

CONTENTS PAGE

FOREWORD	4
FAIR ACCESS AND TRANSITIONS	5-6
Blueprint for Fairness	7-8
Supporting Economic Recovery – Upskilling and Re-skilling	8-8
Commitment to Widening Access	10-12
QUALITY LEARNING, TEACHING & SUPPORT	12
The Needs of Industry and Employers	13
High Quality Learning Experience	13-14
Digital Connectivity	15
LEARNING WITH IMPACT	15-18
STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE	18-21
Covid-19 Pandemic Emergency	21-22
EQUALITIES & INCLUSION	23-24
RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY	25
Contributions to the COP26 Climate Change Conference	25-26
Sustainable Estates Strategy	26-27
FOCUSSED AND STREAMLINED PRIORITIES	27-28
CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND SOCIAL RENEWAL	29
Engagement with Stakeholders	29
Specific needs employers/industry identified, both short-term and longer-term	29-30
Groups and issues that the colleges are particularly responding	30
Work Based Learning and Practical Aspects of Course Provision	3.

AGREEMENT SIGNATORIES

Outcome Agreement between Lanarkshire Region and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2021-22

On behalf of:

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New College Lanarkshire

Date: 23rd May 2022

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23rd May 2022

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Lanarkshire Board

Date: 23rd May 2022

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

KAREN WATT

Chief Executive 28 July 2022



LANARKSHIRE OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2021/22

FOREWORD

The Lanarkshire Colleges aim to be Scotland's leading provider of college education and training, delivering a comprehensive, innovative curriculum that meets the needs of our students and the local economy.

Our wish is to ensure learners are well prepared by providing future-oriented, high quality learning for careers, life and success, and to support the people, businesses, economy and sustainable development of our communities and Scotland.

The Lanarkshire college region, comprising New College Lanarkshire (NCL) and South Lanarkshire College (SLC) remains committed to the proposals outlined in the interim outcome agreement for 2020/21.

As we emerge from the pandemic, the college region will work with SFC on an on-going basis. This outcome agreement between the Lanarkshire colleges region and SFC has been prepared to provide reassurance on the use of allocated funding in 2021/22.

FAIR ACCESS AND TRANSITIONS

Both Colleges deploy funds provided by SFC and the Scottish Government to support students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. These funds include SFC student support funds, training allowances for SDS funded programmes, Educational Maintenance Allowance for students meeting the eligibility criteria, and discretionary funds for crisis support for students experiencing financial difficulties.

Proportion of activity delivered to SIMD10 students										
Academic year 2019/20	Resident in South Lanarkshire	Resident in North Lanarkshire	Other council areas	Total						
New College Lanarkshire	2.9%	11.3%	4.2%	18.4%						
South Lanarkshire College	10.9%	2.1%	5.9%	18.9%						
Lanarkshire Region	5.2%	8.6%	4.8%	18.6%						

Source - Further Education Statistics (FES) data return 2020/21.

SLC is a "Leader in Diversity" and has supported students from the most deprived postcode areas to successfully apply and attain at a high level well above the Scottish average, as shown above. SLC students in 2020/21 from the most deprived SIMD 10 areas have attainment rates of 83%, and there is a continued and unrelenting focus to ensure that these students succeed.

SLC undertook a series of activities to support poverty within the area, and these measures are outlined further in the outcome agreement.

Both colleges are committed to working with both South and North Lanarkshire Councils as our closest local authority partners to support young adults who wish to leave school at Christmas. Working collaboratively, we continue to develop and implement bespoke programmes to support pupils disengaged with school and looking to move to employment and/or further education or training. The young people receive wrap around support from both the college and teams within each local authority to transition to a positive destination at the end of the programme. At NCL, this has led to the development of summer leaver pathways programmes,' which will be piloted this year. At SLC, winter leavers' programmes have been reinstated after being paused due to the pandemic with additional provision being added.

In addition, both colleges have a broad schools' offer to enhance the senior phase curriculum for pupils across Lanarkshire, inclusive of those attending Additional Support Needs (ASN) schools. This includes a range of qualifications, from Foundation Apprenticeships at Level 6 to the Certificate of Work Readiness at Level 4. The courses are delivered throughout the academic session to co-create the senior phase offer with our local authority colleagues to support individuals to follow the right pathway for them, whether that is employment, further education, training or a degree programme.

At NCL, strategy planning sessions are already underway for delivery next year, with a particular focus on how they can integrate a hybrid model of delivery, where appropriate, to better prepare the young people for future challenges and ensure that they are equipped with essential digital skills for learning, life and work. Furthermore, such hybrid models will support students' transition to adult learning environments by increasing their access to NCL's campuses. By engaging with the young people of Lanarkshire in this way, NCL will review our recruitment processes as it is their ambition to remove barriers to accessing courses for this cohort, basing their course offers on their engagement on NCL school courses throughout the year.

SLC has also revamped its curriculum planning processes, which includes implementing clear progression pathways from school into college and onto further education, training or employment. SLC has worked effectively with East Renfrewshire Council to deliver Senior Phase options for their schools and is now represented at the East Renfrewshire Council Vocational Partnership Group meetings, which take place on a quarterly basis. Pupil's infill into SLC's HNCs in Business, Human Resources, Police Studies and Quantity Surveying.

Both colleges work closely with Skills Development Scotland (SDS), and SLC's very successful Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) are designed in conjunction with South Lanarkshire Council and SDS, and are open to pupils across the South Lanarkshire region. SLC has strong links and partnership agreements with South Lanarkshire Council and local employers to provide work experience for their students. These students have continued high attainment rates of over 90%, and a new Creative and Digital Media FA has been offered this academic year.

NCL's close working relationship with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) ensures that the curriculum offer is continually reviewed to support pathways to employment for the young adults of Lanarkshire. NCL's Executive Board meets with SDS quarterly to provide high level strategic overviews of the work being undertaken with other, smaller SDS partner working groups. NCL's Dean for Academic Partnerships meets monthly with key representatives to action the Further Education Partnership Agreement (FEPA).

This details and tracks all strategic actions, and this year NCL will be focusing on: staff CPD around the use of the 16+ Data Hub; the development of a space on NCL's student portal for improving access of students to SDS support and services; increasing awareness and promoting the use of MyWOW with staff; exploring how NCL can work in partnership to effectively utilise our Hamilton Towers campus; and working together to devise training and learning programmes for SMEs and other business organisations.

The Dean for Academic Partnerships also attends a Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) Steering Group, with a focus on planning for increased delivery in AY2022/23, offering more frameworks at Level 6 and providing more opportunities for ASN schools to engage with frameworks at Level 4 and 5.

In addition, the NCL partnership work around their Learner Plan Portal (LPP) has led to the integration of information in the 16+ Data Hub to better support students in their journey towards employment. Currently the portal includes data collected from individuals when at school about their preferred career pathway and then staff at NCL are able to provide effective Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) at key transition points throughout the student's course.

Going forward, NCL are looking at how other data fields around additional support needs, assessment arrangements and care experienced information could be integrated in to the LPP to better support school pupils in their transition to further education and ensure that all appropriate support is in place for them.

As an organisation, NCL is restructuring the academic activity to fully support individuals to access further education and transition positively to an adult learning environment.

