health problems and a broad range of physical impairments.</p> <p>The College's latest Equality Mainstreaming Report provides information on progress for the College's Equality Outcome 2 regarding the reduction of the attainment gap for students with disabilities. The Report highlighted that the following actions have been taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum teams, in conjunction with student support services, identified shortfalls in how well information about students with disabilities was shared in order for support needs to be evaluated, applied and monitored. • The new "Whole-College" support model, implemented in AY2018-19, was designed to involve all staff in identification of needs and application of interventions where appropriate. Early identification of learning and or support needs is crucial if individuals are to be provided with equal opportunity to succeed. For example, information relating to students declaring a disability at enrolment is shared with relevant staff who are able to monitor and evaluate progress in order to arrange interventions as applicable. Students can identify a specific support need at the application stage, self-refer at any time during their programme of study or be referred to the department by teaching/guidance staff or by an external partner/agency. • Improved awareness and systems for early interventions such as increased in-class support have been put in place which has enabled teaching teams to facilitate interventions earlier and provide a more inclusive environment delivering more effective support at the point of need. <p>The College's ambitions for improving approaches for access and inclusion continue, along with its internal review activities, within the current academic year. At the time of writing, a review of College student and staff behaviours is underway and further reviews of the provision and support for care experienced learners and the a curriculum review of the provision at SCQF levels 3 and 4 are due to be concluded in March 2019. It is anticipated that the changes implemented at 01 August 2019, along with the outcome of the three internal reviews scheduled for this academic year will assist significantly in the College's ambitions to improve its approaches to access and inclusion, particularly for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. A review of and further embedding of the new "Whole-College" support model and the introduction of a new data handling system for student support information are also intended to further improve awareness and communication in relation to support needs so that monitoring and interventions can be more quickly and effectively implemented. The College's new "Mentally Healthy College" initiative is also expected to improve availability of support for students with mental health difficulties and to raise the awareness and ability of staff in supporting these students. Plans are in place to implement this in</p>	<p>mirror those set for all FE and HE students.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>AY2019-20 to further help in closing the attainment gap.</p> <p>Care Experienced</p> <p>The College has in place a comprehensive policy detailing roles and responsibilities of staff and processes involved in supporting this specific client group. A copy of the Promoting and Supporting Learning for the Care Experienced Policy can be accessed at http://www.nescol.ac.uk/about/policies. The College has devised a detailed supporting procedure that outlines key responsibilities and roles in supporting care experienced applicants and students, and a range of e-information and guidance for this client group has also been developed.</p> <p>The Student Access & Support Team act as a main point of contact available for all care experienced applicants/students and has the responsibility of monitoring the attendance, progression and achievement of the care experienced students, in conjunction with Guidance Tutors and curriculum staff. The College encourages self-disclosure by applicants and students prior to enrolment and throughout the year, or disclosure from an external agency. At the time of writing, the College is aware of 79 students who have identified as being care experienced, compared to 69 in AY2017-18. The number of declared care experienced students in AY2018-19 may however increase due to work being undertaken to encourage students to self-declare and to improve the support provided to this client group.</p> <p>The College continues to work closely with the two Local Authorities and RGU in terms of information sharing protocol which will help in identifying those from a care experienced background and joint working in other care experienced student related issues. The Student Access & Support Team also continues to participate in the Successful Transitions Post-16 Partnership Planning Group facilitated by Aberdeen City Council.</p> <p>The Student Access & Support Team has also regularly conducted targeted focus groups to establish the preferred approach to providing transition information and support to this client group. Although participation in the focus groups has been relatively low, student feedback has been positive in relation to support provision. All students in attendance, including care experienced, also felt that the Student Access & Support Team additional support transition days organised for all College students were the best way forward, as they thought this to be more inclusive and the students would feel less “targeted” based upon one feature of their background.</p> <p>Currently 4% of young individuals in a care experienced background go from school to university compared to 36% of young people not brought up in a care experienced background. It is the ambition of the College, in partnership with the University of Aberdeen and RGU, to try to bridge this gap with meaningful transitions from college to university through its regional framework identified in Corporate Parenting Action Plans. This regional approach to support the educational opportunities for the care experienced is the first to be formally developed between college and university institutions in Scotland and has been commended by the Centre of Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCIS).</p> <p>In terms of successful outcomes for care experienced students the College will continue to contribute to the National Ambition for Care Experienced Students and its vision for there to be no difference in the outcomes of care experienced students in comparison to their peers. This is reflected in the targets set by NESCol in that the College will seek to achieve a target of 67% of full-time FE care experienced</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the proportion of enrolled full-time care experienced students successfully achieving a recognised qualification was 48.9% for FE and 53.6% for HE. For AY2019-20, the targeted proportion for this group is 67% for FE and 76% for HE.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>students in AY2019-20, this is 1.7% above the AY2016-17 sector average. The College is already above the sector average for this measures in relation to full-time HE students but it will seek to increase this to 78% in AY2020-21. At the time of writing an internal review in relation to care experienced students is planned for AY2018-19. Recommendations identified through this review will inform the creation of an action plan which will be implemented during AY2019-20 and will further seek to improve the experience and successful outcomes of learners from this group..</p> <p>In April 2015, under The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the College became a ‘Corporate Parent’. The College has established a Corporate Parenting Plan, which will be led and monitored through the College’s Curriculum and Quality Action Team. A simplified version of the Plan for ease of reference by students was produced in September 2017. The Plan confirms the College’s commitment to care experienced students. At the time of writing, a review is currently being undertaken of the support the College provides for applicants and enrolled students who are care experienced. This review provide key evidence for a planned review of the College’s Corporate Parenting Plan scheduled to take place in early 2019.</p> <p>During the planning period the College intends to continue to work with appropriate partners to support the transition for care experienced young people into FE and/or HE. This will involve collaboration with the two local universities to improve the positive destinations for the care experienced, including the further development of a meaningful partnership with the new Virtual Head Teacher, responsible for overseeing all care experienced young people in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. This link will prove invaluable in the management of data sharing and transition from school to further and higher education.</p> <p><u>Carers</u></p> <p>NESCol is aware of the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act in April 2018. The College currently relies on self-disclosure by student carers prior to and throughout the year or disclosure from an external agency, and has a named person at both the City and Fraserburgh Campuses to act as a main point of contact. The College is committed to continuing to improve support for student carers and plans to develop and publish a Student Carers Support Policy in order to enhance support available for this vulnerable student group. The College is also committed to ensuring its HR policies and working practices are carer friendly and as part of a planned review of all College policies will ensure that this is reflected appropriately in the College’s approach to flexible working and its Leave in Special Circumstances Policy.</p> <p>The College is aware that Carers Trust Scotland is being funded by the SFC to deliver the “Going Further and Going Higher for Student Carers Recognition Award Programme”, which includes the Trust providing policy support to colleges in creating a student carer support policy. As noted above, NESCol plans to publish a Student Cares Support Policy and as such will seek to utilise the free specialist support offered by the Trust to ensure that the new Policy fits with institutional requirements, and meets the needs and ambitions of NESCol student carers to reach their full potential.</p> <p><u>Gender Based Violence (GBV)</u></p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The College is committed to supporting the Scottish Government’s strategy to take action on all forms of violence against women and girls - Equally Safe. As such it has acted to strengthen its processes and procedures for dealing with incidents of gender based violence (GBV). The newly created Academic Tutoring role and the Student Advice & Support Team play a crucial role in helping to deliver a positive student experience, and allow for improvement in the support of students who experience difficult personal situations including GBV. The structure enables trust to be built between staff and students, and provides scope for signposting to online resources available through the student portal and where required to relevant external support agencies. The College has implemented an effective Student Support Referral System and has firmly embedded safeguarding procedures in the new structure introduced for AY2018-19. Additionally, in line with the Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit, the College has distributed GBV support cards to all staff as a resource to equip them to quickly and safely refer any student or staff making a disclosure onto specialist support services. The College curriculum teams and the Students’ Association will continue to work in partnership in terms of raising awareness about, and prevention of, GBV and responding to any issues disclosed across the institution. Details of any disclosures relating to GBV are captured through the Student Support Referral System and data obtained is held by the College’s Safeguarding Team.</p> <p><u>British Sign Language (BSL)</u></p> <p>The College is aware that the SFC is committed to supporting the implementation of the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015. As such NESCol has considered its role in fulfilling the ambitions contained with the BSL National Plan 2017-23 and has developed, in liaison with Deaf Action, a British Sign Language College Action Plan for the period 2018-2024. The College’s Action Plan details clear guidance, objectives and actions relating to the support of BSL users setting out on their College journey and all the way through their studies and transition to higher education or employment. In order to develop and progress in this area the College has consulted with the region’s two local authorities, local universities, North East Sensory Services (NESS), Sign Language Interpreters (SLIs), and NESCol students and staff. This first version of the Plan outlines the actions the College will take between October 2018 and June 2020 when the first National Progress Report is required.</p> <p><u>Gaelic</u></p> <p>Scottish Government statistics indicate that there are 1,628 Gaelic speakers in Aberdeen City and 1,397 in Aberdeenshire. This represents 0.6% of the regional population (and 5.2% of the total Gaelic speakers in Scotland). During the planning period, in order to ensure that the College contributes to the aims of the current National Gaelic Language Plan (NGLP), the College’s Business & Community Development, and Marketing & Communications Teams will examine evidence on Gaelic use, and demand for use and learning across North East Scotland. The College does not currently offer any Gaelic provision and work will also be undertaken to identify if the regional has unmet demand for provision, such as Gaelic for Beginners.</p> <p><u>Opportunities for All</u></p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The College continues to meet its commitments, together with other partners, to addressing the Government's policy for 'Opportunities for All' as a core part of the College's curriculum offer.</p> <p>In AY2017-18 49% of the College's credits were generated by learners who were aged 16-19 years old. The College aims to increase this proportion to 50% by AY2019-20. In the context of schools aiming to increase the number of pupils who stay on in 5th and 6th year, the College does not anticipate that its activity for this age group can increase much further.</p> <p>The College is committed to developing new partnerships with schools, university partners and employers to deliver a still broader range of vocational opportunities, further enriching the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence, and building strong partnerships to deliver more STEM employability programmes and Modern Apprenticeships. The College also works with SDS to offer programmes which are specifically targeted at groups identified as hard to reach.</p> <p><u>Community and Outreach and Part-time Learning</u></p> <p>The College supports access to opportunities for part-time learners, learners aged over 24 and those returning to learning for up-skilling and re-skilling by offering a broad range of programmes across multiple venues in the region over a range of days and times. NESCol offers over 170 distance and blended learning courses over many different industry disciplines, and a very broad selection of different part-time courses to suit individuals looking to upskill for work or career development. In addition, the College offers Modern Apprenticeship programmes which are delivered in College, in the workplace or a combination of both. These programmes are offered to students of all ages and reflect the demands of industry and the priorities of the Scottish Government and the regional economy.</p> <p>NESCol also has strategic partnerships which offer opportunities to more vulnerable sections of the community. Project SEARCH, a one-year internship programme supporting young people with additional needs to gain skills and experience to progress into employment, is a collaborative project between the University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen-based charity Inspire and the College. Through a close partnership with Aberdeen Foyer, NESCol also supports the delivery of Princes Trust, REACH, Lifeshapers and Citizenship and Tenancy programmes across both Aberdeen City and Shire. These programmes are designed for candidates who may be disengaged from learning or who are recovering from substance abuse or simply breaking away from chaotic backgrounds. The programmes offer a new direction with a wide variety of progression routes into positive destinations.</p> <p><u>School-College Links</u></p> <p>The College is committed to delivering accessible pathways to younger people. The College will, in relation to the wider Learning and Skills Journey, continue to ensure that school pupil pathways across the educational landscape are well-aligned, accessible, flexible and easily navigated. In turn, leading to greater cost-efficiencies, lack of duplication and learner journeys that move at a pace consistent with learner capacity.</p> <p>Through the School-College Links Programme, the College offers a range of courses to school pupils across the region. Included within the programme offered are SQA Skills for Work Awards, City and Guilds Awards, National Progression Awards and Foundation Apprenticeships. The primary objective of the School-College Links Programme is to offer accredited learning opportunities that support</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the volume of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision was 6,922 -a proportion of 5.1%. This proportion will be maintained in AY2019-20.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>pupils from across the region in developing transferable skills for employment and industry relevant knowledge at the level most appropriate to them individually within a curriculum informed by local labour market intelligence. School-College Links courses are mapped to regional pathways identifying access and exit points suitable to learners of all abilities and ambitions. Detailed School Links pages - http://www.nescol.ac.uk/courses/school-links - have been developed for the College website and the Programme and the achievements of those enrolled on it are regularly publicised on Twitter and Facebook to increase awareness of School-College Links activity. Extensive parental engagement through school based events has supported increased engagement and retention within School-College Links courses.</p> <p>In AY2018-19 a wide offer of vocational courses was made to both Local Authorities at a range of levels to encourage pupils of all abilities to participate in career pathway education opportunities. Opportunities in the School College Links programme in AY2018-19 have included a new employability programme being delivered in partnership with St Machar Academy to develop skills for employment in pupils expected to leave school at the end of S4 and a non-certificated year long STEM taster programme where pupils participate in 3 week experiences in Automotive, Construction and Engineering to facilitate identification of areas of interest, skills and strengths.</p> <p>75 vocational courses were offered across the region to school pupils in AY2018-19. Currently 1,248 school pupils from across the region are enrolled on 92 School College Links courses for AY2018-19 – including 14 Foundation Apprenticeship courses, 4 Supported Learning courses and 13 Curriculum Enhancement courses.</p> <p>New additions to the School College Links vocational education programme in AY2019-20 will include Foundation Apprenticeships in Accountancy, Civil Engineering and Food and Drink Technologies, Scientific Technologies and ICT Software. Working in partnership with both Local Authorities, all secondary schools in the region, SDS, DYW North East and business partners, the School-College Links Programme offers extensive opportunities for a wide range of learners to add meaningful depth and breadth to their Senior Phase school curriculum.</p> <p>Membership of Local Employability Partnerships has enabled the College to develop close and effective links with other stakeholders when promoting progression opportunities within the region. The College is an active participant in the Aspire North's 'Schools for Higher Education Programme' (SHEP) which provides valuable support and guidance to school pupils who are considering post-school progression to Higher Education. Three Aberdeen City and Shire schools are SHEP Schools – Lochside Academy, St Machar Academy and Northfield Academy. These three schools are also Scottish Attainment Gap funding schools. 91 pupils from these schools are currently enrolled on Vocational School College Links programmes, which amounts to almost 11% of the whole cohort.</p> <p><u>STEM Strategy</u></p> <p>The College continues to offer a significant number of courses in STEM subjects, with programmes offered across the region at the Altens, City and Fraserburgh Campuses providing local opportunities for both full time and part-time learners. STEM provision in support of the DYW initiative for school pupils consists of a growing number of programmes at SCQF level 4 and 5 and includes Foundation Apprenticeships in the areas of Engineering, Science and Computing. Full-time and part-time provision beyond school offers progression routes from SCQF levels 5 through to level 8 with a variety of entry and exits points across the whole STEM spectrum. Part-time</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the volume of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses was 43,637 - a proportion of</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>enrolments are mostly delivered in partnership with local industry, Local Authorities or universities with 483 Modern Apprentices in Construction, Automotive and Engineering delivered in AY2017-18. A further 236 Engineering students attended skills training from the University of Aberdeen. Partnerships in support of this activity continue to be developed in AY2017-18 and are expected to contribute similar amounts of activity.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, approximately one third of the College credits, over 44,000, were delivered in STEM subjects, including Science, Maths, Engineering, Construction, Automotive Technologies and Computing. At the time of writing, the College has generated over 37,500 credits with planned credits for the remainder of AY2018-19 in STEM being an estimated 43,000. Due to the local economic climate, a drop is anticipated in the number of enrolments for Mechanical Engineering. NESCol already significantly exceeds the national average for STEM activity – in AY2017-18 the College delivered 32.4% of its Credits from STEM related subjects which is the highest in the sector. The College will seek to continue to increase its STEM activity with a target of 35.5% in AY2018-19, increasing to 36.5% by AY2020-21. During the planning period growth is expected from DYW activity related to Science and Computing. It is also thought that the current downturn in activity relating to Mechanical Engineering will begin to reverse.</p> <p>The College responded to the recent Scottish Government consultation - STEM Education and Training Strategy for Scotland – and at the time of writing is developing its own STEM Strategy and associated action plan in line with the national strategy with support from the STEM Foundation. The College's strategy will include action to help address inequalities and gender imbalance in STEM provision at NESCol. In addition, as part of the College's current Curriculum Review, consideration is being given to the possible development of a STEM Academy at the College's Fraserburgh Campus. Following publication implementation of the Strategy, the College's ambition is to gain STEM Assured status, this is a standard that provides independent, industry-backed validation of the quality of an institution's science, technology, engineering and mathematics provision. To achieve the STEM Assured status, the College will be assessed against a robust framework that benchmarks its capability to design and deliver STEM courses that keep pace with emerging technology and the evolving needs of employers.</p> <p>Early Learning and Childcare</p> <p>NESCol continues to engage with early learning and childcare employers through close collaboration with the EL&CC Academy. Local representation is strong and provides the College with the opportunity to meet regularly with influencers in early years with Local Authority and private employers from Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. The EL&CC Academy Lead is working closely with NESCol students on SSSC registered courses (NC Early Education & Childcare and HNC Childhood Practice) to seek to match them to vacancies within the region. This relationship may also help to convert more, who may be using the HNC as a stepping-stone to primary education, to instead move directly into the early years workforce.</p> <p>At its Fraserburgh Campus, the College delivers a number of SVQ Social Services CYP qualifications to early years providers in Aberdeenshire. These candidates regularly visit the Campus for workshops allowing academic staff as well as VQ assessors the opportunity to engage.</p> <p>Partnership working with Aberlour Futures has helped the College to grow the numbers of those working towards a Degree level qualification through the PDA 9 Childhood Practice. Numbers enrolling onto the course in 2018 rose to 20 from 12 the previous year and</p>	<p>32%. In AY2018-19, the target for Credits delivered to learners on STEM courses is 48,779 – a proportion of 36%.</p> <p>In AY2016-17, the volume of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools (i.e. secondary schools with consistently low rates of progression to higher education) was 1,930 - a proportion of 4.7%. In AY2019-20, the targeted volume of Credits to be delivered to this group is 2,860 – a proportion of 6.5%.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>with an additional cohort planned to start in September 2019 this will help provide nurseries with suitably qualified managers to lead the expansion programme.</p> <p>Placement activity within programmes continues to ensure that students gain exposure to the workplace and employers throughout their time at College. Being able to apply the theory from the classroom into the working environment is essential and as well as ensuring that the curriculum is fully fit for purpose it provides confident and competent employees who are work ready by the end of their course. Many students move directly to employment with their placement provider following successful completion of their course, although this does occasionally happen before their course has completed meaning that although they have moved to a positive destination they are not recorded as a successful outcome. Regular contact with employers who offer placement provides the College with an opportunity for feedback on skills and knowledge required and the majority are highly complementary of the quality of student they receive. Placement providers' evenings, employer talks, mentor evenings and career events also attract a number of childcare employers to the College where they can engage with students and staff from childcare as well as those from across the College.</p> <p>An extremely positive engagement initiative developed during AY2018-19 was a working agreement with PEEP. In partnership, three members of College staff have been trained to deliver PEEP sessions within NESCol. This has helped to provide a much-needed opportunity for local parents and carers to access a new venue for their training programme. It also means that the College's introductory level childcare students get the chance to assist and engage with young children in a closely supervised setting. The next stage of development for this project is to become PEEP trainers and to offer the training to NESCol students so they too can run PEEP sessions in the region.</p> <p>Addressing gender imbalance in early learning and childcare is a key priority for NESCol. The College's Care Team have engaged with this through NESCol's Gender Action Plan and more specifically through addressing gender stereotyping by targeting younger audiences to change attitudes towards working in care. Engagement with local primary schools which includes the delivery of a 'Boys care too' by male care lecturers was introduced in AY2018-19 and, following extremely positive feedback, will be offered more widely in AY2019-20. In addition, a number of new early years promotional materials have been developed using some of our existing male students, as positive role models are essential to the success of addressing gender imbalance, especially for those considering coming to College or changing career. This is also true to gender balance within NESCol's care teaching team.</p> <p><u>Gender Imbalance in the Curriculum</u></p> <p>The College is already committed to, and involved in, work which seeks to address gender imbalance and inequality. Within its most recent set of equality outcomes, published in April 2017, the College identifies an ambition whereby:</p> <p><i>'Opportunities will be created in targeted curriculum areas to address gender imbalance and stereotyping. The College will aim to eliminate the barriers to subject choice and thereby enable all students to maximise their education and employment opportunities'. (Equality Outcome 3).</i></p> <p>Such ambition is also identified within the College's first Gender Action Plan which was published in 2017. All College staff have a responsibility to support College approaches towards greater gender balance within its curriculum offer. Curriculum staff have, through learning and teaching, opportunities to promote and support gender equality. All staff, support and curriculum, have</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>responsibilities to positively, in terms of academic, vocational and career choice and progression, support and encourage prospective or current learners to challenge arcane views and practices which perpetuate gender segregation in specific course areas and career choices. In order to ensure that both curriculum and support teams appraise the success of their respective efforts to address gender disparities an increased emphasis on gender imbalance and the use of equalities data has been placed within the College's quality improvement processes, particularly KPI meetings with curriculum managers and self-evaluation reporting for all managers.</p> <p>Data from AY2016-17, showing the proportion of credits delivered by gender in each of the subject areas delivered by the College, suggests that most subject areas within the College show some degree of gender imbalance. The subject areas with the greatest gender bias are very similar to those identified by national data, i.e. Predominantly female: Hair & Beauty (98% Female); and Care (90% Female) and Predominantly male: Computing (68% Male); Engineering (89% Male); and Construction (97% Male).</p> <p>The data also shows that in almost all subject areas female full-time students attain more highly than full-time males. The exceptions to this are Construction students, where the small minority of females do significantly less well than males, and Learning Opportunities students, where female attainment is 2% behind that of males. Female minorities in Computing, Automotive and Engineering attain better than their male counterparts. Male minorities in Care programmes do less well but the difference is comparable with subject areas where there is no significant male minority.</p> <p>The small number of males in Hair and Beauty do significantly less well than females and the attainment difference is significantly larger than in other bias areas. There are also significant attainment gaps by biological sex in some subject areas where there is a less significant enrolment bias – mostly notably in ESOL and Sport but also in the Business subject areas.</p> <p>The College acknowledges the Scottish Government's ambition to address gender imbalances at subject level with the key aim of no subject having an extreme gender imbalance of greater than 75% of one gender by 2030. As such NESCol will aspire to reduce gender imbalance in curriculum areas where this currently exists as follows – 5% reduction by 2020, a further 7% reduction by 2025 in areas where extreme imbalance still exists, with all extreme gender imbalances eliminated by 2030.</p> <p>Work continues through curriculum self-evaluation processes to understand better, and address, gender imbalances. In particular, the College, through its Gender Action Plan, is targeting activity to address imbalances between the biological sexes. Specifically, it proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take steps to address the enrolment bias in Care; Hair & Beauty; Engineering; Computing; Construction and Automotive subject areas; • Investigate further the reasons for the attainment gap between biological sexes in FE courses in Care; Hair & Beauty; Engineering; Computing and Construction where the minority groups attain less well; • Take steps to address the attainment gap between biological sexes in FE courses in Care; Hair & Beauty; Engineering; Computing and Construction where the minority groups attain less well; • Investigate the reasons for the difference in application conversion by biological sex in Art & Design; Music. Media & Drama and Electrical Engineering; • Take steps to address the difference in application conversion by biological sex in Art & Design; Music. Media & Drama and Electrical Engineering. 	