NCL is currently in the process of creating a Department for Access and Continuing Education, with a focus on entry level and employability programmes. This department will provide courses that focus on both vocational skills, and holistic subjects to ensure that NCL develops the whole person, whilst preparing them for further study or to enter the workforce. Academic staff in this department will work in partnership with vocational specialists in other areas to develop progression pathways, nurturing talent to transition on to higher level qualifications in other departments, while others will be fully prepared and supported into employment at the end of the course in the Department for Access and Continuing Education. In organising our academic activity in such a way, NCL fully demonstrates its commitment to fair access and transitions.

BLUEPRINT FOR FAIRNESS

Both colleges are fully committed to supporting the tertiary sector's targets of increasing the percentage of those from the 20% most deprived backgrounds entering degree programmes as set out in the Blueprint for Fairness. To do this, we recognise the important part we play in working in partnership with our higher education institute partners to bring higher education closer to our students and the pupils of Lanarkshire.

At NCL this year, the University of the West of Scotland have united with NCL to strengthen opportunities for young people in North Lanarkshire. A new report, 'Developing Pathways, Packages and Partnerships from School to Employment in North Lanarkshire' was approved at a meeting of the council's Policy and Strategy Committee on Thursday 18 March 2021. The report sets out plans to ensure young people leave school and further/higher education equipped with the skills they need to access sustainable employment opportunities across key sectors. The joint approach has been agreed by the three organisations to create a pathway from senior school through to college-based learning and on to university, finally resulting in permanent employment in a business environment in North Lanarkshire.

In its pilot year, this programme is supporting 30 S6 pupils to complete an HNC in either Computer Aided Draughting and Design, Construction Management or Cyber Security, covering the first year of a degree programme while still at school. Doing so will allow students to enter in to the HND programme at NCL next year, with guaranteed third year entry to degree programmes at UWS thereafter.

This initiative clearly demonstrates the commitment that NCL has to providing appropriate pathways for those from some of the most deprived areas in Scotland to access Higher Education.

At SLC, the Life Science team are involved in a new initiative working in partnership with the University of Glasgow to deliver a bespoke HNC in Applied Science that will allow students to articulate directly into year 2 of undergraduate degree programmes within Life Sciences. Students enrolled on this articulation programme will complete their HNC in college and will participate in additional sessions run throughout the year by the university to support transition. Students will also be enrolled as University of Glasgow students for the duration of their HNC giving them access to a range of university resources.

Eligibility criteria for this programme at SLC includes those who live in SIMD postcode areas 1 to 4 and those students who are care experienced, estranged, or have caring responsibilities. The programme design also includes a dedicated weekly slot for university engagement.

At NCL, proposals are being reviewed to support the opening of a UWS university centre in the Cumbernauld campus to help to widen access to higher education in one of highest areas of deprivation in the whole of Scotland. Providing a university hub in the town centre of Cumbernauld will enable NCL to work in partnership with UWS to increase the number of individuals in the Cumbernauld area to access degree programmes in an environment

that they are comfortable with and can access with ease. In addition, UWS and NCL will be able to collaborate to provide flexible programmes of study to support mature students and working adults to increase their level of qualifications.

Another way in which NCL is bringing our HEI partners closer to our students is by developing a student portal to support students in accessing information and support at the right time for them. In collaboration with partners, NCL have developed distinct spaces on their intranet for each of the associated universities to provide them with a digital footprint in NCL's digital campus. On there, students can find out information about each institution, contact details for key support staff and advice for applying through UCAS and writing personal statements.

NCL has a dedicated UCAS correspondent who co-ordinates all NCL's UCAS activity and reports on progress. During the UCAS application process, which has been live since 18 May 2021, students have access to a raft of support to help with their application. Previously, Student Advisers had been delivering a UCAS presentation to explain the process, outlining the support available and provide advice for application content, especially for the personal statement. This year, this presentation was recorded and is now available via MyNCL so that student can access this independently at any time. NCL intends to thoroughly interrogate data from the UCAS portal to get an overview of course choices and university selections to inform future decisions around university partnerships, articulation routes and curriculum planning.

This year at SLC there is a revised college wide approach to curriculum planning. This is to ensure that the content of curriculum at South Lanarkshire College is based on strategic and local priorities, as well as setting out how our curriculum content and implementation will help to ensure our students progress onto their chosen destinations.

This is not a quick fix and curriculum areas have been tasked to think about their three-to-five-year visions, which supports the ambitious "curriculum for all" approach. This will enable SLC to clearly set out what its curriculum strategic priorities will be.

The SLC focus is on creating clear progression pathways, encouraging students to move through levels to achieve their education and career goals, which are easily understood by all of SLC's stakeholders. SLC curriculum areas are already using employers to help inform the curriculum offer, however, not all are able to undertake work placements on their course. SLC aims to provide a clear message to our students enabling them to make career choices.

SUPPORTING ECONOMIC RECOVERY – UPSKILLING AND RE-SKILLING

NCL works with several external stakeholders and partners to create a future-proof curriculum, designed to address the demands of Scotland's economic aspirations. NCL uses a host of relevant data, from publications such as the Regional Skills Assessment (RSA), to inform curriculum planning and content.

A key partner in this is SDS, and recently NCL hosted a cross-party workshop for SDS and key strategic leads at North Lanarkshire Council to review how data in the 16+ Data Hub and Labour Market Intelligence data can be used by all partners to create pathways to employment and careers. Following from this, further workshops and continuing professional development opportunities will be available for those best placed to offer CEIAG to the young people of North Lanarkshire.

In addition, key representatives from the senior leadership team at NCL are members of North Lanarkshire's Workforce for the Future working group. This working group has been established to support the implementation and realisation of North Lanarkshire's Workforce Force the Future Strategy, published in March 2020, which has since been reviewed to consider the effects of the pandemic. The ambition of this strategy is to drive the recovery of the labour market in North Lanarkshire and NCL are involved as a key stakeholder within this initiative. NCL's presence on the main working group, and various sub-groups, ensures that they use their influence and expertise to impact on the economic growth of our local community.

There are a variety of ways in which NCL is working to ensure that the course provision remains responsive to the shifting needs of employers and industry. One way in which NCL are doing this is by working in partnership with SQA to design and pilot several of the SQA Next Gen qualifications. Many of our lecturers, practitioners and academic leaders have been involved in the Quality Development Teams (QDTs) at SQA, helping to shape and design the next generation HNCs and HNDs in line with the needs of industry and the skills' gaps identified by employers. This has led to the development of qualifications that have a flexible assessment framework, allowing industry partnership and collaboration to flourish, while integrating essential meta-skills acquisition as a key part of the learning. NCL's Film and TV team are involved in the first ever pilot programme for the HNC Television Production, positioning NCL firmly at the forefront of curriculum innovation and planning to meet the demands of an ever-changing employment landscape. Looking towards 22/23, it has recently been confirmed that NCL will pilot Next Gen HNCs in Computing and Fitness, Health and Exercise.

SLC are heavily involved in the shaping of the SQA Next Gen qualifications and have been selected as one of only two pilot centres for the NextGen: HN for the HNC Childhood Practice. Furthermore, the Horticulture team are working with UHI on a NextGen HNC.

Both colleges engage with a huge variety of industry leaders and employers to collaborate on programmes and offer students meaningful work-placements that will prepare them for the future. At NCL, for example, the partnership employability programme with ACS Clothing, Pathways to Textile Care, started in August 2021 with 16 recruits, 8 from both North and South Lanarkshire.

This new course at NCL is supported by job coaches in both North and South Lanarkshire so that students can undertake practical workplace experiences in both warehousing and logistics, whilst attending college to cover the underpinning knowledge for the associated SVQs within this field.