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<p>The Students' Association (SA) is central to the College's gender equality activities and ambitions, playing a key role in the promotion of gender-related issues to the wider student body through targeted campaigning, arranging key awareness-raising events and campaigning through local, regional and national activities and initiatives.</p> <p>The College is also committed to ensuring that its efforts to ensure greater gender equality are promoted, supported and implemented through regional community planning partnership (CPP) arrangements. The College is a statutory partner on both Community Planning Aberdeen and the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. As activity is developed through the respective CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plans and Locality Plans, the College will – in conjunction with other CPP partners – seek to ensure that positive actions are implemented to support activities that will establish greater levels of educational and employment gender equality within the region.</p> <p>As part of its commitment to developing new and innovative approaches to business development and employer engagement, the College will seek to ensure that it promotes and encourages local employers, local young people, their parents/guardians and school staff to consider the benefits of gender equality and to consider ways to negate and challenge gender segregation. In doing so it will build upon existing College successes including the Shell-sponsored 'Girls into Energy' initiative which is now delivered yearly to over 120 school pupils from 9 City and Shire Academies.</p> <p><u>Equality and Diversity</u></p> <p>The College continues to seek to ensure that as an organisation it creates - year-on-year - a more equal, diverse and inclusive learning and working environment for students and staff alike. The College's approach is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure equality and diversity is embedded in all areas of College activity; • Implement a set of Equality Outcomes based on evidence gathered through consultation, monitoring and analysis of key performance indicator data; • Promote equality, diversity and educational and social inclusion, • Eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality; • Ensure that all College staff undertake mandatory equality and diversity training to raise awareness of the need to promote equality within their work areas. <p>Further information can be found in the College's Equality and Diversity Policy</p> <p>A key priority for the College is the delivery of its Equality Outcomes. NESCol has identified four Equality Outcomes for the period 2017-21. A high-level action plan has been developed to indicate key actions the College will implement for each of the Outcomes has been developed. These actions, along with actions from other equality-related College activities, have been incorporated into the College's Equality Enhancement Plan (EEP). Progress towards completing the actions within the EEP is now the responsibility of the College's Leadership Team. As a consequence the focus given to equality-related activities and actions has improved considerably as such matters have more established on the agendas and in the discussions of the Leadership Team.</p> <p>The College's First Impressions Survey includes the question 'All students are treated fairly'. The response rate for this question in AY2018-19 was 97%, an increase of 5% on the previous year. However, this high and very positive response rate does not dampen the</p>	

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<p>College's enthusiasm to seek further improvements to our students' experiences. For example, over the previously two and half years NESCol has been involved, as one of several colleges, in an Equalities Challenge Unit (ECU) (now known as Advance HE) project relating to 'Attracting Diversity: Equality in Student Recruitment in Scottish Colleges'. The project, which concluded at the end of AY2017-18, was established to understand better the barriers to, and increase, the participation of underrepresented groups within the student body.</p> <p>As a consequence of its contribution to this project the College continues to focus on ensuring that its approaches to student recruitment are inclusive of groups sharing a protected characteristic. In addition, NESCol staff will, as the College's focus continued to deepen and broaden, continued their work on seeking improvements in the experiences and outcomes for, students from underrepresented groups.</p> <p>As a consequence of the extensive internal review activity conducted in AY2017-18, the College is now developing more proactive and focused approaches to improving outcomes and experience for learner groups likely to experience some degree of disadvantage. Such approaches include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the availability of equality-related data to staff through the development of a Power Bi dashboard; • Improving both curriculum team analysis of equality-related data in order to appropriately assess underrepresentation in certain curriculum areas; • Setting specific and achievable targets in relation to improving participation for those from particular groups e.g. SIMD 10 and care experienced; • Targeting and collaborating with partners, including RGU and Community Planning Partnerships, to improve educational outcomes for those from underrepresented groups; • Establishing, through the implementation of robust internal review processes, opportunities for professional dialogue with staff, student and stakeholders, on how best the College can provide inclusive and accessible services for all. • Developing a whole college, equality improvement approach built on the theme of 'respect'. <p>The College is now well-established, Equality Action Team (EAT) actively supports the development of improved approaches for the delivery of its equalities priorities. The EAT has developed an Equality Enhancement Plan (EEP) which identifies, within a single document, the actions that the College needs to take in relation to its Gender Action Plan; Equality Outcomes; Access and Inclusion Strategy; College Enhancement Plan; Gender Pay Gap Report and Occupation Segregation Reports for gender, race/ethnicity and disability (Copies of these key equality and diversity documents can be accessed on the College website.) Further, the EAT has proactively sought to ensure that collective and individual responsibility is taken by all members of NESCol's Leadership Team for the undertaking, the monitoring, promotion and mainstreaming of the College's equality responsibilities and activities and in achieving the equality-related actions identified within the EEP. The EAT also works closely with the College's Equality Committee (EC), an important equality engagement forum for comprised of Regional Board members, staff and students. This consultative group assists the EAT by ensuring that the direction of travel for the College's equality-related activities is correct. Such consultation has also helped shape the work of the EAT in establishing activities, for implementation in the calendar year 2019, relating to the aforementioned theme of 'respect'.</p> <p>At the time of writing, the College's Vice Principal (Access, Outcomes & Partnerships) is in discussion with Advance HE with a view to joining its Board's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-committee. This position is reserved for a representative from Scotland and some</p>	

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<p>overtures have been made that it would be advantageous, for reasons of balance, if the representation was from the college sector. Essentially, Advance HE is looking for someone with EDI knowledge who can apply it strategically to this national organisation.</p> <p>Quality Arrangements</p> <p>Following the publication of ‘How Good is our College?’ in December 2016, the College reviewed its approach to self-evaluation. New templates for Evaluative Reports and Enhancement Plans, based on the new quality framework and focused around relevant quality indicators, were produced (College level, School level, Faculty level, Course level, and Support teams). The templates require a review of performance throughout the academic year to be completed, followed by the development of enhancement plans detailing improvement actions and how these relate to College annual priorities. The refreshed approach detailed above ensures that the College’s process for self-evaluation and improvement planning is undertaken at all levels of the organisation. The suite of completed templates are then reflected upon during the preparation of the College’s Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) which is required to be submitted to both the SFC and Education Scotland.</p> <p>To ensure that the self-evaluation process followed by NESCol is sound and the judgements contained in the EREP are accurate, the College sought the views of the Regional Skills and Learning Partnership (comprised of representatives from the Local Authority, Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Robert Gordon University, Skills Development Scotland, Opportunity North East, Job Centre Plus and the University of Aberdeen) who confirmed that the strengths, evidence and areas for development identified in the Evaluative Report for AY2017-18 and Enhancement Plan AY2018-18 were true and fair.</p> <p>The actions arising from the evaluative process detailed above are integrated into a College Enhancement Plan which brings together actions to address quality enhancement issues; key strategic objectives and annual priorities; risk management priorities, and priority outcomes from the SFC Outcome Agreement. During AY2019-20 this process will be further developed and embedded to support the outcome agreement process of intensification and to support action towards key agreed intensification targets.</p> <p>What needs to progress in AY2019-20</p> <p>In conjunction with the College-wide Curriculum Review, detailed consideration will be given to medium and long-term strategies with regard to the desired proportions of different modes and levels of activity i.e. full-time/part-time, HE/FE, schools activity, STEM activity. This will also include an analysis of levels of unmet regional demand.</p> <p>In AY2019-20, the College will aim to increase participation of learners from all protected characteristic groups and will increase the proportion of credits delivered to learners from the 10% most deprived postcode areas.</p> <p>Following its publication in AY2018-19, awareness raising activities will be undertaken across the College in relation to its refreshed Access & Inclusion Strategy to highlight responsibilities of all College staff with regard to its implementation and monitoring.</p> <p>The College will ensure that there is an increased focus on reducing gender imbalance, specifically in key curricula areas where this is most prominent e.g. Computing, Care, Engineering, Construction, and Hair & Beauty. This will include revised approaches to curriculum offer</p>	