This programme is just one example of how data from the RSA is being used by NCL to shape partnerships and design curriculum content. Another example of partnership working between NCL and industry is their collaboration with Gael Music. Gael Music is a youth led arts and heritage organisation that develops and celebrates folk and traditional music with communities across the UK. In the New Year, Gael Music will be working with both NCL CADD and 3D Animation students to research, reimagine and share historic technical drawings from Coatbridge's Summerlee museum's own archive and special collections.

This project will be embedded into the graded unit for HND CAD and 3D Animation students, showing how NCL is working with external stakeholders on live projects that mimic employment out in industry once students have graduated.

SLC have established an award-winning External Wall Insulation Academy in partnership with an employer to support training and job progression in that field.

COMMITMENT TO WIDENING ACCESS

Both colleges are fully committed to widening access to higher education for our local communities. Across both colleges there is a variety of well-established articulation routes to a diverse range of universities across Scotland, reaching as far as Aberdeen University. Close working relationships with key university representatives ensures that these agreements are constantly reviewed, and further routes explored using relevant data. In addition to this, there are several degree programmes delivered by both colleges following a franchise model, ensuring that both colleges widen access to degree programmes for the people of Lanarkshire. It is NLC's ambition to continue to grow the degree programme provision so that every department, where appropriate, leads to the opportunity for students to maximise their potential and achieve the highest level of qualification possible within their chosen field.

NCL also has agreed Additional Funded Places (AFPs) with UWS. For 21/22, UWS has allocated a total of 27 AFPs at HNC/Level 7 and 27 AFPs at HND/Level 8 to NCL. These are HNC and HND students who will articulate on to the degree programme. The offer of AFPs is as follows:

"Associate Students Distribution AY 2020/21"	"UWS"
HNC Computing	10
HND Computing	10
HNC Sport	7
HND Sport	7
HNC Accounting	10
HND Accounting	10
Total	54

Working in collaboration with the UWS College Engagement team, NCL guarantees that these places are fully utilised to ensure that our students can take full advantage of the support available to them to study at degree level.

Both colleges offer a broad range of SWAP access programmes, aimed at older students, with life experience and poorer qualifications, to allow them to progress to degree provision in specific HEIs.

These courses include:

- Access to Social Sciences.
- Access to Nursing.
- Access to Social Services.
- · Access to Childhood Practice.
- Access to Professional Health Care.
- Access to Paramedic Science.
- Access to Chemical and Life Sciences.
- Access to Health Sciences.
- Access to Radiography and Optometry.
- Access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

At SLC, the Early Education and Childcare section plan to offer a Scottish Widening Access Programme (SWAP) 'Access to Childhood Practice' course in Lanark early in 2022. The Faculty has had previous experience in delivering two successful PDA Education Support Assistant courses in Lanark. The Faculty intends to build on their successful delivery by introducing the SWAP Childhood Practice course as a further opportunity to widen access for students in the rural community.

The course is planned to run from January until June 2022 on a three-day basis and will include the following sessions: one day face-to-face, one day online and one day in work placement.

An important part of the work of NCL is about encouraging the students to aspire to transition to a university degree and to imbue them with the confidence and self-esteem to do so. Making university accessible and showing them the value of articulation pathways is key to this, and, as a result, NCL, like most other colleges, took the decision to move their HEI Fayre online for 2021.

Prior to this event, NCL hosted UWS in a virtual showcase and supported a soft launch of the university partnership tile on My NCL on Wednesday 21 October.

This comprised of a range of presentations from UWS, including a previous NCL student who articulated to UWS, and a clear focus of this event was on the support available to support individuals to transition to studying at university and the advantages of studying at college before moving on to final year degree programmes.

The programme for the HEI fayre the following week included student representative from UWS, GCU, Strathclyde, Stirling and Napier, as well as NCL's own student presidents. Presentations focused on the larger aspects of university life, especially the support that is available for a range of different aspects, including mental health and disabilities. Most of the speakers had articulated from NCL to university and all of them were very complimentary about their experience of college and acknowledged that their pathway to university was made easier because of their experience at NCL.

Both colleges are committed to our responsibility as corporate parents and recognise the importance of supporting our care-experienced students. Both colleges are committed to working in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders to meet this ambition. We have a strategic commitment to support the development of an inclusive, positive culture in relation to care-experienced learners throughout the student journey.

Both colleges fully recognise that a holistic approach is needed when supporting care-experienced students and both colleges have a named staff contact who provides tailored one-to-one support before, during and after college. This flexible service seeks to support each student in line with their unique needs, issues, and circumstances. Having this point of contact ensures students can access support at the point they need it and lets them know there is always someone to turn to if they experience difficulties or issues.

Both colleges are committed to providing a range of student support services in order that care-experienced students can achieve their full potential whilst at college. This can include support with childcare arrangements, literacy or numeracy support, learning and study support, emotional support or counselling. At NCL, care-experienced UCAS applicants will have their UCAS application fee paid by the college, as well as any costs associated with graduation.

At NCL, there is further work to be done on consulting with care-experienced students about the level and type of support required to progress in college. NCL is working to increase the confidence of any of their care-experienced students and to encourage them to disclose their care status, which allows us to offer appropriate support for their learning journey. Ensuring all staff are aware of the needs of care-experienced learners is crucial to success.

To that end, NCL worked with Who Cares? Scotland and College Development Network to develop an online module for use in all colleges. So far, over 700 staff have completed this online module and it is now a fixed part of new staff induction.

NCL is also committed to supporting students who have an unpaid caring responsibility outside of college that may impact on their learning experience and ability to make good progress on their course.

Being an unpaid carer is an indicator that a student may be at risk of failing to achieve their potential and NCL will work to enable student carers through a variety of actions, including encouraging carers to disclose their status, raising awareness of the challenges they face with staff, offering support via ELS and Student Advisors, and working with a host of external agencies to support transition to and from college. This year, a dedicated carer's page will be added to the NCL website and a system of carer notification e-mails will be set up to send to Academic Leaders and Department Heads, in line with the monthly care-experienced emails.

SLC has reshaped its Corporate Parenting Plans and the action plan outlines activities and sets out our proposed actions for improvement to 2023, as detailed within Sections 58-60 of the Act. This has been set out in four main sections – Before, During, After and Evaluation/Monitoring. The first three sections reflect the learners' journey from their pre-entry steps and transition into college life; their journey through their college course through to their transition into Higher Education or employment. The final section highlights the work we do to ensure the plan is relevant and that the support provided to care-experienced learners is what they want and need. SLC achieved the Carers' Trust Going Further Award, showing their support for student carers. SLC continue to monitor the achievement and progression of all of students including those who have identified as carers or care- experienced.

QUALITY LEARNING, TEACHING & SUPPORT

Aligned to our strategic priorities, NCL's new Staff Development Academy will create opportunities for staff - at all stages of their career - to enhance their skills, experience and knowledge with a view to delivering on our purpose, mission and values.

STAFF INDUCTION: online resources support new staff, and existing staff who transition into new roles, to develop their learning and teaching. Across AY2021/22 we will begin the process of reviewing and refreshing these.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION OF THE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING AND TEACHING THROUGH ANNUAL CURRICULUM EVALUATION (ACE): The ACE process will inform the development of Curriculum Improvement Plans and the actions identified will be progressed across AY2021/22 as part of the operational planning process.

COURSE REVIEWS: a new approach is being piloted in AY2021/22 to enhance the involvement of our students and obtain valid qualitative feedback on all aspects of learning and teaching.