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<p>and design, increased staff awareness of Scottish Government and SFC priorities relating to this issue, refreshed approaches to marketing and stakeholder engagement, for example, with local schools, school pupils and their parents.</p>	
<p>Outcome: An outstanding system of learning where all students are progressing successfully and benefiting from a world class experience, in the hands of expert lecturers delivered in modern facilities</p>	
<p>Priority Outcome Three:</p> <p>Successful outcomes for all learners will be improved, increasing the number of learners achieving positive destinations to employment or further study. This will be achieved through the provision of nationally recognised qualifications and through the provision of support to students to enable them to become effective contributors personally, socially and economically. A strong focus will be placed on increasing learner success rates for all learners from all backgrounds and with all abilities. Progression routes to employment and university will be developed and promoted and numbers progressing to university with advanced standing will be increased. The College will continue to monitor learner destinations once they leave college and demonstrate the positive impact college education has had on their employment or future study prospects.</p> <p>This Priority Outcome will be achieved through the College's approach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum planning to meet the needs of the region • Developing and promoting clear pathways using the SCQF Framework • Improving retention and attainment and successful outcomes for all learners • Articulation. <p><u>Curriculum Planning (Meeting the needs of the region)</u></p> <p>The College's curriculum planning process aims to develop, plan and offer an extensive and responsive range of programmes which meet the needs of individuals, employers, industry and communities. Curriculum plans take full account of the strategic priorities of the external bodies who influence the curriculum, including the Scottish Government, the SFC, Industry Bodies, (such as Sector Skills Councils, OPITO, ECITB, Construction Skills, HABIA etc), SQA and other Awarding Bodies, SDS and local industry.</p> <p>The curriculum planning process is informed by environmental scanning to ensure that the impact of other external factors such as demographics, the local economy and regional infrastructure developments are reflected upon. Key Skills Development Scotland documents referred to as part of the annual Curriculum Area Development Planning (CADP) Exercise are the Regional Skills Assessments for Aberdeen City and Shire and Skills Investment Plans. Labour market intelligence and employer engagement activities also play a crucial role in the process. The College continues to make good use of the EMSI labour market information toolkit which is used by curriculum teams and managers in assessing the current and future regional need for courses and programmes.</p> <p>The CADP/Curriculum Matrix exercise provides an opportunity for curriculum staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather the expertise of the subject team in relation to ongoing and forthcoming changes to the external environment which will 	