DIGITAL CPD FOR STAFF - Bespoke CPD has, and will continue to be, delivered to support the hybrid learning and teaching model.

PATHWAYS TO ENHANCE LEARNING AND TEACHING: both colleges support staff to develop their skills, using various preparation and development courses, such as PDA Teaching in Scotland's Colleges and Teaching Qualification in Further Education (TQFE). This strengthens the skills of staff to deliver high quality learning and teaching.

As part of the NCL Staff Development Academy, in AY2021/22 we will initiate a review of the educational pathway(s) for academic staff. This review will allow us to identify areas of good practice that will be further strengthened and enhanced in the future.

PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING (PDLT): SLC has a learning and teaching observation support model in place called Professional Discussion of Learning and Teaching (PDLT). Lessons delivered on digital platforms are being observed, discussed in terms of strengths and areas for enhancement. SLC staff continue to work hard to ensure our students had an excellent learning experience, with highlights across learning and teaching being noted during Education Scotland's National Review of Practice in March 2021.

THE NEEDS OF INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYERS

Through the SDS 16+ Data Hub and regional labour market evidence, we are aware of the future skills demand in Lanarkshire. The top three areas with job vacancies in the mid-term are wholesale and retail trade, construction and administrative and support services. Digital skills is a thread which runs through all these industries and digital construction is an area that NCL are particularly focussing on. Human health and social work, and transportation and storage are also forecast as areas with both expansion and replacement demand. NCL have courses planned from January 2022 in Access to Care and Mental Health as well as upskilling/reskilling in Cyber Security, Coding and Networking.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, NCL's plan for this academic year is to refresh our curriculum delivery plan with a focus on the Lanarkshire regional labour market evidence. NCL are already addressing most of the regional skills demands in terms of health and social care and digital but there are gaps in areas such as digital construction and automation and NCL are planning to address these in AY2022/23. NCL have recently begun a new partnership with Balfour Beatty in looking at digital construction and how many of the construction jobs of the future will be digital.

SLC works in partnership with Smart Sustainable East Kilbride and has established external wall insulation provision

HIGH QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

NCL has developed a clear, focused and dynamic strategy that will take us forward by prioritising articulated dimensions that aim to support the growth, development and advancement of the college. The foundation of that strategy is expressed by NCL's commitment to place resource close to students and they have a clear and absolute commitment to modernise, improve and enhance the educational experience of students at New College Lanarkshire. Going forward, NCL believes that almost all courses will continue to be delivered in a blended mode with students undertaking some of their study electronically.

At SLC the Learning and Development Team continue to provide much needed support for students who were identified as having barriers to attainment. Despite the ongoing pandemic, support, such as providing Learning Assistants to participate in live Teams sessions to take notes or signers supporting students virtually, continued to be implemented. The team also ran focused and open workshops to offer support, for example: to ESOL students on mainstream courses; support for CV writing, essay or report writing; referencing; and writing personal statements for UCAS applications. Teams have front loaded practical work and are bringing in as many our FE students as SLC are able to do so.

At NCL we realise that food poverty is a barrier to learning. To address this, they will open their canteens to offer a free nutritious breakfast for all our students. Before the pandemic, this was piloted at Cumbernauld Campus. As we emerge from the pandemic, NCL's aim is to re-start the complimentary breakfast in each of our main campuses. Our local suppliers are willing to support this initiative by providing stock.

NCL is looking to introduce porcelain crockery & cutlery thus reducing the overall costs and to honour our strategic aim to reduce our Carbon footprint within catering department. Similarly, the SLC Student Association has been working hard to provide students with free soup and a sandwich at lunchtime. There has been a great deal of discussion surrounding digital poverty and alongside this the SA wanted to tackle the issue of student poverty. Both colleges continue to work hard to ensure our students have an excellent learning experience. Teaching staff support and help their students to use Zoom and Teams. Staff at NCL are upskilling in the more advanced feature of Teams, Sway and Forms to further support students as part of their "NCL Goes Digital" project. SLC staff make use of digital champions to provide peer support and continue to ensure students.

NCL is developing a programme of Digital First Aiders to support students to ensure the safe use of digital devices. The plan is to run two virtual cyber-wellbeing events in Session 2021/22. The first will take place before Christmas on the theme of how students (and staff) can stay safe online during their Christmas shopping.

The second Cyber/Digital Awareness week will be in the second semester during the week of February 28 – 6 March 2022, the same week as Cyber Scotland will be running their event. We also plan to increase the availability and accessibility of the content available on the Cyber Wellbeing portal. We believe this support equips students well for the future. Both colleges continue to evaluate remote delivery through the student associations and student surveys. The flipped classroom approach is working well at both colleges. NCL supports students into higher education through their dedicated UCAS correspondent, their work with SDS and their HEI Fayre. NCL supports students into employment via employability and transition to university units. Where NCL has vocational programmes, students are continually supported by an appointed mentor to enable the transition from employment into the workplace.

Both colleges recognise that attending college can create many exciting opportunities, but there can also be challenges along the way. As a result of the pandemic, both the college and Student Associations recognise that the availability of support services to students is crucial. As such, we are keen to be involved in the NUS Think Positive initiative for 2021/22 to improve upon our existing mental health support strategies.

NCL is committed to raising awareness of the importance of positive mental and physical health where connections between this and productivity and a harmonious environment can be made. By being involved in the creation of key partnerships both internally and externally, the college can be more effective in signposting anyone identified as requiring assistance or advice in these subject areas.

NCL has made a commitment to work through the established criteria of a Healthy Body, Healthy Mind award which is coordinated by Scottish Student Sport, where significant progress has been made in fulfilling the requirements of the first recognition level. NCL's participation in recognised award structures such as this, demonstrates their dedication to fulfilling the criteria points and encouraging students to be active, and shows their commitment to the health and wellbeing of the students now and in the future.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

To mitigate unnecessary stress, it was essential that students could participate in class and submit their coursework without worrying about how to access courses. To facilitate this, both colleges rapidly increased our capacity for laptop availability for students. Across both Colleges, over 1500 laptops and Connecting Scotland Chrome Books have been provided to students in the 2020/21 academic year and support continues in 2021/22. This has been hugely important in allowing students to engage with their class groups and lectures, thereby reducing isolation for those unable to attend class in person. Digital inclusion is also not just about ensuring access to classes but also as a means of tackling social isolation. By providing laptops and access to Wi-Fi devices, we ensure students can keep in touch with their course tutors, peer networks and support services, such as online counselling sessions.

In addition, at SLC, students starting courses in the 2021/22 academic year were provided with well-being packs to highlight a strong focus on mental health. SLC has a cross-college Student Voice Working Group (SVWG), which is part of the Equality Group, and is active in continuous improvement activity to promote student voice accessibility. SLC has worked hard, within Scottish Government guidelines to ensure that students have access to an on campus experience. Students are rotated, with staff, trade unions and the Student Association working together to agree and create a positive learning environment. At the start of the pandemic, NCL moved all campus curriculum delivery into online blended delivery and this approach was largely maintained for most of 2020-21, however guided by the direction of the Scottish Government public health directives, when and where possible on-campus delivery does take place.

A scenario plan was developed in partnership with staff, Trade Unions and the Student Association which was the foundation of activity, however given the very nature of the pandemic and the impact it had on the various stages of the Scottish Government's Covid-19 Route map, this remained a dynamic process. Guidance in relation to learning and teaching activity was co-created by the Executive staff and NCL EIS-FELA for an interim period which had the ambition to return to face to face teaching for all as soon as it is safe to do so. Going forward, NCL will maintain a mixed model of blended learning although the most practical subjects will be taught, face-to-face, on-campus.

LEARNING WITH IMPACT

Both colleges work with SDS, employers and local authorities to understand the needs of business and industry, to ensure there is a pipeline of appropriately skilled students going out into the labour market.

Both colleges offer vocationally based courses affording work placements, and all courses focus on the necessary employability and metaskills required for students to progress onto their chosen destinations.

Both colleges work with a vast number of employers spanning the central belt and beyond across a wide range of sectors and, where appropriate, provide guaranteed interviews for students prior to course completion.

NCL supports Foundation Apprenticeships programmes delivered to S5 and S6 students affording articulation onto further programmes of study or employment as a Modern Apprentice.

NCL currently supports 28 Modern Apprenticeship families across a wide range of sectors to expand our educational reach.

In March 2021, Skills Development Scotland offered the Apprenticeship Employment Grant which was a contribution towards the costs of employing new apprentices. NCL successfully supported 15 businesses in accessing this grant.

The Employability Grant has also supported NCL to work in partnership with Lanarkshire Housing Association, to establish a two-year apprentice sponsorship model to benefit both individuals looking to secure employment and SMEs in the recruitment of staff, contributing to economic recovery.

NCL adapted Prince's Trust programmes by introducing courses in Animal Care and Sport. These programmes support individuals who have been made unemployed or are facing unemployment.

NCL Transition programmes are planned to follow the completion of Prince's Trust courses to support students to engage with further learning until the end of the 21/22 AY. Successful completion of transition programmes will support articulation onto core programmes within the individual's area of interest or employment supported by a Modern Apprenticeship.

At NCL, the External Funding and International Activity (EF&I) team optimise funding and global connections to support the work of academic departments to deliver a curriculum that contributes to Scotland's economic recovery (from the pandemic), whilst meeting the college's obligations to raising educational achievement in Lanarkshire. The imperative of paying due heed to sustainability is overarching.

The long-awaited launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) has been announced, and it will roll out from April 2022: this fund replaces the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund and will be used to invest in skills, education, local businesses, and employment. In terms of deliverables, impact, and outcomes, it is anticipated that the college will seek to secure a share of this funding for existing curricular outputs and, if possible, capital development linked to the curriculum. In addition, the team will continue to identify and pursue other opportunities to access external funding and international collaborations and income.

At NCL, the SDS Employability Funded programmes support individuals who have recently become unemployed, or entering the workplace for the first time. Flexible Workforce Development Funds are utilised to upskill, reskilling, and retrain the workforce.

Princes Trust programmes have been redesigned to support unemployed or risk of unemployed young people.

Community engagement via the delivery of short 18-week programmes offers opportunities to young people to support entry into the workforce.

NCL will continue to work with the John Mather Trust to support the sustainability initiatives presented at the NCL sustainability education event during COP26.

NCL's work-based learning programmes at FE and HE level in 2020/21 would normally include work placement. During Covid-19 there was a redesign of curricular delivery, unit replacement, front loading of underpinning knowledge, use of simulated learning and the use of other digital platforms to support the reality of work-based learning. For those students who did attend a work placement Covid risk assessments were employed to mitigate against Covid-19.

With the easing of Covid restrictions, and in partnership with placement providers, NCL has started to reintroduce students into work placements.

Partnership and collaborative working are central to evolve knowledge exchange and NCL has a strategic role in the following groups:

- NHS Lanarkshire Care Academy.
- Business Development Directors Group.
- Lanarkshire Business Hub.
- Lanarkshire Women in Business.
- East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership Board.
- Business Engagement and Jobs Growth-Workstream.
- Workforce for the Future strategy group.

NCL's mission that we bring education closer is supported by the NCL 2025 strategy. Examples of how this will be realised include:

Partnerships with Schools, North Lanarkshire Council, and the University of the West of Scotland to fast-track undergraduate qualifications.

Partnering with the University of the West of Scotland, Glasgow Caledonian University, and the University of Stirling to support entry to year two care students.

Promoting and supporting our students to participate in World Skills competitions. From an SLC perspective, despite the impact of the pandemic, 93.1% of leavers confirmed that they had progressed into positive destinations.

At SLC a pathway example is that childcare students across the region receive a guaranteed interview at the University of the West of Scotland (UWS).

SLC acknowledges that securing part-time employment for students is much more difficult than it has been in previous years. The SLC Student Association decided to use the Student Wellbeing Teams channel to research job vacancies and advertise them via Facebook pages and Teams. A new dedicated Teams channel was established to promote these vacancies to students. These were uploaded on a weekly basis during the 2020/21 academic year and is something we would be keen to continue going forward. SLC also utilises social channels to promote vacant posts and work with SCL Marketing team to create additional ways to promote this.

The purpose behind the promotion of this is to help alleviate stress that may be linked to students being furloughed or suffering job losses because of the pandemic. It was also intended as another small step towards addressing and tackling student poverty by highlighting opportunities available within the community. Volunteering posts were included to increase the skills and experience of students applying for job vacancies.

NCL work closely with internal and external stakeholders to include:

- Skills Development Scotland.
- Lanarkshire Regional Skills Assessment.
- Lanarkshire Labour Market Intelligence information.
- Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.
- Articulation arrangements from FE to HE.
- North and South Lanarkshire Councils.
- Lanarkshire Post 16 Data Hub.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Supporting and enhancing the 'student experience' throughout the student lifecycle is critical to success for both the student and the colleges.

Both colleges have a strong commitment to engaging with our students and we use a wide variety of methods to facilitate feedback from students and applicants through student representation on college committees, including the Student Association (SA), and general feedback via focus group meetings, question time, student Be Heard events, student surveys and feedback forms.

Students from both colleges are also represented on several committees and working groups including Regional Strategic Body, the Board of Management, the Curriculum, Quality and Development, Equality, Sustainability, Safeguarding, LGBTQ+ and Mental Health. As a result of blended and remote learning, both colleges have developed a range of new communications in response to positive student mental health and wellbeing that include:

- · Weekly SA emails that highlight all the events and news relating to the SA.
- Increased social media posts via Facebook and Instagram.
- A shift towards using video as a way of sharing essential information.
- Creating virtual events such as our Care Experienced students' lunch or during Estranged Students Solidarity Week.
- Launching the dedicated Student Wellbeing Teams page, including the introduction of our Friday Student Lunch and Tea and Talk Time.

Success measures include:

- Regular newsletters sent out to all students outlining the mental health support and new initiatives such as yoga and other sports related classes.
- Weekly SA emails sent to students directly.
- Attendance at virtual events.
- Peer support network created.
- Impact assessment of social media interaction.

The NCL SA, now has three Presidents, with each President having a lead role in Learning and Teaching, Health, Wellbeing, and Inclusion and, Community and Sustainability. These Presidencies allow for engagement with every part of the student's college experience and increases accessibility for students to engage in SA support.

NCL's SA is managed and supported by the Senior Learner Engagement Coordinator, demonstrating our commitment to partnering the Student Voice in all aspects of planning.

To ensure that NCL's SA's voice is embedded and enhances the student experience effectively, NCL will look at extending the tenure of the President posts as this will afford the individuals within the post to develop longer term plans spanning two academic years. This will provide extended continuity and strengthening the culture of the student experience.