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<p>affect the nature of the curriculum being offered in particular subject areas – this could affect both the way in which it is offered (e.g. a need to switch from College based to work based programmes) and the content (e.g. new technology, new legislation, government initiatives);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the existing curriculum to assess its strengths and weaknesses and to identify programmes for amendment and deletion; • Identify new courses to be introduced having considered the external factors, reviewed the existing offering and considered the College’s strategic aims and objectives and curriculum priorities. <p>Through this exercise, a number of new additions have been added to the portfolio for AY2018-19 including a new HND Fashion Business programme which has now been approved by SQA, the HNC in Complementary Therapies, and the NC Mechanical Manufacture and Mechanical Maintenance programmes. A new fast track Introductory to Science course was offered in January 2018 to support the demand in this sector as part of the College’s STEM Strategy. Further information on the provision offered can be found in the College’s Prospectus 2019-20.</p> <p>In order to help young people and their families, school staff, careers advisers, employers and staff of colleges and universities better to understand the variety of curriculum pathways that these links offer, a series of Curriculum Maps has been developed which show in different vocational areas the pathways from school through college and/or university into work. As well as sharing routes through full-time study, the maps record the “apprenticeship” routes – including the developing Foundation Apprenticeships and Graduate/Advanced Apprenticeships, as well as the long-established Modern Apprenticeships. A copy of the College publication, a guide to education progression, can be accessed on the College website - North East Scotland Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Pathways</p> <p><u>Improving Retention and Attainment</u></p> <p>Our students are NESCol’s greatest assets, and supporting them through to successful completion of their programme is of huge importance. A core part of our approach is the ongoing support offered at both academic level and through the various support mechanisms that are in place. This approach has helped the College to consistently perform above the national average for full-time HE programmes, the College however acknowledges work is required to achieve the national average for full-time FE provision.</p> <p>To ensure the College made improvements in retention and attainment, dedicated time for subject specific advice was given by lecturing staff (class tutors) and this was introduced in AY2017-18. This was in addition to the pastoral support and information given by Guidance Tutors and Advisers. As a result, learner success rates when combining full-time FE and HE with part-time FE and HE improved in AY2017-18 compared to the previous year, while learner success rates improved in full-time FE, part-time FE and part-time HE on the previous year. Through a curriculum restructure, a new Academic Tutoring role has been implemented in AY2018-19 to further support improvements in the College’s learner success rates.</p> <p>The College has commenced its Curriculum Review process with a view to having a fully modernised curriculum in place by August 2020, as well as carrying out an internal review of all Level 4/Introductory programmes. The review will explore current retention policies and practices, seek to benchmark against those who are significantly above national averages, identify evidence of excellence that can be shared, and make significant improvement to our outcomes at non-advanced level. The audit will build on the Internal Review undertaken in AY2016-17 for Admissions, Applications and Funding with a view to reviewing and developing curriculum and student support mechanisms.</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the proportion of enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification via full-time study was 66.6% for FE and 74.1% for HE. For AY2019-20, the targeted proportion of full-time learners achieving a recognised qualification is 73.2% for FE and 78% for HE. In AY2017-18, the proportion of enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification via part-time study was</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>A new curriculum Leadership Forum has been created and will give the College's Heads of Faculty the opportunity to engage with the Senior Management Team to discuss retention and achievement, and to agree required actions.</p> <p>In attempting to improve student support, retention and attainment, the College – during AY2017-18 - undertook two support-related internal reviews relating to support for learning and student access and on-course support. The lead officers for these projects published their respective reports and a series of recommendations were approved and implemented for the start of the AY2018-19. Consequently, the College has instigated significant change to both support and curriculum team processes, structures, roles and philosophies. Fundamentally, these changes have resulted in a 'whole College model' being adopted, created and implemented to support prospective and existing learners in a more coherent and responsive manner.</p> <p>The new student information, advice and support model is a fundamental redesign of the way in which NESCol students are supported both academically and pastorally during their studies. The refreshed approach is providing a framework for more integrated, targeted and impactful support to be provided to all students, but has been specifically designed to target FE cohorts, where early retention and attainment outcomes have remained relatively static in recent years.</p> <p>The new model is one of inclusive practice where all students are to be treated the same, regardless of their background or circumstances i.e. those from areas of deprivation, care experienced, veterans, estranged students etc. That being said, the College will of course continue to ensure that appropriate tailored support, including any additional needs adjustments, is provided and that all students are encouraged to self-declare and are monitored to ensure that the information, advice and support provided is effective. As well as ensuring that every student on a non-advanced course has an academic tutor to provide more immediate support if required, the College has also introduced Student Advice Centres (SACs) for all main campuses. These SACs contain dedicated support teams working collaboratively across many areas to offer more targeted support and information to both prospective and existing students relating to courses, the application process, and student support services.</p> <p>The College has, through partnership working, introduced additional support services for learners within College campuses. Progression and careers advice is now available through dedicated SDS Guidance staff who are now located within the SAC at the Colleges. Similarly, money management advice is provided through the College's relationship with the Foyer whose staff provide this service to learners attending the Fraserburgh Campus.</p> <p>A full evaluation of the impact of these changes detailed above will be made towards the end of AY2018-19 to identify their impact and if additional changes, improvements or staff training to embed the new support model further is required.</p> <p><u>Additional Needs and Disabilities</u> As a core part of NESCol's approach to ensuring that all learners have an equal chance of being successful, the College is committed to</p>	<p>69% for FE and 79.5% for HE. For AY2019-20, the targeted proportion of part-time learners achieving a recognised qualification is 72.5% for FE and 83% for HE.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, the number of FT FE learners aged 16-19 who successfully completed their course was 1,439, a proportion of 63.2%. For AY2019-20, the targeted number of FT FE learners aged 16-19 who successfully complete their course is 1,456 – a proportion of 66%.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>ensuring that people with additional needs and disabilities are treated fairly. The College, therefore, makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that students with additional needs and disabilities are not disadvantaged.</p> <p>In relation to access, the College is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a flexible and accessible curriculum that enables learners at all levels who can benefit from the vocational courses offered, to access provision that provides clear pathways to sustainable employment or further study; • Ensuring that there are entry-level courses, including those suited to the abilities and aspirations of those with additional learning requirements, in each area of provision wherever possible; • Developing new courses in, and converting existing courses into, formats that promote flexible access to learning in order to increase participation; • Ensuring that teaching approaches and materials do not create unnecessary barriers to learning, and wherever possible recognise the variety of learning styles, and anticipate the range of common learning difficulties. <p>The College is committed to providing access level programmes for those learners with additional needs who can benefit from them, and supporting transition between the region’s educational institutions for those with additional needs. NESCol is a key member of the region’s Partnership Matters Agreement. The purpose of the Agreement is to ensure: all partners recognise, understand and respect the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies that provide support; on-going discussion about the provision of support; and commitment to working in partnership to ensure provision of that support.</p> <p>The overall ambition of the local partnership is to ensure children, young people and adults have the opportunity to access learning opportunities within further and higher education as appropriate within the context of career progression pathways. During the planning period the local partners will continue to work together to identify and develop strategic solutions in ensuring the provision of appropriate support for children, young people and adults to access further and higher education. The local partnership will also further develop processes and protocols for considering individual cases where required.</p> <p>As an inclusive College, students with additional needs and disabilities are well supported throughout the academic year. The levels of support will vary according to the individual needs of students, and support is administered by experienced staff on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. A number of key skills are covered that help prepare learners for employment or further study including research skills, presentation skills, time management, CV writing, employability units such as work experience or volunteering units as part of their programme of study.</p> <p>In October 2018, the College published its first British Sign Language College Action Plan. The BSL Plan aligns with the National BSL Plan for Scotland and identifies 21 specific actions across 5 strategic themes. Collectively these aims and actions seek to enhance the opportunities and outcomes of those learners who are deaf or hearing impaired. Whilst the BSL Plan runs from 2018 to 2024, it is intended that an annual report on the College progress will be published for each year of the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>The In AY2017-18, 1,114 full-time students had declared a disability with 67.7% achieving success, an increase of over 4% on the previous year. The College will seek to build on this success as it continues to review, change and enhance its approaches to access and inclusion</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>thus ensuring that all students regardless of background and disability are given the opportunity to progress to and through College and beyond.</p> <p><u>Mental Health and Wellbeing</u></p> <p>The College is currently developing a Mental Health Strategy to strengthen its commitment to improving the support for and retention of students who experience mental ill health. This is being led by a steering group consisting of support, teaching and student body representatives who will also develop and drive forward a range of College-wide initiatives to embed the new Strategy following its publication before the end of AY2018-19.</p> <p>The College is working with the Students' Association and NUS Scotland representatives on the creation of a Student Mental Health Agreement. The College is working closely with the Students' Association and Human Resources/ Occupational Health to plan a range of events and activities to raise awareness of, and tackle stigma about, mental health issues and promote health and wellbeing of both the student and staff population.</p> <p>Enhanced Mental Health First Aid guidelines and safeguarding procedures are firmly embedded in the new curriculum and student support structures which were introduced for the beginning of AY2018-19. The newly created Academic Tutoring role and the Student Advice & Support Team play a crucial role in helping to deliver a positive student experience which allows for improvement in the support and retention of students who experience mental ill health, and ensures that all students are enabled to achieve their full potential as successful learners, ready to transition to future learning, life and work. The College does not have a counselling service in place, however the Academic Tutor role (over 300 in place) provides the opportunity for effective relationships and trust to be built between staff and students, and signposting to online resources available through the College's Student Portal and where required to relevant external support agencies. Additionally, the steering group is currently exploring possible enhanced partnership working with a number of Third Sector organisations.</p> <p>The College continues to exchange and evaluate good practice in collaboration with other colleges, local schools and universities to ensure smooth transition and positive destinations for students, including those experiencing mental ill health issues. A comparison of key performance indicator data for students who have declared mental health issues in the current and previous academic year will form part of the review of the implementation of the new support and curriculum structure and the impact of the College's Mental Health Strategy and related initiatives.</p> <p>To support the introduction of the new Strategy, arrangements are currently being made for all College staff to receive mental health awareness training. In addition, the College's Student Advice & Support Team and other key members of staff will also undertake mental health first aid training.</p> <p><u>Diet and Healthy Weight</u></p> <p>The College is aware of the Scottish Government's strategy, A healthier future: Scotland's diet and healthy weight delivery plan and its five</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>outcomes. NESCol will contribute to the delivery of the strategy as appropriate, with key actions linked to Outcome 2: The food environment supports healthier choices, and Outcome 4: Leaders across all sectors promote health, diet and weight.</p> <p>The College will continue to work with its catering contractor to support staff and students to make positive dietary choices and to encourage an increased uptake of healthier choices which reduce the excessive consumption of food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt. The College already operates a canteen, The Made Healthier Café, at its Aberdeen City Campus which is a destination for healthy, balanced eating where all options use nutritious ingredients. The catering contractor will continue to be encouraged to promote healthier options to students and support healthy eating at home with the access to free 'Eat Well' recipe cards at College canteens and cafes.</p> <p>Fully equipped fitness suites are available free of charge at each of the College's main Campuses to encourage staff and students to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Regular activities and exercise classes are also held in the Games Halls at the Aberdeen City and Fraserburgh Campuses.</p> <p>NESCol has achieved the Healthy Working Lives Award at Gold level and will seek to maintain this accreditation on an annual basis by continuing to identify and address issues which lead to further improvement of the College's health, safety and wellbeing culture.</p> <p>Strategic engagement with the two local Community Planning Partnerships to support delivery of their LOIPs, and working with NHS Grampian's Public Health Team will provide the College with opportunities to work more closely on a regional approach to the Scottish Government's strategy which reduces duplication of actions undertaken in colleges in relation to diet and health weight.</p> <p>Articulation</p> <p>NESCol and RGU benefit from highly effective partnership working in a number of key areas which enable the institutions to deliver the right learning in the right place, develop the region's workforce and contribute to the region's economic needs. In recent years the Boards of the two institutions have held a number of joint events to discuss curriculum links and future developments and opportunities for the partnership. Both institutions remain committed to developing further the longstanding strong partnership which was strengthened with the signing of the Associate College Agreement in October 2007 and which is regularly highlighted throughout Scotland as a model of good practice. An integral part of the agreement is the 2+2 Degree-Link Programme, which offers NESCol students the opportunity to gain two awards from four years of higher education – an HND and an Honours degree. Offered on a 2+2 basis (two years at College followed by two years at RGU), students successfully completing a relevant College HND qualification can obtain entry to the third year of a four-year degree. In some cases 1+3 Degree Links are available where students who complete an HNC can enter into second year of the appropriate degree course. Over 400 students progress annually to RGU from the College through these arrangements. Over 1,100 students have articulated from HNC/Ds at North East Scotland College to the second (HNC) or third (HND) year of degree programmes at RGU in the past three years. The comprehensive articulation arrangements with RGU play a key role in widening access to higher education in the region, especially for those who lack the qualifications to enter university straight after school or who are more suited to vocational study/the College environment. During the planning period, opportunities to increase the number of Degree Links across the regional curriculum will continue to be sought. For further information, can be found in the Degree Links leaflet.</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the number of successful learners achieving HNC (SCQF level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8) qualifications articulating to degree levels courses (SCQF Level 9) with advanced standing is TBC – figures awaited from National Articulation Database. For AY2019-20, the target for this group is 500.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The College has also established articulation agreements with a number of universities across Scotland (including University of Aberdeen, Abertay University, Edinburgh Napier University, Glasgow Caledonian University, Queen Margaret University, The Open University, and the University of the Highlands and Islands) with agreed articulation routes in place for the majority of its HNDs. Work is being carried out to establish future articulation agreements with Heriot-Watt University and the University of the West of Scotland. The College currently promotes a total of 178 advanced standing degree programmes across 30 College HNC/D's and an additional 10 agreed pathways with formal agreements applied. In addition to this, the College also has a formal articulation agreement in place with the Open University, which can give up to 240 credits transfer covering a range of degree programmes. The College will continue to maximise articulations opportunities for students ensuring articulation is considered when new programmes are introduced.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, 554 students articulated with advanced standing compared with 445 in AY2016-17. It should be noted that at the time of writing the College is waiting on confirmation from three universities on the number of AY2017-18 students who have progressed to university with advanced standing. In the past three years, almost 180 students have articulated with the Open University. The College remains committed to increase opportunities for articulation where possible however, it should be noted that significant increases in the planning period are not expected as this is dependent on the number of available places at universities. Further information on university progression pathways can be found in the North East Scotland Prospectus 2019-20.</p> <p>During the planning period the College will seek opportunities to develop additional progression routes for its learners. These plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College and University of Aberdeen piloting a new articulation route between the HND Social Sciences and BSc Psychology where students will progress directly into year 3 subject to graded unit results. A proposal to include a summer school will form part of this pilot to ensure students are effectively supported. • The College and University of Aberdeen are also in discussions to an articulation route for our Accounting students to progress from the HND year 2 into 3rd year of the new single honours Accountancy degree. The students will be supported through a summer school which will help familiarise them with the University, the degree and the teaching team. <p>Robert Gordon University (RGU) and NESCol have entered into an ambitious enhanced alliance to deliver a seamless skills-rich educational pathway for learners in Scotland's North-East. Building on a well-established partnership and a shared commitment to present an innovative and inclusive tertiary education model, the new TWO PLUS partnership will see the two institutions take new active steps to strengthen their connection within and beyond traditional higher and further education streams. The joint approach to addressing access and inclusion across the two institutions will find new methods of collaborating to meet the Scotland's ambition for a world class education and skills system, supporting findings from the recent 15-24 Learner Journey Review and Enterprise and Skills Review, as well as the Developing Young Workforce agenda. The initiative will build on the success of the existing Degree Link programme between the two institutions, which provides a stepping stone to further study by allowing students to gain advanced entry to a degree at RGU after completing a relevant HNC/D at NESCol. It will create new and efficient routes to progress to higher education by incorporating additional discipline areas into the articulation programme and will ensure young learners receive clear advice to make informed decisions about progression pathways between college and university. TWO PLUS will also look at ways to maximise the opportunities to progress into second year of a degree and/or HN study with an advanced higher qualification and will deliver a new cohesive and integrated approach to outreach activity for school-age learners which enables access and supports attainment. It will also support the Developing Young</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>Workforce Agenda by delivering an integration of work based learning pathways for learners and business.</p> <p><u>English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</u></p> <p>As part of the College's commitment to ensuring that the needs of all learners across the region are met the College continues to work with the two local Community Planning Partnerships to identify and meet demand for ESOL programmes. ESOL programmes continue to be an area of high demand in the region.</p> <p>Applications for full-time ESOL provision at Aberdeen City Campus in AY2017-18 were similar to AY2016-17. Applications for the Fraserburgh Campus remain buoyant with the continuation of the beginner level courses. However, uncertainty remains around the impact of Brexit for students and staff and in turn the demand for ESOL courses from AY2018-19 onwards.</p> <p>Comprehensive ESOL provision is crucial for progression to employment, further studies and integration for many of the region's migrants. The number of learners completed ESOL courses at the College and progressing to College courses and higher education has been consistently high for the past 4 years. The College predicts that nearly 45% of its ESOL students will progress to other College courses, 45% will enter employment and 10% will apply to a university. Business Plus ESOL and Travel & Tourism Plus ESOL courses continue to be popular, and at the time of writing the College's ESOL Team are exploring opportunities to introduce new Plus ESOL courses in areas where there is an increased interest.</p> <p>In terms of part-time provision, NESCol's part-time ESOL open courses saw an increase in enrolments from 417 in AY2016-17 to 489 in AY2017-18. This was as a result of offering part-funded courses which helped to reduce costs. The same time period saw a decrease in fully funded programmes from employers in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire from 124 to 72. Although demand was greater, staff availability at key times in the year impacted the ability to run programmes. Courses offered range from beginners through to advanced level.</p> <p>The College continues to provide comprehensive information and support to potential ESOL students through targeted sessions providing information on progression routes and career options. These information sessions play a key role in helping the College to determine regional needs and levels of demand for ESOL provision.</p> <p><u>What needs to progress in AY2019-20</u></p> <p>Following its publication in AY2018-19, work to fully embed and monitor the impact of the College's new Mental Health Strategy will be undertaken.</p> <p>The College will ensure that its admissions process continues to improve access for learning for specific 'at risk' groups and that NESCol's enrolments and learner outcomes for these groups equal or exceed sector averages.</p> <p>A new approach to understanding unmet regional demand, along with partners such as schools, SDS and local employers, will be developed which analyses applications against offers made and enrolments, and identifies the destinations of learners who were not offered a place. This new approach will help to further improve the College's curriculum planning process.</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>Evaluation of the College's new information, advice and support model will continue with improvements implemented as appropriate. This review will help to support an increased focus on identifying strategies to tackle issues around the College's early withdrawal rate.</p>	
<p>Outcome: A more successful economy and society with well prepared and skilled students progressing into jobs with the ability, ideas, and ambition to make a difference</p>	
<p>Priority Outcome Four:</p> <p>A greater contribution will be made to regional economic growth and prosperity. This will be achieved through joint planning and close collaboration with employers, community planning partners, Opportunity North East (ONE) and the Regional Economic Strategy Group.</p> <p>Priority Outcome Five:</p> <p>Learners will be skilled, qualified and well prepared for the world of work. This will be achieved through the provision of a range of senior phase vocational pathways. A revised approach to employer engagement will be developed and a full review of the current provision of work experience for all students will be undertaken.</p> <p>These Priority Outcomes will be achieved through the College's approach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the Young Workforce • Employer engagement • Delivering apprenticeship opportunities • Use of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund • The regional alignment of the College curriculum to skills • Student engagement • Use of student satisfaction data. <p><u>Developing the Young Workforce</u></p> <p>The College has well-established partnerships with each of its local authority partners and university partners. These links exist to provide a meaningful vocational training and skills development for young people as part of their school curriculum, while facilitating seamless transition throughout the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence on to meaningful post-school and post-college destinations. The Developing Young Workforce (DYW) recommendations are clear for schools and colleges, and ensure that all young people have the opportunity to engage in purposeful work-related learning while at school.</p> <p>The College had a well-established DYW Regional Collaborative Group which comprised of senior officials from the College, both local Universities, the two Local Authorities, SFC, SDS and SQA, and this group worked collaboratively together to ensure that all 39 recommendations of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young workforce were being given the appropriate focus in Region. At the</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by the College was 553.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, the volume of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>time of writing, the continuation of the DYW Regional Collaborative Group was being considered by the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP) group, jointly chaired by NESCol and SDS. The purpose of the RLSP is to ensure, through effective and strong partnership working, that the skills requirements of individuals and employers are fully met and that the skills system contributes to improved performance and productivity in the North East of Scotland.</p> <p>The RLSP will provide a strategic forum for partners to identify and discuss key issues relating to skills in the North East and provide oversight of the implementation of the Regional Skills Strategy Aberdeen City & Shire and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a strategic forum for the identifying, discussing and agreeing collective action to address the skills challenges and opportunities in the north east of Scotland; • Identify the key evidence required to ensure that skills investment is informed by employer demand and learner needs, and take agreed actions to fill any identified gaps in evidence; • Provide strategic insight and challenge to ensure that skills investment is aligned with the needs of the regional economy and learners; • Support the implementation, progress and evaluation of work specific to the fulfilment of the key priorities in the Regional Skills Strategy Aberdeen City & Shire and associated action plan. <p>In AY2017-18, the College had 89 school pupils who undertook a Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programme across nine FA courses. This was a significant increase on AY2016-17 when 22 school pupils were studying for the FA. A 300% increase and a result of effective partnership working with schools, guidance staff and teachers, parents and pupils in raising the awareness and opportunities FAs have to offer. There are a number of factors at play that have supported the year on year growth in School College Links activity in the North East:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regional offer has been expanded in terms of breadth of subject and academic level in recent years to meet the needs of all Senior Phase pupils, irrespective of their first destination plans. The programme has been designed to develop essential transferable skills that will support entry to the employment market at whatever point that may be. • The regional offer is negotiated in collaboration with schools and Local Authorities and has been designed to address local needs taking into account Labour Market Intelligence, school and College resources, pupil profiles and the development of coherent career education pathways. • Applications are of a high volume, with good subsequent retention as the regional programme is negotiated within a timescale that allows most schools to incorporate the College options into the school options processes, so College courses are presented to pupils alongside the school based national qualifications. Within Aberdeen City there is a common timetable that allows pupils to select a College course as one of their 5 or 6 National Qualifications, and within Aberdeenshire timetables in most schools have been adjusted to support pupil access to College courses without having to miss too much school based course delivery. • Many courses have more applicants than available places, so selection measures are implemented – this in turn supports improved retention as there is an added value attributed to the College learning experience. • Both Local Authorities fund transport to College based School College Link courses – this supports continued engagement and positive retention, and removes equity issues. The centralised funding of transport is a critical element in ensuring success of the regional School-College Links activity. • Marketing and promotion activities include attendance at and involvement with a large number of in school events and 	<p>studying vocational qualifications delivered by the College was 2,347- a proportion of 1.7%. This proportion will be expected to increase to 2.4% in AY2019-20.</p> <p>In AY2017-18, the proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully completing a vocational qualification delivered by the College was 51.3% for FT FE and 72.8% for PT FE. For AY2019-20 the target proportions are 60% for FE and 75% for HE.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>activities. The profile of SPVP courses is raised through in school information activities with whole year groups and with entire cohorts of parents through parental engagement events. This breaks down traditional perceptions of School-College Links activity, generates parental interest and engagement, which in turn increases pupil participation and retention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of our 29 schools have between 30 and 70 pupils engaged with either SPVP's or Level 4 certificated courses excluded from the SPVP data, but also designed to develop the young workforce. Very positive partnerships and relationships exist at all levels to support this engagement and facilitate pupil access to the provision. • It has been noted that there was very high demand for Level 4 Vocational programmes and a number of pupils for whom this activity could be beneficial were unsuccessful in securing the places they applied for. This will be addressed in the AY2018-19 curriculum offer through expansion of the range of Level 4 opportunities – albeit they won't be included in the SPVP data set. <p>During the planning period, the College is seeking to increase the levels of young people undertaking FA's in key subject areas including established frameworks in Engineering, Care, Computing, Business and Creative Industries. In addition, new frameworks will be offered in Accountancy, Civil Engineering, Laboratory Skills, and Food and Drink to help meet the demands of the region. As a result, the College is planning to offer an ambitious target of just over 200 places across both Local Authorities. Through its strong partnership with RGU, the College will work collaboratively in mapping the FA in either Computing or Care with the Graduate Level Apprenticeship.</p> <p>The College has strong support structures in place to support the ongoing developments of DYW that supports the development of high quality senior phase vocational pathways while engaging with employers. A dedicated School Liaison Team actively engages with all 29 schools across the region, and is well supported by a DYW Administrator who is funded through the FA contracts agreed with SDS. The College also has a dedicated Employer Engagement Manager, predominately in the Engineering sector raising the awareness of Modern Apprenticeships MA's]. This supports the College through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing levels of young people undertaking Foundation Apprenticeships in key subject areas as identified in the Regional Skills Assessment, by working in partnership with AGCC, key employers and the Local Authorities to secure high quality work-based learning experiences and work-placement opportunities that will enhance their learning experience. • A regional approach in identifying CPD for College staff as well as schoolteachers in curriculum areas where there are skills gap e.g. IT has been identified within the region where there is insufficient capacity in the delivery of a full IT curriculum in schools. A mutually arranged CPD provision will allow for development in both sectors to increase capacity for curriculum delivery. • Actively promoting opportunities to employers and young people which will address gender imbalances existing within certain occupational areas and will capitalise on the existing successes of the College in developing, in partnership with companies such as Shell, SCORE Europe and Schlumberger, initiatives designed to get 'Girls into Engineering'. In addition, the College will seek to create a greater awareness for employers and young people of careers that have traditionally seen an under-representation of specific genders i.e. care and automotive. • Building on its already strong and well-established relationships with partner Local Authorities, schools and young people to develop and create greater awareness of the variety vocational pathways to employment available via the Senior Phase, Foundation Apprenticeships through to Modern Apprenticeships and Graduate/Advanced Apprenticeships. • Actively engaging with local employers in order to promote Foundation Apprenticeships more widely along with other College-based 	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>vocational opportunities.</p> <p>In considering ways to support DYW through School-College links there are opportunities to link in with younger years in schools to build aspiration and motivation to consider future employment opportunities. To this end the College has had initial discussions with RGU to identify ways of linking in with their Northern Stars programme which engages with S1 and S2 pupils at Northfield Academy. Opportunities also exist for College staff to engage with pupils in Primary 7 and S1 and S2 across the region to start the process of thinking about employment opportunities and the value in developing the key employability skills to support progression to the workplace.</p> <p>Work Experience</p> <p>The College recognises that employers increasingly look for “job ready” employees, people who have had work experience or who have worked in a realistic work environment. Many learners are given the opportunity to undertake work experience that will help build on a series of personal skills that is more than just their classroom experience. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-of-the-art Hair and Beauty salons give students the opportunity to work with real clients and public, across all programme levels. This provides a realistic work environment for students to gain valuable, hands-on professional experience. • The College’s restaurant facilities are equipped with multiple large kitchens, giving students the chance to get learn culinary skills using a range of different types of cooking equipment. These training kitchens are linked with the restaurants, where food prepared and cooked by our students is served up to the public, NESCol staff and students. • Students on the Events Management programme plan events throughout the academic year as part of their course. <p>More emphasis will be placed on work placements for all full-time programmes. The College will carry out an audit at the end of AY2018-19 to ensure that our work experience activities comply with the SFC’s publication “Work Placement Standard for Colleges”.</p> <p>In liaison with employer partners, the College has continued to secure further work experience opportunities for learners for whom this was not a mandatory element of their course. At the time of writing, 549 companies were available for NESCol student work placements with X. In AY2018-19 it is anticipated that similar levels of full-time students are expected to undertake some form of work placement experience activity as part of their programme. This includes external placements, real work experience, coaching, simulation, volunteering, and the suite of Foundation Apprenticeships where there is significant work-based learning opportunities for those school pupils moving into year two of the programme.</p> <p>The College will also continue to ensure that opportunities for the development of learners’ employability and enterprise skills are included in programmes of study irrespective of curriculum area. Other desirable preparatory skills for employment will also be encouraged through the promotion of volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Employer Engagement</p> <p>NESCol’s new Business Development Strategy was formally approved by the Regional Board’s Curriculum & Quality Committee in October 2018 with the primary objectives of increasing non-SFC income, commerciality and employer engagement opportunities. The downturn in the oil and gas industry has had a significant impact on NESCol’s income. This has, in part, prompted the College to implement a new</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>strategy which identifies opportunities to increase income from existing or new, non-SFC sources.</p> <p>The Business Development Strategy seeks to raise the profile of commercial activity to an equal level with full-time and part-time programmes and to promote employer engagement within all faculty areas. In addition to employer engagement, the Strategy will also promote College relationships with several employer membership bodies including the Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC), the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) and the Fraserburgh Development Trust. The College also continues to work closely with other bodies, including ESP; OPITO; ECITB; CITB; HABIA; SMTA; SNIPEF and MCA to support the emerging training and skills needs of a wide range of industries both regionally and nationally.</p> <p>The Moray East Windfarm and the proposed Moray West Windfarm projects are specifically highlighted as strategic opportunities within the document. NESCol's partnership approach with the Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners and Aberdeenshire Council has been and will continue to be instrumental in securing the long-term operation and maintenance activity for Fraserburgh and supporting the development and implementation of these projects will be particularly beneficial to the College.</p> <p>The Scottish Maritime Academy (SMA) is the College's nautical centre of excellence serving the needs of the fishing, merchant navy and energy sectors, and is an approved centre for MCA, AMERC, RYA and Seafish courses. The Academy is seen as one of Scotland's premier maritime education and training providers. Maritime activity is of critical importance to the regional economy, with significant investment in the local ports planned over the next few years. Excellent relationships exist with the main shipping companies and organisations such as Scottish Fishermen's Federation, Seafish Industry Authority and the Maritime Coastguard Agency. Over the last 5 years, staff at SMA have worked with various employers including Peterhead Port Authority, ASCO (logistics) and Vroon Offshore, to develop company specific provision tailored to meet specific skills shortages e.g. bridge resource management and ship handling. In 2017, the SMA developed a new programme in Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) training and is the only provider in Scotland to offer this particular programme. New recent developments also include Approved Engine Course 2 (AEC2) which has now been approved by MCA for delivery, with 2 cohorts being completed and further demand evident. The AEC1 and AEC2 programmes are key components of the overall Small Vessel Engineering programme which industry has been encouraging us towards. Delivery of the next stage of Small Vessel Engineering is being planned for spring 2019. The SMA also continues to look for international opportunities through partners which can be supported locally. Distance learning seems the most likely opportunity to emerge and some early discussions on this front are taking place. Despite the adverse economic climate, Shell UK continues to support College activity with its sponsorship of the Shell Engineering Scheme (a 2-year technician training programme). In AY2018-19, NESCol adapted the technician programme towards mechanical engineering where Shell has greater skills gaps. Looking forward, the College expects the programme to switch between electrical and mechanical according to skills demands. The College continues to work successfully with Shell in addressing aspects of equality and diversity within the oil, gas and energy industry, including sponsorship of 'Girls into Energy' programmes, run by the College, for regional schools.</p> <p>The College's Employer Engagement Manager (EEM) continues to actively engage with employers in the promotion of Modern Apprenticeships and sponsored programmes. As well as overseeing the effective running of SDS contracts, the EEM is also tasked with ensuring that employers and their staff experienced the highest levels of customer service. Since commencing, the EEM role continues to be instrumental in securing Modern Apprenticeship contracts with additional places being requested (and awarded) by SDS each year.</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The Regional Economic Strategy Group (which includes NESCol) has developed a revised Regional Skills Strategy for the North East of Scotland. The Strategy will lead to more coherent approaches evolving between partners in order to ensure that there is, regionally, greater and more targeted employer engagement; improved development of partnership working; targeted approaches for meeting the workforce planning requirements of regional employers; the identification and support of potential employment growth areas for the North East economy including care, health, tourism and energy and support for the eventual upturn in the oil and gas sector.</p> <p><u>Oil and Gas Employers</u></p> <p>Oil and gas remains the dominant employing sector in North East Scotland, despite the downturn with around 120,000 less jobs across the supply chain than there were 5 years ago. NESCol continues to maintain relationships with oil and gas employers and to support the emerging upturn of the sector mainly through its Employer Engagement Manager, although this contact is now expanding through the implementation of the new Business Development Strategy and the promotion of the College's employer portfolio aligned to the skills agenda through Modern Apprenticeships and other programmes.</p> <p>Strong links continue with Shell UK who have renewed their Technicians' Scheme for AY2018-19 with another 12 technicians joining the programme and eight classes from Aberdeenshire secondary schools taking up the opportunity to participate in Shell's 'Girls into Energy' programme. Shell also sponsors a S2 Skills competition which helps to highlight STEM opportunities and encourage associated subject choices. As well as the Aberdeenshire schools participating in 'Girls in Energy', six Aberdeen City schools are participating in AY2018-19 for the first time. The College will use this opportunity for the promotion of further 'Girls in Energy' activity for AY2019-20 and in turn will continue to coordinate the programme along with Fife College.</p> <p>The College also continues to work closely with the two local universities and these effective partnerships have developed a series of detailed pathways showing how students can progress from secondary school, through College and onto university - North East Scotland Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Pathways. These maps are highly informative for parents and careers advisers and help to inform subject and career choices. The combined capacity of the three institutions continues to help drive economic growth through the Aberdeen City Region Deal and the aspirations and priorities of ONE.</p> <p><u>Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships</u></p> <p>The College aspires to grow its Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme both in terms of breadth and volume but recognises the challenging economic circumstances in which it operates and aligns activity to areas of regional employer demand. Labour market intelligence, regional skills assessments and ongoing employer engagement activities will enable the College to identify areas of unmet demand and will inform the College's tendering process for MA places. In AY2016-17 SDS awarded the College with 125 MA places, 124 in AY2017-18 and 183 in AY2018-19 (162 originally awarded and an additional 21 added on).</p> <p>In AY2018-19 the College has been offered 96 places in engineering, 25 administration, 19 automotive, 16 hairdressing, 18 health and social care, five in Management (a new framework for NESCol in AY2018-19 and four in transport & logistics. Some places have been swapped in the current year to meet industry demands. 61 additional apprentices were added to the NESCol portfolio following the liquidation of ITCA in November 2017.</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the number of starts for contracted apprenticeships (e.g. in CITB, SECTT) was 1,300. For AY2019-20, the target for this group is 1,320.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>In AY2019-20 the College will seek modest growth in engineering, automotive, admin and similar numbers in the remaining frameworks. The terms and conditions of the tender (once published) and the College's existing contract performance will determine what NESCol is ultimately awarded.</p> <p>During AY2018-19 the College trained 1,35027 apprentices (includes SDS funded MAs, sponsored students on a MA programme not administered through NESCol, and MAs funded through other industry bodies) on a variety of full and part-time programmes. Relationships with employers generally remain positive and effectively managing customer relationships remains a primary focus in terms of growing non-SFC funded activities.</p> <p>NESCol's Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) portfolio will grow again in AY2019-20 with 211 places now being offered across <u>all</u> available frameworks (with the exception of Financial Services (where the industry has particular difficulties in offering placements for school pupils due to data protection)). These include: Social Services & Healthcare; Social Services Children & Young People; Civil Engineering; IT: Software Development; IT: Hardware/System Support; Engineering; Business Skills; Creative Digital Media; Scientific Technologies and Accountancy. In partnership with RGU, the College will also continue to support the development of Graduate Apprenticeships.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Levy continues to fund the three Apprenticeship programmes and since September 2017, the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) has also been offered. This fund sees £1.1m being allocated for employers in the North East of Scotland for delivery by NESCol. The fund offers Levy payers in the region up to £10k (in AY2017-18) and £15k (in AY2018-19) for developmental training. FWDF is an essential catalyst in the development of employer relationships and the implementation of NESCol's Business Development Strategy. In AY2017-18, £701k worth of training was contractually committed by employers for delivery commencing by end of September 2018. With employers now familiar with the requirements and possibilities around the use of the Fund, take up in AY2018-19 and beyond is expected to be much closer to the regional allocation of £1.1m.</p> <p>Regional Alignment</p> <p>Over the course of AY2017-18 the College continued to become more involved in, and more central to, the activities of the Regional Economic Strategy Group (RESG). The College's partners within the RESG include Opportunity North East, Scottish Enterprise, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Skills Development Scotland, University of Aberdeen, RGU, NESTRANS and Visit Scotland.</p> <p>The Group's main purpose is to co-ordinate the communications, action plans and resources that support of the delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). In addition, the Group also monitor progress towards the completion of the Strategy objectives which relate principally to four key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investment in Infrastructure ('Vibrant built environment for life, learning and work'); 2. Innovation ('NES reputation for enterprise, innovation and world class solutions'); 3. Inclusive Economic Growth ('A skilled workforce for the future'); 4. Internationalisation ('NES: a location of choice for investment, business and skills'). 	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The College's contribution to the delivery plan for the RES relates predominantly to the area of 'Inclusive Economic Growth' which specifically focuses on areas which aim to assist the economic development of the region. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills: Vocational learning, training and apprenticeships; • School links: Attainment levels and positive destinations; • Skills for key sectors: Oil and gas, food and drink, tourism and life sciences; • Regeneration: Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIP) and Locality Plans; • Addressing regional skills shortages: development of a Regional Skills Strategy. <p>The College has consolidated its position within the RESG as a lead and core partner, particularly in the development of the Regional Skills Strategy (RSS). This Strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address the skills needs of a changing North East economy; • guide the repositioning of the skills system, including education, to support the transition and rebalancing of the regional economy; • identify common priorities, with clear roles and responsibilities, to ensure effective and efficient responses to the challenges ahead; • set out a common view and vision on shared priorities, in particular reflecting the Regional Economic Strategy focus (including the Aberdeen City Region Deal); • help make the case for better focussing existing activity and identify where additional action is required; • seek to reduce duplication and silo working and promote strong partnership working. <p>Whilst the College has identified activities across all the 4 themes, its main involvement relates to theme 3 ('Repositioning the Skills System') which involves activities related to the realignment of the regional skills system, the expansion of work-based learning and the enhancement of links to employer-education. Specifically, the College has begun to address the RSS requirements through its developing Apprenticeship Family offer; its effective delivery, and expansion, of Modern Apprenticeships (MAs); its partnership working activities with RGU, and its approach to aligning its curriculum offer to the workforce development needs of key employers e.g. NHS Grampian.</p> <p>In seeking to drive forward the ambitions of the RSS the College, in conjunction with SDS, co-chairs a newly formed Regional Learning and Skills Partnership which would provides a 'home' for the RSS as well as an opportunity for key Regional partners to discuss, develop and implement learning and skills approaches which address the skills, learner journey and DYW priorities of the region.</p> <p>The College has also become more centrally involved in the Community Planning activities of both Aberdeen City (Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership (ACPP). Progress towards producing Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) and Locality Plans has been more obvious in CPA, which has seen a greater degree of connectivity to the ambitions of the Regional Economic Strategy Group and the Regional Skills Strategy. For example, the College has become a lead partner within the 'Aberdeen Prospers' Group of CPA which oversees inclusive economic growth opportunities within the City. The College delivers to these aims through its skills development, DYW and Apprenticeship Family activities.</p> <p>The College is also involved within the 'Prosperous People' Group of CPA which seeks to ensure that children within the City are respected,</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>included and achieving. In order to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to this particular CPA ambition the College continues to explore ways in which it can grow its already well-established schools-links offer. It is also exploring, through locality planning approaches, opportunities to provide targeted vocational training opportunities for leaving school and residing in areas of economic and social deprivation. And in furthering the College's commitment to successful partnership working, the College's Vice Principal (Access, Outcomes & Partnerships) now acts as vice chair of the CPA's Integrated Children's Services Board.</p> <p>After a somewhat slower start, the work of ACPP, and the activity of the College and other partners therein, is gaining more traction. The College is, in partnership, working towards addressing the key themes identified within the three Aberdeenshire LOIPs, namely 'Changing Aberdeenshire's Relationship with Alcohol'; 'Reducing Child Poverty' and 'Connected and Cohesive Communities'. Further, the College now has a more influential presence on ACPP groups including membership of its Board as well as the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) Groups for Tackling Child Poverty and Connected and Cohesive Communities.</p> <p><u>Online/Blended Learning</u></p> <p>NESCol's online/blended learning service has existed and evolved over many years, supporting (mainly) work-based learning both in region and more broadly across Scotland. Provision (including administration, tutor support and quality assurance) is delivered exclusively by NESCol staff, but with marketing support and resources provided by third parties who have been contracted through competitive tenders. NESCol is one of two Colleges in Scotland currently delivering activity through this type of service model.</p> <p>NESCol's approach to online/blended learning aligns very well with each of the College's Strategic Themes - delivering programmes to meet demand in a highly accessible manner to companies and individuals who are often the least able to access or afford continual professional development. External verification reports regarding this type of provision continue to be very positive, providing assurance that quality remains at the forefront of programme design and delivery.</p> <p>NESCol has invested over many years in building the infrastructure and operations associated with the delivery of education and skills training via online/ blended delivery modes. By its nature, the demand for this provision is not limited to the immediate locality of the College with many employers operating nationally and seeking cpd solutions which are consistent across their workforces.</p> <p>In addition to supporting the Scottish Government's ambitions in relation to the digital agenda, and their economic and labour market strategies, access to education and skills training, for all ages and equalities remains a key priority for the Scottish Government. Online learning is essential for servicing Scotland's more rural populations who otherwise would face significant difficulties accessing high quality education and skills training. The development of learning platforms, online content and related digital expertise also increasingly adds value to NESCol's core provision as the College moves towards digital and blended approaches to learning and teaching.</p> <p>The College believes that its distance learning activity supports regional and national work based candidates and employers, and ensures that NESCol students and staff and some of the region's and Scotland's most vulnerable sections of society are not disadvantaged. As the economy of North East Scotland continues to recover this service model provides flexibility to respond quickly to reprioritise areas of provision to support that recovery. The College has always focused its efforts towards regional provision, with the caveat that employer</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>demand, especially for the care sector, often takes NESCol beyond its natural regional boundaries. Following discussions with the SFC regarding the level and funding of distance learning activity NESCol currently delivers through a third party, the College is reviewing its approach to this type of delivery. At the time of writing, the College is exploring a number of scenarios to ascertain if its third party distance learning activity could be reallocated to provision that supports regional priorities and/or the Scottish Government's upskilling agenda. In the event that the change of SFC policy relating to the funding of distance learning results in an excess of credits being allocated to the region, the College will negotiate with the SFC an appropriate approach to the transition.</p> <p>Student Engagement</p> <p>The College is committed to providing students with a range of meaningful involvement and enhancement opportunities that can be recognised as impacting upon, influencing and enriching their overall College experience. The Strategy summarises the key mechanisms used by the College to engage with students and to capture critical feedback. A Student Engagement Action Group, comprised of both College staff and Students' Association (SA) representatives, has also been established to identify and implement strategies that support the key elements and principles of the Student Engagement Framework for Scotland. The Group also supports the ambitions of both the SA and the College as documented within the new Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>A key mechanism for capturing student feedback to enhance the learner experience are the annual First Impressions, and Student Satisfaction and Engagement Surveys. Feedback captured from the surveys is used as part of the College's approach to improvement planning i.e. course level action plans to address areas of low satisfaction.</p> <p>Work undertaken to strengthen the College's approach to student engagement in partnership with the Students' Association, including improved Class Rep training and ongoing support, has in turn led to Course Committee Meetings and Peer-Led Reviews being dynamic platforms for students to share their views and to influence learning and teaching approaches at NESCol. Students are also invited to provide feedback as part of the College's lesson observation process.</p> <p>The AY2018-19 First Impressions Survey asked students to comment on the question: "I was informed about the Students' Association at induction". From the 4,195 respondents, 88.75% provided a positive response - this is 3% increase in comparison to the previous year. To the question, "I am aware of how the Students' Association can support me" 82.69% responded positively which is a 5% increase in comparison to the previous year. Since the beginning of AY2017-18, the SA has actively sought to address the issues raised and increase its presence and visibility across the main College centres.</p> <p>A re-positioning of the SA office in the Aberdeen City Campus and an increased presence at the Aberdeen Altens Campus is continuing to have a positive impact in terms of raising the profile of the SA and their events and campaigns. Increasing engagement from the wider student body has significantly improved in recent years but the SA remain motivated to improve as much as possible and are currently reviewing key methods of communication to widen their reach. In AY2018-19 this has included the publication to both staff and students of an annual calendar of SA events and initiative to increase the number of student clubs and societies run by students for students, with support provided by the SA.</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience, were: Full-time: 94.9%, Part-time: 95.7%, Distance Learning 100%.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The operational activities of the SA continue to thrive, with the new Partnership Agreement as a key driver. SA policies and procedures in support of student engagement activities are being reviewed to ensure there is clarity and consistency of implementation. Work with national agencies such as NUS Scotland and SPARQs also continues to support SA and College student engagement initiatives.</p> <p>What needs to progress in AY2019-20</p> <p>During the planning period, it is thought that the College's full-cost recovery and commercial (i.e. non-government-funded) activity will be particularly important in meeting the needs of employers as the limitations and constraints of funding rules do not apply.</p> <p>As the energy sector in the North East of Scotland looks towards recovery, the College will need to identify the best ways to respond in order to meet changed industry needs, including any emerging skills gaps.</p> <p>The College will undertake an audit of its work placement provision in line with the SFC's 'Work Placement Standard for Colleges. This will ensure that every NESCol student benefits from work experience, helping to develop their skills and learning and ensuring that they are work-ready.</p>	
<p>Outcome: High-performing institutions – a coherent system of high- performing, sustainable institutions with modern, transparent and accountable governance arrangements</p>	
<p>Priority Outcome Six:</p> <p>Effective governance arrangements will ensure continuous improvement in the quality of governance and will promote equality and diversity. This will be achieved through maintaining a strong focus on the effectiveness of the Regional Board through the operation of the Governance Steering Group and a range of evaluative processes with operate annually. The Board will maintain a strong role in the promotion of equality and diversity through the Board Equality and Diversity Champion.</p> <p>Priority Outcome Seven:</p> <p>The principles of sustainability will be embedded in the College's planning cycle with particular emphasis on ensuring financial sustainability and demonstrating best practice in estates planning and achieving environmental targets. This will be achieved through robust planning processes, matching available financial, accommodation, HR and ICT resources to the College curriculum, whilst providing best value in the use of public funds.</p> <p>These Priority Outcomes will be achieved through the College's approach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing its impact on the environment • Financial resilience • Progressing its Estates Development Strategy, in particular backlog maintenance • Maintaining high standards of governance • Providing leadership in equality and diversity. 	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p><u>Leadership in Environmental and Social Sustainability</u></p> <p>The College recognises its responsibility to address its own environmental impact and has in place an Environmental Sustainability Strategy. The College also recognises its role in leading behavioural change to promote social sustainability. NESCol is a signatory of the Universities and Colleges Climate Commitment for Scotland and an active member of the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC). It has recently signed to the EAUC SDG Accord, committing to the principles of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>NESCol holds the British Standards Institution ISO14001 Environmental Management Standard and ISO50001 Energy Management Standard, demonstrating our commitment to best practice in these areas. Achievement of the Standards enables the College to better respond to Government and sector-led carbon reduction programmes, minimising the risk to future operations, and adopting a formal structure to manage energy consumption and achieve greater energy savings. The systematic approach to reviewing and measuring activities engages staff and students further in helping identify and respond to energy saving opportunities and begin the process of behavioural change to ensure a more sustainable society.</p> <p>The College has developed a Carbon Management Plan, using guidelines set by Resource Efficient Scotland in partnership with the SFC and the EAUC. The College is committed to reducing carbon emissions whilst continuously improving the learning experience for students and the working environment for staff and this is demonstrated by its aim to reduce the CO₂ emissions from its activities by 15% from an AY2010-11 baseline of 4,095.91 tonnes by July 2020. This reduction will be achieved through a number of projects, centred on changes to the College's estate and by raising the awareness of staff and students.</p> <p>The College has already completed significant projects to reduce environmental impact and embed sustainability, including changing oil boilers to gas and the overclad of the Tower and East Blocks at its Aberdeen City Campus. During the planning period, work will be ongoing to meet the requirements of the Standards' continual improvement aspect. The College will also continue to monitor performance against targets in the areas of energy and water use, waste and transport using its Environmental Dashboard, a system of monthly recordings and readings. Planned activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to improve the monitoring of energy consumption; • Increasing efficient lighting throughout all campuses; • Reducing business mileage, and reducing fleet vehicle emissions by 15%; • Increasing the overall amount of waste diverted from landfill to 80%; • Reducing electricity, gas, oil and water use by 15%; • Embedding sustainability within the EREP process; • Campaign to reduce plastic across the College. <p><u>Financial Stability</u></p> <p>The College continues to plan its resourcing to ensure financial stability and that it complies with the Financial Memorandum with SFC and</p>	<p>In AY2017-18, the gross carbon footprint (TcO₂E) was 3,440.00. In AY2019-20, the targeted gross carbon footprint is 3,701.91.</p>