Due to the increase in requests and participation of appointments for students with additional support needs, the NCL Educational Learning Support (ELS) team have started to further enhance and develop a digital service which has brought resources closer to our students. The engagement of students on a digital platform for support will be the catalyst for reimagining of ELS within the college over the remainder of academic session 2021/22.

Joint College/Sparqs class representative training is provided annually to class representatives at NCL to ensure that class representatives are prepared and supported in their role. Student input into course team meetings continues to provide valuable feedback and impact on change.

The annual student Be Heard feedback events create a space for students, managers, senior managers and continues to be instrumental in influencing change. This year the blended learning and teaching delivery models across the college were co-created through the student feedback at these events.

At SLC, the annual Student Question Time event offers a platform for students to ask their questions to a College Leadership Team Panel, which in 2020/21 was done via Teams and included members of SLC's Board of Management. Actions from Student Question Time are embedded in Quality Enhancement activities across SLC. The 2020/21 Student Satisfaction Survey published in November 2021 showed that 90% of FE FT and 87% of HE FT students were satisfied with their learning experience at the college, both rates are above national benchmarks.

NCL's 'Laptop Library' (a student mobile device free loan service) initiative continues to be pivotal in providing students with IT equipment to support students engaging with their college course. The Laptop Library is now an embedded student support process within the college. The application process is well signposted and will continue to be available to all current and future students. Most programmes have now transitioned to a blended learning delivery model and have varying percentages of on-campus delivery that will be based on the content needs of each programme. Programme blended delivery arrangements will be reviewed annually in consultation with the students to ensure that the student needs are being fully satisfied.

The College Student Adviser team at NCL have developed a centralised student request system to improve response time for interventions to support students. The blended approach to this service will include both face to face and meetings on digital platforms, and will continue to be further developed in providing an improved service meeting the needs of students in the longer term.

NCL continues to provide a dedicated support to students through a partnership arrangement with the Talking Rooms specialist counselling services. Talking rooms have been working very closely with the NCL's Student Adviser Team for approximately eighteen months, providing both one to one and group counselling sessions to support students and staff across the college.

In response to student feedback the NCL Student Association, through active partnership arrangements, are further developing a number of sports-related activities to support the health and wellbeing students.

- Currently working through criteria of SSS's College Sport Award (CSA).
- Men's Football team started their season on the BUCS league and are unbeaten in their first 3 competitive games.
- Match reports being posted on MYNCL sports page to raise awareness and gather support.
- Creation of first NCL Women's Football team in progress and recruitment process underway.
- Entered Women's team into Scottish Cup and will play Glasgow University on December 8th in Glasgow.
- In discussion with TV & Film students to be present at upcoming games to record for mutual benefit.

The NCL curriculum offer across all programmes provides a wide range of suitable entry, exit and progression opportunities for students to study and to move into employment, transition internally to next stage of their programme or to progress into higher education. The College Academic Standards Planning and Monitoring Committee provides supports to all academic areas of delivery on proposals for new delivery together with reviewing existing curriculum offer to students. This process ensures that that the NCL curriculum delivery offer is current and relevant in meeting the needs of students, employers, and current and future industry needs.

Within NCL, the Student Association is now managed by the Senior Learner Engagement Coordinator who will continue to work closely with NUS, Sparqs and Education Scotland in developing processes and procedures to further enhance the student experience. The use of nationally devised class rep training materials together with the learner engagement tool-kit is central to supporting the student voice. Additionally, in support of the guidance from NUS, Sparqs and the SFC and to ensure that the SA remains sustainable, NCL will appoint a SA Co-ordinator to ensure the service run is not person dependant. NCL has successfully fulfilled criteria of SSS's Healthy body Healthy Minds basic level and is working through second level (Bronze). Confident of completing bronze level by end of 2021/22.

Due to many staff working from home, NCL has responded by inviting staff to get involved in challenges and activities that they can do from home which also helps with their wellbeing. For example, reconnecting with nature by going on a walk and taking a nature photo to inspire others and share with everyone at NCL, or take part in the online staff yoga class or try out the promoted breathing techniques that can help to manage stress. To support students, NCL has ensured that students have access to responsive support services. including:

- Counselling service: The Talking Rooms provision has been a huge advancement in the infrastructure available to students and the self-referral mechanism fits with the finding that students may not approach staff for assistance.
- Togetherall: An anonymous posting service that provides a community for shared experiences and mutual support. The platform promotes a sense of belonging and connection through community. They are accessible anywhere, anytime, 24/7.
- My Day App: We have developed the Student Mental Health & Wellbeing tile within the student information app. That has accessible information on 50+ mental health topics, gives advice on how to access support and provides a list of online resources.

SLC Student Services has continued to offer emotional and counselling support, and financial advice and guidance, as well as face to face support for those students who cannot access services from home. The team have new designated webpages to support health and wellbeing providing greater accessibility to students. In addition, the Counselling team have continued to provide Covid-Resilience online workshops to students and staff, which were very well received with incredibly positive feedback and excellent interaction from participants. As well as this, SLC also have free mindfulness sessions for students. All of this support has continued into the 2021/22 academic year.

At SLC, to help introduce the counselling team to new and existing students, the promotion of the service including a 'meet the team' initiative. This involved each of our counsellors 'introducing' themselves along with their picture and background, which was then posted on the college and SA social media accounts. The service was also rebranded as the Counselling and Wellbeing Team. The intention of this promotional work was to break down any barriers to accessing the College's excellent support services and remove any anxiety that may be involved when starting a new service. As illustrated in Think Positive's own research, SLC is aware that there is a divide between awareness of mental health support

services and the level of course being studied. For example, four times as many HE students are aware of support services compared with those studying at FE. As such, we want to ensure as many students as possible are aware of the student counselling service.

As part of this promotional campaign the dedicated webpage was updated to include the introduction of digital and phone counselling support.

Furthermore, SLC offered online and phone-based counselling services and promoted these as alternatives to face to face support during lockdown and remote learning. Additional CPD was undertaken by the team to ensure students received excellent support in a bid to tackle isolation and any negative impacts of being unable to attend sessions in person.

Due to blended learning continuing into 2021/22, SLC is committed to continuing to provide online/phone sessions where requested.

In order to provide flexibility within the service SLC will continue to provide this option beyond the 2021/22 academic year, if requested.

- 100% of respondents to the feedback questionnaire felt they had benefitted from their support, with 90% advising they rated the service 'very good'.
- The majority of those attending counselling were made aware of the service via their course tutor or Student Services. As such, there is still work to be done on promoting the service and we will be looking to increase awareness via social media in the 2021/22 academic session.

To date, SLC has hosted several virtual events such as Virtual Graduation, Freshers', Refreshers', Care Experienced lunches and a lunch for Estranged Students Solidarity Week. Looking forward, SLC will provide more on campus events that students can attend. The first of these being our Student Wellbeing Morning in the 2021/22 session. This session will focus on the theme of positivity to help combat poor mental health. Suggestions for the morning include providing students with a free breakfast on campus (once restrictions allow), a key speaker to provide a 30-minute session on the benefits of positive thinking and finally a mindfulness or yoga session to end the morning.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC EMERGENCY

NCL has responded to the global pandemic by recognising the needs of staff and students and providing several services and platforms to engage in support as detailed below:

- Talking Rooms meeting with faculties and providing workshops.
- Working arrangements for staff have been co-created to suit staff and organisational needs.
- MyNCL app has been further developed to provide students with regular communication updates.
- Regular communication updates to all staff from the Principal to thank staff.
- · Increased funding disbursement runs to student to support student payments.
- Distribution of IT equipment to staff and students to support off campus working/ studying.
- Extended the academic delivery year to support students completing their awards.
- Supported revised quality assessment arrangements with delivery teams to support students completing/achieving their awards.
- Introduction of BSL signing service for classes and closed captioning.