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>all other regulatory requirements. Careful financial planning and management and a commitment to efficiency of service delivery and corporate functions are required in the context of constrained public funding and the public sector operating environment. The Regional Board has approved a five-year Financial Forecast which will enable it to meet the significant external challenges it faces, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General price inflation; • National bargaining and pay harmonisation for lecturing and support staff; • Increased employer pension contributions for lecturers and support staff; • Significantly increased requirement for property maintenance, in the absence of capital investment; and • Continuing difficult trading conditions in the local economy. <p>To achieve a stable position, the College will be required to make further efficiencies and consider the way that all services are delivered to learners, employers and other stakeholders.</p> <p><u>Estates</u></p> <p>Last year, the College reported that it was seeking support from SFC for its Estates Masterplan which would have ensured fit-for-purpose facilities to support learning across the region, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Campus – remain, refurbish and new build • Aberdeen Altens Campus – remain, refurbish and new build • Aberdeen Clinterty Campus – vacate • Fraserburgh Campus – remain and maintain • SMA Peterhead – remain and maintain. <p>The College was informed in May 2018 that it had not been successful in gaining this support so is currently in the process of developing an alternative Estates Strategy.</p> <p>The Estates Masterplan would have addressed the College’s significant backlog maintenance challenge, estimated by a detailed survey in 2016 as being £50M. As an alternative, the College is now utilising its own funding, together with the element of SFC funding allocated in support of “very high priority maintenance” to address the highest-priority areas from that survey, including significant spend on M&E works.</p> <p>Alongside this, the College continues to seek a purchaser for its surplus sites.</p> <p><u>Governance</u></p> <p>In June 2018, the Regional Board approved a new Strategic Plan for the College covering the period 2018-2021. A suite of Strategies to support delivery of the Plan were also adopted. During AY2017-18 the Regional Board also refreshed its approach to risk management and adopted a new Strategic Risk Register aligned to the Strategic Goals detailed in the new Strategic Plan.</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p>The Regional Board's Governance Steering Group supports the Board in maintaining high standards of governance. This is achieved by undertaking a role in ensuring that the Board fully complies with the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges, and by considering governance issues that arise centrally or in other college regions and any possible related implications or considerations for NESCol. In addition to the Governance Steering Group undertaking a role in ensuring compliance with the Code, the Board's Audit & Risk Committee undertake an annual review of the College's governance arrangements in line with the Code's requirements.</p> <p>In terms of the clear ownership of institutional financial health, the Board and each of its Committees have well defined Terms of Reference with the Board's remit clearly stating its role to "Safeguard the financial and institutional sustainability of the College by ensuring that funds are used as economically, efficiently and effectively as possible, and that effective monitoring arrangements are in place." The Board's Finance & Resources Committee has overall responsibility (within the Financial Memorandum between the College and the SFC)) for the direction and oversight of the College's financial affairs.</p> <p>The Regional Board of North East Scotland College is committed to fostering a culture of equality and diversity. Board Members are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, and have undertaken Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) training on 'Promoting equality in a new landscape: the role of the governing body' and 'Unconscious Bias'. To further demonstrate its commitment to equality and diversity the Board appointed its first Equality and Diversity Champion in June 2016. The key objectives of the role include helping to ensure that the Board observes good practice in regard to equality and diversity, and supporting the Board to further embed equality and diversity in its strategic and decision-making processes.</p> <p>In October 2017, the Regional Board signed up to the Scottish Government's Partnership for Change Pledge. The Pledge asks public, private and third sector organisations to set a voluntary commitment for gender balance on their boards of 50/50 by 2020. The Board has reaffirmed its commitment to take positive action in recruitment. Through the adoption of a Succession Planning Policy for Board Members and the subsequent appointment of new Board Members at the beginning of AY2018-19, the Board improved its gender balance, 4 female non-executive Members compared to 7 male non-executive Members, and seeks to improve this further following a further recruitment process planned for early in 2019.</p> <p>Cyber Resilience</p> <p>To deliver the Scottish Government's Cyber Resilience Public Sector Action Plan, NESCol is undertaking a carefully planned approach led by its IT InfoSec Lead and partners at the HEFESTIS CISO Service. At the time of writing the College had undertaken a significant amount of work to improve the College's cyber resilience, including: mandatory staff training; achievement of the Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation; a review and update of key College IT policies; Improved collaboration and partnership working with CISP, SGCRU, Police Scotland, JISC, NCSC, and the RCISO Shared Service; implementation of NCSC Web Check (website configuration and vulnerability scanning service) and NCSC CNR (detection of network abuse events and vulnerable services; and implementation of Nessus Professional Application (vulnerability scanning tool). The College's three year Cyber Resilience Plan is focussed on three key themes: AY2018-19 – Compliance, AY2019-20 – Resilience; and AY2020-21- Design. Key activities under these themes include the creation of a best practice framework, and ISO27001 accreditation.</p>	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<p><u>What needs to progress in AY2019-20</u> In relation to environmental sustainability, work will be ongoing to meet the requirements of the continual improvement aspect of bsi ISO50001 and this will be reflected in external audits that will be carried out on a six-monthly basis.</p> <p>Work will continue on financial resilience measures to ensure the College's financial stability.</p> <p>The College will publish its new Estates Strategy and will start to plan to achieve the ambitions detailed within it. This will necessarily include identification of sources of income to fund its implementation.</p>	
Outcome: Greater innovation in the economy – a national culture of enterprise and innovation leading to a more productive and sustainable economy	
<p>Priority Outcome Eight:</p> <p>A College culture in which innovation can flourish and economic growth is supported will be developed and embedded. This will be achieved through partnership working with business, industry and the public sector to find innovative solutions.</p> <p>This Priority Outcome will be achieved through the College's approach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise and entrepreneurship • Relationships with partners • Innovation. <p><u>Enterprise and Entrepreneurship</u></p> <p>The College plays an active role in the enterprise and entrepreneurship landscape within the region and engages with a wide range of employers who work in collaboration with academic staff and students in setting projects or challenges that help develop enterprising mind-sets across all campuses. This engagement helps the College in building network opportunities to secure opportunities for staff and students that lead to the development of entrepreneurial and employability skills and experiences. In addition, NESCol has very good relationships with a range of agencies, such as Elevator, Bridge2Bridge and Scottish Enterprise, who support the College's entrepreneurship activities as well as support for students interested in starting their own business.</p> <p>The College has in place a number of approaches that support entrepreneurial activities spanning different subject disciplines and encourages collaborative practices including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong employer engagement where students are tasked with real-life client led briefs to undertake as part of their course. This challenges students through <i>learning by doing</i> and in some cases being assessed through their involvement and performance; • Increasing contact and links with employers and entrepreneurs through guest speakers, master workshops, work experience (widely defined), placements, volunteering, fundraising, performances, exhibitions, presentations, cross institutional competitions and visits; • Developing skills by students working in Hair and Beauty salons, the College's hospitality kitchens and restaurants, and the shop RecyCOL which generates almost £5,000 each year which goes on to benefit local charities; 	

Commitments, strategies and evidence of progress	Measure of progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-disciplinary participation in SilverNote Sound Enterprise; • Developing an increasing focus on career management through the learning journey; • In 2018/19 the College devised and credit rated a free standing unit, offered to all students, that provides a platform to create, develop and maintain networks where they can acquire or enhance the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and personal qualities required for life, learning and work (Developing Skills for Employability, Enterprise & Entrepreneurship, imprESs) • Supporting the development of digital skills through initiatives such as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD); encouraging professional use of social media platforms, recognising students as social influencers, and providing help and support through the student-led IT HelpZone Helpdesk. The student led IT HelpZone Helpdesk is now considered a vital service for students and staff. In AY2018-19, the Helpdesk received an average of 1,438 calls per month and distributed over 960 laptops to students. • Working in Partnership with RGU in introducing the Startup Accelerator programme to members of both RGU and NESCol. Additionally, there are a number of planned ongoing Innovation Workshops, Masterclasses and the Future of Work Seminars, open to staff and students of both organisations. <p>From AY2019-20 onwards. further developments for education entrepreneurial are being planned and these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New frameworks continue to be introduced that have a clear reference to collaborative project work where students are required to identify their own skills development. This includes: HN Music; HN Fashion Business; HN Media Analysis and Production. • The allocation of Digital Advisers into curriculum teams to support staff in acquiring new digital skills that will, amongst other things, support the development of entrepreneurial education programmes. • Providing relevant and innovative CPD opportunities for staff on delivering entrepreneurial activities and programmes. This also relates developing skills to appropriately tackle gender inequality by exposing and challenging industry related stereotypes and prejudices including those that may exist within enterprises and entrepreneurship. • Through our strong partnership with RGU, work collaboratively in sharing best entrepreneurial practice that will benefit all learners. In particular continued involvement with the new Entrepreneurship Hub for the region driven by RGU and ONE. The College will also continue to work closely with RGU to identify opportunities to participate in new areas of research for the University through staff placement opportunities and relevant innovation plans. <p><u>What needs to progress in AY2019-20</u> During AY2019-20, the College will develop approaches to innovation that enable it to benefit from any college-based funding streams that may become available.</p> <p>The College will also continue to strengthen its approach to employer engagement which will support the development of innovative solutions to business problems, particularly for SME's in our region.</p>	

Glossary

CDN	College Development Network
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
ECITB	The Engineering Construction Industry Training Board
EF	Employability Fund
FA	Foundation Apprenticeship
FE	Further Education
HABIA	Hair and Beauty Industry Authority
HE	Higher Education
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
MA	Modern Apprenticeship
NC	National Certificate
OGAS	The Oil and Gas Academy for Scotland
ONE	Opportunity North East
PDA	Personal Development Award
SA	Students' Association
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
SfW	Skills for Work
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SMTA	Scottish Motor Trade Association
SNIPeF	Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
UKCS	UK Continental Shelf

Appendix – Approaches to Increase Full-time Enrolments and to Improve Early Withdrawal for 2019-20 (Submitted to SFC March 2019)

Introduction

Further to recent discussions between North East Scotland College and the Scottish Funding Council regarding the continued difficulties the College is encountering in meeting the annual credit target, it has been agreed that the College and the SFC will work together to achieve the planned level of credit activity in 2019-2020.