As part of the college induction process each student completed a Covid awareness unit.

In reviewing their student experience, the teams at NCL are responsible for each of the services and initiatives above, and will be taking these forward in collaboration with our Mental Health team to ensure that there is a well-rounded relevant support package. In August 2021, at NCL, a dedicated role was created - Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Officer. This service provides NCL staff with a 'listening ear' service, counselling support, mindfulness training and encouraging emotional freedom techniques for positive mental health. The mental health issue does not need to be work-related; it can be something in the staffs' personal life that they need support with. The person in post has also completed courses which are specific to mental health support in relation to Long Covid so can support staff with this specific need if required. Since the service has started, it has been well used resource for staff and appointments are made through a confidential, self-referral process. This service will continue to be developed over the next year.

Following on from SLC's promotion of the counselling services, the Counselling and Wellbeing team developed and delivered new in-house Covid Resilience workshops and Student Relaxation Group Sessions. The Covid Resilience workshops featured a strong focus on resilience strategies, in addition to outlining the various support services. The purpose of these one-off sessions was to introduce the concept of resilience, address what stress means, how to recognise when we are stressed and provide practical tips on how to develop resilience. Alongside class group sessions, we ran workshops over Freshers' & Refreshers' as virtual events. An additional workshop was scheduled for our Construction Department as part of the November campaign activity addressing men's mental health. We recognise that attending college can create many exciting opportunities, but there can also be challenges along the way. As a result of the global pandemic, both the SLC and Student Association recognise that the availability of support services to students is crucial. As such, we were incredibly keen to be involved in the NUS Think Positive initiative for 2020/22 to improve upon our existing mental health support strategies.

By talking openly about mental health and promoting strategies surrounding positive mental health, we hope to create an environment where all students feel comfortable discussing their mental health and can easily access SLC's support services.

Student support services within the College include the following:

- Free student counselling.
- Weekly mindfulness classes.
- Free weekly yoga classes.
- One to one support from Student Services and Guidance Tutors.
- Access to Togetherall (an online platform available 24/7 to support mental health and wellbeing.
- Student Association support available in-person or by email.
- Dedicated Student Support email.
- Student Teams page for various activities.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty during academic year 2020/21, these sessions were welcomed as an opportunity for students and their lecturers to discuss how they were feeling at the time and encourage open discussion about mental health, thereby reducing any stigma attached to this.

Looking forward, SLC will continue to provide the Relaxation workshops for class groups, as well as updating the Resilience workshops to ensure they are relevant to student needs.

EQUALITIES & INCLUSION

Whilst NCL has experienced some key challenges, particularly in terms of the interruptions experienced in appointing an EDI Adviser and more recently the response to the Coronavirus pandemic, they have continued to drive their Equalities and Inclusion strategy and take positive steps to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty.

In 2021, NCL reconvened the EDI Committee adopting a strategic role and link between the Executive Board and the Board of Management. Through the review of the committee's terms of reference, NCL consolidated and simplified oversight for several other themed areas of work, including the Access and Inclusion Plan and our BSL Plan.

The Committee will continue to be tasked with setting the EDI agenda and ensuring that the college responds accordingly to the diverse needs of staff, students and stakeholders, ensuring that principles of fairness of equality, access and inclusion are promoted and embedded across all areas of college life.

NCL recognises the barriers experienced by people with disabilities but particularly the barriers they experience in obtaining employment. To further their commitment, NCL is currently working in partnership with the Enable Works Team. The project will help NCL to identify key gaps and help develop practical solutions to enable NCL to become an enhanced disability confident employer. Alongside building a workforce that is free of bias, it will create a workforce that reflects the diverse communities That NCL serves.

NCL had previously committed to achieving the LGBT Youth Charter report, but unfortunately this work was delayed due to changes within the Students Association and the new appointment of an EDI Adviser. However, recognising the need for this area of work, NCL has restarted their engagement with the Charter and is committed to achieving the Foundations Level within the current academic year. Achieving the Charter will ensure that NCL creates a culture of inclusion for everyone, irrespective of gender identity or sexual orientation.

SLC's Student Association received the LGBT Silver Charter Mark Award in November 2020. This follows a significant amount of activity that takes place across the college and wider community to support LGBTQ+ Equality. This award demonstrates the positive work taken to ensure SLC's learning environment is inclusive for everyone, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. The college works closely with LGBT Youth Scotland and other support agencies to promote inclusiveness, equality and diversity. The active LGBTQ+ Champion Group meets regularly to progress actions and annual LGBT celebrations are embedded into the annual calendar of events. This Group along with the Equality Group have both staff and student membership, and seeks to promote and embed these core values into all aspects of college life.

In 2020, NCL committed to signing the Declaration to 'Stand United Against Racism'. Signing the Declaration is only the first stage towards their commitment to tackling racism in all of its forms. Moving forward, NCL will work towards raising awareness of the impact of racism (including micro aggressions), developing appropriate mechanisms for staff and students to report racism and creating and facilitating safe spaces for discussions about difference and conversations about race, racism and whiteness.

SLC was awarded the Stand-Alone Pledge Award in 2020. This year, the award recognised the overall institutional support for estranged students during Covid and personal commitment of individual staff members and teams. Staff across the College and the Student Association work closely with estranged students to understand the barriers and ensure support is in place throughout the student journey and beyond.

SLC is proud to be one of the pilot institutions for the new EmilyTest Gender Based Violence charter. EmilyTest is a Scottish charity working to improve prevention, intervention and support concerning gender-based violence (GBV) in further and higher education. The charity was created in 2016 following the death of undergraduate student, Emily Drouet, who took her own life, after being subjected to a campaign of Gender Based Violence from a fellow student.

EmilyTest is being funded by the Scottish Government to develop the first GBV Charter for colleges and universities. The Charter is a flexible framework, based on evidence, student and survivor voices and co-creation with staff, to help institutions start or improve their work in tackling GBV. It aims to set out both minimum standards and excellence in preventing GBV, responding effectively when it happens, and supporting everyone it affects. Recognising the ongoing need to address GBV, the college will also be fully engaging with EmilyTest to work towards adopting the first GBV Charter for colleges and universities. Recognising the ongoing impact of Covid across the SLC community, there has been a continued focus to support those who may be experiencing GBV during the ongoing lockdown restrictions. SLC has delivered digital campaigns to promote and highlight referral pathways including offering an accessible, confidential contact route for those impacted. This also included delivering the Equally Safe First Responder Training to staff and the Student Association.

Taking cognisance of the ongoing work on specific areas within EDI, both colleges have identified new Equality Outcomes.

SLC's "Access and Inclusion Strategy" has, at its core, equity for all our learners, and the British Sign Language Plan is in line with the Scottish Government's BSL National Plan. SLC has made adaptations to the campus for learners who are hearing impaired with hearing loops, as well as those who are wheelchair users, with automatic door opening pads placed on both sides of corridor doors. In addition, toilets have been adapted across the campus.