The SFC has issued an indicative funding allocation for 2019-2020 to North East Scotland College which sets a credit target of **135,496** inclusive of 2,427 ESF funded credits. This is almost the same credit target as originally set for the College for 2018-2019. However the 18-19 target was subsequently reduced by 3,000 credits to a total target of **132,530** inclusive of 2,460 ESF funded credits.

In order to achieve the credit target set through the indicative funding allocation for 2019-2020, the College will need to deliver **2,966** credits more than in the current year.

Achieving the credit target

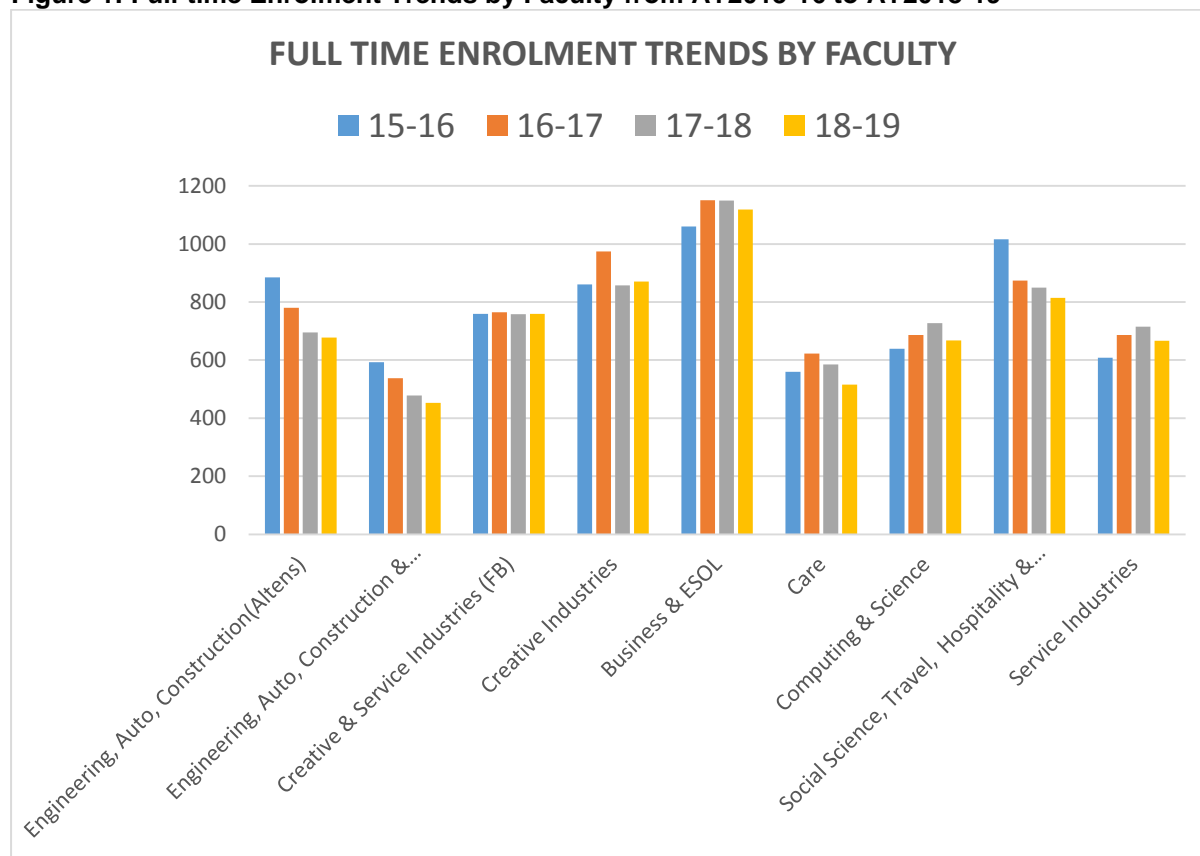
The ongoing challenge facing the College in relation to achievement of the credit target is linked to declining numbers of full-time enrolments over the past three years. This, combined with static early withdrawal rates, has reduced the number of credits earned by the College from full-time enrolments. As part of the review of historic achievement of the credit target the College has been considering full-time enrolment trends.

Four-year Full-time Enrolment Trends

Table 1: Full-time Enrolment Trends by Faculty from AY2015-16 to AY2018-19

FACULTY	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Trend 2017-18 to 2018-19	Trend 2015-16 to 2018-19
Engineering, Auto, Construction (Altens)	885	780	695	678	-2.4%	-23.4%
Business & Community Development	15	16	12	12	0.0%	-20.0%
Creative & Service Industries (FB)	759	765	758	759	0.1%	0.0%
Engineering, Auto, Construction & Computing (FB)	593	538	478	453	-5.2%	-23.6%
Business & ESOL	1,060	1,151	1,149	1,118	-2.7%	5.5%
Care	560	623	585	516	-11.8%	-7.9%
Creative Industries	861	974	857	871	1.6%	1.2%
Computing & Science	639	686	727	668	-8.1%	4.5%
Social Science, Travel, Hospitality & Learning Ops	1,016	874	849	814	-4.1%	-19.9%
Service Industries	608	686	715	667	-6.7%	9.7%
TOTAL	6,996	7,093	6,825	6,556	-3.9%	-6.3%

Figure 1: Full-time Enrolment Trends by Faculty from AY2015-16 to AY2018-19



Commentary

Overall, full-time enrolments have dropped by over 6% since AY2015-16. The decline has not been even, with some subject areas showing significant declines and others some modest rises over the period. However, only one team showed growth in AY2018-19 compared to the previous year - a modest 2% increase in Creative Industries.

The most noticeable decline has been in Engineering – principally advanced Mechanical Engineering (52% decline) – which has resulted in a decline in full-time enrolments of over 23% since AY2015-16 in both Altens and Fraserburgh Campuses. Automotive Engineering and Construction have remained steady over the period. The other most notable decline has been in Social Sciences, Travel/Events and Hospitality & Learning Opportunities. Social Science and Learning Opportunities have been steady whilst the decline has been in the Travel/Events & Hospitality Team. This has been influenced by the transfer of

Animal Care enrolments to SRUC in AY2016-17 (197 enrolments lost) but, aside from this, there has still been an 18% decline in this team since AY2016-17. Care has also been declining over the last 3 years, more specifically in Healthcare and, to a lesser extent in Social Care. Childcare has been steady over the period.

The Faculties of Service Industries; Business & ESOL and Computing & Science saw 3 year improvement trends turn into downturns in AY2018-19, although network computing remains strong and ESOL numbers are currently being maintained.

Factors Affecting Demand for Full-time Programmes

It is vital that the College is able to gain a better understanding of the factors that may be impacting on demand and it is therefore, a key recommendation of this report that consideration is given to commissioning a data research project to fully explore the recent recruitment trends. In the meantime, however, it is clear that the following factors may be having an impact:

- **The number of School Links courses now being offered is impacting on the number of FT FE applications that we are receiving**
 - With over 2,000 School Links places now available it is inevitable that many school pupils who would previously have come to College full-time will stay at school. With many schools not at capacity the number of pupils leaving school is lower than it once was.
- **The University widening access agenda and other ROA intensification targets are impacting on the number of HE applications that we are receiving**
 - Contextualised entry requirements and increased recruitment targets in areas such as Healthcare and Social Care are enabling potential students to access university with lower qualifications than before.
- **Unemployment is low in both Aberdeen City and Shire**
 - Unemployment in the city fell from 3.8% to 2.9% between 2016 and 2018, and with low levels of unemployment in the Shire, increasing numbers of people may be tempted to go directly into work.

Impact of declining numbers on credits

As can be seen from table two below, the number of credits claimed through full-time enrolments has declined between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

Table two: Credit earning enrolments comparison

Year	Full-Time Total	Full-Time Credit Earners	Average credits per earner	Credits	Notes
2017-2018	6704	6167	17.27	106,519	Audited figures
2018-2019	6592	6037	17.24	104,066	Live data as at February 2019
Difference	-112	-130		-2,453	
A target number of full-time enrolments generating credits has been set for 2019-2020 as detailed below					
2019-2020 (Forecast)	6900*	6350*	17.24	109,474	As per curriculum planning March 2019

In 2018-2019 there were 555 enrolled full-time learners who did not earn credits. These are broken down as follows:

466 early withdrawals

67 additional funded places students (RGU)

20 residing outwith Scotland

2 on 2 full-time programmes in one AY, withdrew then enrolled on Feb programmes

Securing the credit target for 2019-2020

The College has decided that the most effective route to securing future activity is to increase the number of credits allocated to full-time enrolments and as a result a strategy has been developed which aims to:

- Deliver a revised approach to marketing, admissions and recruitment
- Generate additional enrolments through new provision
- Deliver improvements in early withdrawal rates across the College.

Marketing and Admissions

Marketing

In early March 2019 the College launched a revised marketing campaign, building on the creation of a national campaign “Choose College”. This campaign targets school leavers, adult returners with family commitments, people looking to upskill for better employment prospects and those in work looking to improve their careers. In addition it targets those individuals who would like support while they are learning. The “Choose College – Choose NESCol” campaign has a wide coverage including TV, Radio, billboards, buses, local shopping venues and a wide range of social media approaches. The campaign will run initially through March, April and May. The College has invested £50,000 in this campaign, designed to increase awareness and to support increased applications and improved conversion to enrolments. An example of the images at the heart of the campaign is shown below:



Admissions

Following a significant review of College admissions processes in 2017-2018 the College has created a working group to monitor progress against admission targets and to take action throughout the admissions period. This group meets weekly between January and August and is led by the Vice Principal for Access, Outcomes and Partnership. Each of the three Directors of Learning are members of the group along with the Director of Student Access and Support and the Director of Marketing and Communication. In addition, the group is joined by the Director of Business Development and the Schools Liaison Manager. The group will:

- Consider live applications data by curriculum area and Faculty including number of interviews held, offers made and offers accepted.
- Consider progress against the Admissions timeline which sets deadlines for applications for returning students and target timescales for the completion of interviews and the issuing of offers
- Request additional marketing activity where required to generate additional applications
- Work in partnership with the schools liaison team to ensure that advice and guidance sessions held in schools are timely, appropriate and support young people to complete applications for college
- Work with the student funding team to ensure that funding information is delivered to applicants and that student funding applications are processed in a timely manner
- Identify any emerging barriers to admissions and ensure that all necessary resources are in place to facilitate the admissions process.

Recruitment Challenge

In line with forecasting for credit generation through full-time enrolments the College has set each faculty a 50+ recruitment challenge for 2019-2020. This strategy aims to increase full time enrolments from **6534** in 2018-2019 to **6931*** in 2019-2020 increase enrolments by:

- Utilising places which were not taken up in 2018-2019 and which led to spare capacity in some curriculum areas
- Understanding unmet demand by considering what programmes can be developed and offered to learners who do not meet the entry requirements for their programme of choice
- Understanding unmet demand by considering where courses are considered to be “full” due to a lack of physical or staffing resources
- Creating new programmes to refresh the curriculum offer where trend data shows declining interest in and demand for courses

The table below shows the specific targets and actions to increase recruitment for each of the College faculties:

Faculty Name	F/T Enrolments 18/19	Projected Enrolments 19/20	> Difference	How Are We Going To Do It?
Social Science, Tourism and Hospitality (GSTH)	808	853	45	Additional group from existing demand in HND Social Science (15); Growth from existing demand Access to Social Science, Arts & Education (12); New SVQ 3 course (growth in progression opportunities) in Learning Ops (8); New Bakery course in Hospitality (additional vocation option with current attractiveness) (10)
Computing & Science (GCTS)	698	753	55	New programme in Cyber Security and Games Development (to meet expected demand) (25); New option in HND Digital Design and Development (to meet expected demand)(15); New programme in HND Technologies in Business (development of skills for future business need) (15)
Engineering, Auto & Construction (AENC)	684	705	21	New course in general engineering to provide progression option (14) Using unfilled capacity through more targeted and improved marketing in current engineering programmes – electrical and mechanical to provide remaining balance (7).
Creative Industries (GCRI)	886	926	40	Targeted, bespoke marketing. Hosting subject specific events to increase applications. Maximise class numbers. Drama students will have a float at Torcher parade. Introduce Creative Photography & Digital Media SCQF L5 to support progression to L6.

Faculty Name	F/T Enrolments 18/19	Projected Enrolments 19/20	> Difference	How Are We Going To Do It?
Business & ESOL (GBUS)	1044	1143	99	Team is producing flyers in various languages & distributing them to increase applications to ESOL. This has proved moderately successful so we are aiming to run an additional class (BREXIT concerns to one side). Aiming to run an additional class <i>Prep for HN Business and/or Admin (numbers dependent)</i> . <i>Revised framework for Advertising & PR should appeal to more (it will include digital marketing)</i> . <i>Advertising: Discover Administration & Business for those who don't know what to apply for or what level to apply for. Increasing projections to maximise class numbers.</i>
Care (GCAR)	518	559	41	Targeted, bespoke marketing. <i>Advertising: Discover Care</i> to appeal to those who don't know which course/level to apply for. Hosting subject specific events and taster sessions. Increasing engagement with schools. We will offer a late start course again. The articulation into Y2 of the Social Work degree from our HNC Social Services will be widely publicised from February onwards.
Service Industries (GSVI)	697	710	13	Increased engagement with schools. Targeted marketing. Hosting subject specialist tasters. Running an additional course: <i>Uniformed Services (at behest of M&C)</i> . <i>The Faculty is producing promotional videos. Family friendly timetables will be included for 19/20.</i>

Faculty Name	F/T Enrolments 18/19	Projected Enrolments 19/20	> Difference	How Are We Going To Do It?
Engineering & Construction (FENC) - Fraserburgh	431	530	99	Added additional Construction Craft Christmas leavers' course and slightly increased class sizes where they were previously too low; Increased group sizes in mechanical manufacturing and maintenance where previous planned enrolments were too unambitious; Increased group sizes in measurement and Control where previous planned enrolments were too unambitious - this is speculative (high risk). New Shell course will be electrical so there will be additional demand here.
Creative & Service Industries (FCSI) - Fraserburgh	768	752	-16	Reduced group sizes in L2/3 hair & Beauty due to lower first year numbers. Slightly increased sport and uniformed services group sizes; New Christmas leavers' course added. Increased group sizes in creative industries as retention/throughflow of students should have improved. Reduction in the projected number of business, management and accountancy enrolments due to poor historic demand; Reduced planned enrolments for care courses due to demand and low first year numbers impacting on L5/6; Increased group sizes in hospitality and non-advanced social sciences where we believe there is capacity to increase numbers.
Totals	6534	6931*	397	

Improving Early Withdrawal Rates

The College has, as part of our ongoing approach to improving the outcomes for all learners, a clear priority to reduce the number of learners who leave programmes before they have completed the qualification for which they enrolled. A regular and thorough review of key performance indicators relating to Early Withdrawal, Further Withdrawal, Partial Success and Complete Success is a core part of our quality enhancement process.

In addition to the strong focus on ensuring successful outcomes, it is clear that the number of students leaving the College before the November census point, which triggers eligibility for funding, has a direct bearing on the number of credits the College can claim.

We can see from the figures above that in 2018-2019 466 learners who enrolled on College programmes left early. If we assume an average of 17.24 credits earned per learner this amounts to a loss of over 8,000 credits. An improvement of 2% in early withdrawal rates across the College would reduce the amount of credits lost by around 2,300.

The early withdrawal rate for the College as a whole remained static between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 at around 7%.

The College is strongly committed to working on a range of strategies to reduce early withdrawal, specifically:

- The further development and implementation of a whole-College model of support
- Specifically designed interventions driven through each faculty and curriculum area
- The use of effective curriculum design to support early engagement and early success for learners
- Improved processes around student funding applications and awards (bursaries) to enable students to access their funding support earlier.

Whole College Model of Support

Following an extensive review of the systems and services in place to deliver support to students a new whole-College model of support was created. A copy of the core document “Framework for supporting successful Students” can be found here

<https://nescol.interactgo.com/Utilities/Uploads/Handler/Uploader.ashx?area=composer&filename=Framework+for+Supporting+Students.pdf&fileguid=3761c3a7-8d9b-455b-8a40-9af412253976>.

The key features of the model are:

- A revised approach to academic tutoring and student referral
- The creation of multi-disciplinary student advice centres at each Campus
- The creation of a team of multi-disciplinary student support advisors and tutors based in each of the student advice centres.
- A model of commissioning for targeted additional support
- A College-wide approach to supporting students facing the challenges of poor mental health
- A revised approach to handling safeguarding
- A new approach to managing student discipline
- Revised approaches to managing attendance.

Faculty-based plans and interventions

Faculty	Actions
Social Science, Tourism and Hospitality (GSTH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved pre-entry advice and guidance • Improved use of academic tutor functions and attendance monitoring to develop class based action plans • Improved referral to student support services and early use of targeted in-class support
Computing & Science (GCTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of early monitoring, identification of at risk students and early intervention • Use of team meetings to support identification and access to targeted support for learners.
Engineering, Auto & Construction (AENC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of programmes of study and timetables to ensure early engagement with practical activities • Improve effectiveness of academic tutoring to identify referral and support opportunities leading to earlier intervention for students • Increased use of employer engagement, visits and activities to improve motivation for learners to continue in the industry • Creation of an SVQ Level 1 option to support learners not yet able to achieve at SVQ Level 2
Creative Industries (GCRI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised and improved pre-entry arrangements were established • Curriculum enhancement activities planned for early November to encourage learners to remain on programme • Academic Tutors and lead tutors follow-up quickly on at risk attendance patterns • Curriculum managers following up on wider issues of student support such as homelessness, health and welfare with appropriate referrals to student support services. • Dedicated support arrangements in place for learners with disabilities or who are care experienced
Business & ESOL (GBUS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional subject specific support sessions have been timetabled to support learners with challenging technical elements of programmes • Improved attendance tracking and referral for support • Academic tutoring working well and has improved consistency of support • Pre-entry advice and guidance has focused on managing expectations. • Improved induction has led to improved behaviours • Fewer withdrawals for financial reasons as support and access to bursaries has improved.
Care (GCAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content of some programmes has been reviewed and amended in response to student feedback • Increased engagement opportunities for learners to raise issues and experiences • Academic tutor support has improved • In-class support referrals have increased with 14 FE classes receiving in-class support • Reduction in class sizes and increased attendance hours for introductory FE courses • Further curriculum re-design is planned • External support from Education Scotland targeted in this area.
Service Industries (GSVI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised pre-entry process to increase awareness of expectations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved monitoring of student attendance and early intervention through academic tutoring • Further need to use targeted in-class support earlier in programmes • Improved use of projects, competitions and placements to increase motivation for learners.
Engineering & Construction (FENC) - Fraserburgh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective management of academic tutoring functions – particularly relating to behaviour and attendance • A rapid process for identifying “at-risk” students and referring these to the student support team • Revised programmes of study to ensure early engagement in practical activities • Strong focus on quality processes and use of programme delivery guidelines
Creative & Service Industries (FCSI) - Fraserburgh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic tutoring rolled out effectively across most groups – this will be reviewed where inconsistencies remain • Staff absence has had an impact and improved contingency planning is now in place • At risk students are quickly identifies and referred for additional support • In class support is targeted at key groups early in the year • Project based learning approaches have been particularly effective in Art and Design • A risk based approach has been developed particularly in relation to care experienced learners • Collaboration and communication within teams has been improved to share strategies to improve early withdrawal rates • A revised approach to supporting essential digital skills for learners early in their programme has been implemented.

Revised approaches to the management of bursary applications

In 2018-2019

- The Bursary application process was opened earlier than in previous years to ensure that returning students could apply before the end of term. In addition, new students were encouraged to apply using emails and social media campaigns.
- Weekly monitoring of applications was introduced to identify those students who had started but not submitted their applications. These students were then encouraged to attend a funding workshop or to seek support from the Student Advice Centre.
- Students were advised and supported to upload their own documents as part of the application process, to improve the speed of processing applications.
- Additional staff resource was provided to support the administration of the process to reduce the time between application and award.
- Applications were prioritised in accordance with the uploading of new documents to remove the need for students to wait in a queue to have their applications completed.
- The creation of a multi-skilled team within each of the student advice centres has improved advice to students and increased the efficiency of the processing of applications.
- Student funding drop in sessions continue to be held and are enabling students to access a wide range of financial advice in addition to support for bursary applications.

Monitoring and Reporting in line with College Planning Cycles

College Reporting

The College has a well-established cycle of reporting and monitoring by key management groups and structures and by the Regional Board. In 2018-2019 and moving into 2019-2020 this will be further enhanced by the introduction of a “90 day planning cycle” which will ensure that key data is shared at the most appropriate time to allow for timely intervention.

In relation to the activity provided in this report the following cycles apply:

Activity	Frequency	Management Group	Person Responsible
Achievement of credit target	Reports created weekly for Directors of Learner	Summary report to Wider Executive Group fortnightly and to Regional Board meeting at each meeting of the Board	Director of Planning and Directors of Learning
Curriculum planning activity for achievement of credit target for 2019-2020	Reports updated in accordance with the curriculum planning cycle and process between January and May	Progress is reported to the Wider Executive Group fortnightly. Reported to the Regional Board at each meeting in line with the development Regional Outcome Agreement	Director of Planning and Directors of Learning
Application numbers and progress towards admissions targets	Prepared weekly for the Admissions Working Group	Progress is reported to the Wider Executive Group fortnightly and to each meeting of the Regional Board	Directors of Learning

Reporting to the Scottish Funding Council

Reports will be provided to the SFC on request or in line with the regular cycle of meetings between the SFC Outcome Agreement Manager and the College.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Part 1. Background Information. (Please enter relevant information as specified.)

Title of Document:	Outcome Agreement 2019-20
Person(s) Responsible:	Director of Strategy & Planning
Date of Assessment:	May 2019
What are the aims of the document being considered?	Outcome Agreements are intended to enable colleges and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to demonstrate the impact of the sector and its contribution to meeting Scottish Government priorities.
Who will this policy, procedure or practice impact upon?	Prospective and enrolled students, members of staff, key regional partners and stakeholders, and Board Members.

Part 2. Public Sector Equality Duty comparison (Consider the proposed action against each element of the PSED and describe potential impact, which may be positive, neutral or negative. Provide details of evidence.)

Need	Impact	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation 	Positive	<p>Commitments detailed under Priority Outcome One: Accessible and diverse learning opportunities will enable people in the North East of Scotland of all ages, communities and backgrounds to learn, to succeed and to progress.</p> <p>Commitments detailed under Priority Outcome Two: More learners from disadvantaged backgrounds will be able to access learning and achieve nationally recognised awards.</p> <p>Acknowledgement of the College meeting required legislative requirements related to equality and diversity.</p> <p>New developments and improvements directed by the College's Equality Action Team.</p> <p>Seeking to address Scottish Government policy priorities in relation to equality, diversity, access and inclusion.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing Equality of Opportunity 	Positive	<p>Commitments detailed under Priority Outcomes One and Two.</p> <p>Work of the College's Equality Action Team.</p> <p>The College's establishment and delivery of its:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality Outcomes • Gender Equality Action Plan • BSL Plan. <p>The review of College processes to ensure equality of opportunity e.g. review of the student support model.</p> <p>Partnership working to address gender imbalance in the curriculum.</p> <p>Regional Board's commitment to 'Partnership for Change'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Good Relations 	Positive	<p>Approach to working in partnership both internally, e.g. staff and the Students' Association, and externally, e.g. Advance HE.</p> <p>Working with the two local Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), including specific actions seeking to ensure that positive actions are implemented to support activities that will establish greater levels of educational and employment gender equality within the region.</p>

Part 3. Action & Outcome (Following initial assessment, describe any action that will be taken to address impact detected)

Given that this is a strategic document, the information contained within it provides an overall direction of travel for the College in relation to equality, diversity, access and inclusion. The impact of specific actions is considered at an operational level through the College's evaluation and quality improvement processes. The Outcome Agreement is however refreshed on an annual basis and these processes will help to inform any required realignment of activities and actions to ensure the College continues to meet its the PSED.

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing	
Name:	Pauline May
Position:	Director of Strategy & Planning
Date of Review:	May 2019

SFC Outcome Agreement Targets for 2019-20 to 2021-22

- * denotes priority measure
- ** denotes successful completion figures where the underlying proportion is likely less than 50, meaning projections are subject to greater change

OA National Measure	Actual 2017-18	Projection 2019-20	Projection 2020-21	Projection 2021-22
1(a)* The volume of Credits delivered				
The volume of Credits delivered (core)	135,126	133,070	133,070	133,070
Core Credits target (region)		133,070	133,070	133,070
% towards core Credits target (region)		100%	100%	100%
The volume of Credits delivered (ESF)	1,140	2,427	2,427	2,427
The volume of Credits delivered (core + ESF)	136,266	135,490	135,490	135,490
1(b)* Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas				
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas	5.2%	3%	4%	5%
1(c) The volume and proportion of Credits relating to learners from different protected characteristic groups and Care Experienced				
Proportion of Credits delivered to Male learners	49.1%	48.7%	48.7%	48.7%
Proportion of Credits delivered to Female learners	50.9%	51.3%	51.3%	51.3%
Proportion of Credits delivered to Other learners	0.06%	-	-	-
Proportion of Credits delivered to BME learners	4.5%	4.4%	4.5%	4.6%
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with a known disability	19.6%	18%	18.5%	19%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged under 16	2.2%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19	49.0%	50%	50%	50%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24	20.2%	19.5%	19.5%	19.5%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners age 25 and over	28.7%	28%	28%	28%
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with Care Experience	0.9%	1.5%	2%	2.5%
2* The number of senior phase pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges	553			
Proportion of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges	1.7%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
The proportion of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%
Proportion of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools	4.7%	6.5%	7%	7.5%
3. Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses				
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses	32%	36%	36.5%	37%
4(a)* Proportion of enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	66.6%	73.2%	73.2%	73.2%
The percentage of PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	69%	72.5%	73%	73.5%
The percentage of FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	74.1%	78%	78%	78%
The percentage of PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	79.5%	83%	83%	83%

4(b)* Proportion of enrolled MD10 students successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of MD10 FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	75.8%	73.2%	73.2%	73.2%
The percentage of MD10 PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	45.2%	72.5%	73%	73.5%
The percentage of MD10 FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	66.7%	78%	78%	78%
The percentage of MD10 PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	100%	83%	83%	83%
4(c)* Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully achieving a vocational qualification delivered by colleges				
The percentage of senior phase FT FE pupils achieving a vocational qualification	51.3%	60%	60%	60%
The percentage of senior phase PT FE pupils achieving a vocational qualification	72.8%	75%	75%	75%
The percentage of senior phase FT HE pupils achieving a vocational qualification	-	-	-	-
The percentage of senior phase PT HE pupils achieving a vocational qualification	-	75%	75%	75%
4(d)* Proportion of full-time enrolled Care Experienced students successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of CE FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	48.9%	67%	70.5%	70.5%
The percentage of CE FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	53.6%	76%	78%	78%
4(e)* Proportion of full-time FE enrolled students aged 16-19 successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of FT FE enrolled students aged 16-19 achieving a recognised qualification	63.2%	66%	67%	68%
5. The number of starts for contracted apprenticeships (including industry bodies such as CITB and SECTT)	1,300	1,320	1,320	1,320
6. Number and proportion of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study				
Proportion of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study	24%	72%	75%	78%
7.* The number and proportion of successful students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing				
The proportion of successful students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	64.1%	66.7%	68%	68%
8.* The number and proportion of full-time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying				
The proportion of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying		91%	92%	92%
The proportion of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying		91%	92%	92%
9. The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)				
Response rate	94.9%			
Full-time	95.7%	95.50%	96%	96.50%
Part-time	100%	90%	91%	92%
Distance Learning	100%	90%	91%	92%
10. Gross Carbon footprint (tCO2e)				



Outcome Agreement between North East Scotland College and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2019-20

On behalf of North East Scotland College:

Signed:

Print name: Liz McIntyre

Position: Principal

Date: 01 August 2019

Signed:

Print name: Ken Milroy

Position: Chair

Date: 01 August 2019

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed:

Print name: Karen Watt

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 28 June 2019