SLC continues to focus on recognising its staff and in June, the College launched a trial staff recognition programme, "Employee Star Awards" to celebrate employees who live the college values and contribute to the success of the college. Colleagues were asked to recognise their peers and nominate for defined categories. Nine winners were selected by a panel, and the award ceremony was streamed live to all staff to celebrate the recognition awards collectively.

In August, SLC successfully achieved Disability Confident Employer accreditation. This means that, as an employer, the college is proactive in ways to recruit disabled people and have mechanisms in place, ensuring that people with disabilities and long-term health conditions, feel supported, engaged and able to fulfil their potential in the workplace. SLC successes have included:

- Being a finalist in the global LEAD5050 awards for the gender diversity across our leadership team. The award seeks at least 50% female representative at leadership level.
- In July 2021, the college was a winner in the sljobs Recruitment Awards 2021, Best Diversity & Inclusion Initiative category in recognition of our recruitment approach.

RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COP26 CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

NCL ran a Sustainable Education Hub for the duration of the COP26 conference, showcasing the work of NCL students/departments and external partners.

All NCL faculties were represented and we held events on the following Sustainability themes on the days:

- Food.
- Business.
- Fashion.
- · Hair, Beauty and Makeup.
- Collaborative Robots/WorldSkills.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Film & TV/Creative Arts.
- Supported Learning/Health & Social Care.
- Music/Travel & Tourism.

All events were livestreamed on YouTube to allow those who could not be physically present to get involved. Recordings of these will be kept/made accessible to staff and students as the content was very interesting and relevant.

This project is just the start of NCL's commitment to sustainability and will inform our work in this area moving forward. The event will be evaluated, and the outcome of this will be reported back to the Executive Board, which will include compiling an archive of content which we should be able to use in other areas in future.

Through the Sustainability Group, SLC worked hard to develop a range of activities for both staff and students to complement the COP26 Conference. COP26 presented an opportunity for the college to showcase the sustainable activities taking place across the college community and to highlight the sustainable partnerships with local authorities, employers and the local community.

SLC organised a programme of on-campus and virtual events to take place across the period, including pledging to meet the Race to Zero climate change challenge; showcasing their: Forest Kindergarten, sustainable cuisine, science and sustainability, recycling of PC components; and demonstrations of their sustainable construction work – heat pumps, wall insulation: etc.

SLC was delighted that a number of Hospitality students worked with Compass Catering and the prestigious London-based catering firm, Payne & Gunter, to provide the catering for the COP26 event – including cooking dinner for President Biden and supporting hospitality provision for between 10k–20k visitors per day.SLC's next steps are to further review and update its Climate Change Disruption Plan, and to further develop the embedding of sustainability in the curriculum.

The NCL Student Association is launching a Swap Shop which will have a pop-up format on campus, encouraging students/staff to bring in clothes and swap them for other pre-loved items. NCL is also working with ACS Clothing (based in Eurocentral) to develop bio-bubbles, encouraging biodiversity and offsetting carbon.

At NCL, we are also developing a Sustainability award that students will be able to achieve alongside their qualifications, establishing a co-curricular approach to sustainability and beginning the process of truly embedded sustainability principles in all that we do.

SUSTAINABLE ESTATES STRATEGY

It is the belief of both colleges that, as well as embedding sustainable behaviours into our curriculum, we should also demonstrate sustainable behaviours as organisations.

The NCL Estates Strategy (2018-2023) commits us to developing sustainable management practices and outcomes by working towards achieving the following objectives:

- Providing a fit for purpose, environmentally sustainable built environment while embedding environmental and sustainable practices in all Estates operations.
- Supporting and contributing to the Scottish Government's Greener Scotland strategic objectives.
- Ensuring the College achieves value for money and secures improvements to economic, social and environmental wellbeing.
- Facilitating the involvement of stakeholders including staff, learners, SMEs, and third sector bodies to promote innovation and commitment.

Through delivery of these objectives, NCL commits to addressing sector and national environmental and social sustainability challenge, as we recognise we have a significant role to play in supporting the Government's Greener Scotland strategic objectives. The colleges are acknowledged by the Scottish Government via The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 as a 'Major Player', in being one who has a "larger influence or impact" on climate change than others and therefore can deliver emission reductions and adaptation as owners and operators of a large and complex estate. As such, the colleges commit to fulfilling all relevant obligations under this Act.

In accordance with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, both colleges report annually to the Sustainable Scotland Network of which we are a member, on our compliance with Climate Change duties. Both colleges also adhere to environmental requirements in areas such as procurement, business travel and building management, and recognise the importance of consistent environmental reporting across public sector bodies. Through the NCL Estates Strategy, there is commitment to prioritise capital investment in environments that are proven to be economically viable and sustainable in their construction, operation and in the delivery of the curriculum.

NCL commits to implementing a robust Carbon Action Plan that will set NCL's sustainable ambitions and targets to address the environmental impact of our activities through planned sustainable practices, and which commits NCL to completing and supporting both the 'Required' and 'Wider Influence' sections of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) Reporting tool.

SLC has an established sustainability group, which meets four times a year and has representation from across the College. SLC is also a member of the Alliance for the Sustainability Leadership in Education (EAUC) and attends the EAUC Small Institutions Meetings.

SLC's Sustainability Group co-ordinates, promotes, monitors and reports on sustainability initiatives and activities within the College, which includes, sustainability competitions, the development of HR systems, materials donated from local business and the promotion of the use of the VLE.

Two of South Lanarkshire College's three campus buildings are low-energy, low-carbon buildings used to inspire and train students, companies, organisations and individuals who are mostly, but not exclusively, from the local area.

SLC has won multiple awards for its pioneering approaches and its commitment to embedding aspects of sustainable behaviours into the curriculum. Both buildings have a large annual footfall of visitors eager to learn about construction approaches that are demonstrably more sustainable than current methods. The effectiveness of the low energy buildings are demonstrated by the fact that the college has increased its activity levels over the past 10 years by around 40%, yet over the same timeframe its carbon footprint has dropped significantly – by 55%.

Both colleges work closely with the Energy Skills partnership (ESP), using cross-sectoral funding to invest in pioneering curriculum development.

SLC has excellent links with partner organisations through its involvement in Smart Sustainable East Kilbride initiative. The College is also working with a consortium of colleges, universities and companies with regard to the training aspects of low carbon fuel technology and decarbonisation of the energy supply grid.

FOCUSSED AND STREAMLINED PRIORITIES

NCL has developed and agreed their new purpose, mission and values which will allow them to have a more focused set of priority issues going forward.

OUR PURPOSE

We advocate social justice, enable whole-person education and partner to release potential within our communities.

OUR MISSION

Bringing Education Closer.

OUR VALUES

We are just. We are bold. We give our all. We respect all. We are kind. We give more than we take.

SLC is focussed on student achievement and progression, as well as ensuring the health and wellbeing of our whole college community. There is a renewed focus on our curriculum content, ensuring that they start planning for a "curriculum for the future", which meets future labour market demand and demonstrates clear progression pathways for all stakeholders.

A review of the NCL leadership team structure took place ahead of the start of the new academic year to ensure they deliver the best possible student experience. The new structure is aimed at delivering the College's 2025 strategy, placing educational excellence along with student success and attainment at the heart of their thinking and action.

In addition to a new Executive Board and the creation of five College Dean posts, a subsequent reorganisation of NCL's academic faculties into smaller departments has positioned the college to deliver on its aims to prioritise resources close to the students and strengthen the curriculum. The college has worked closely with the trade unions and consulted with all colleagues at each step of the restructure.

NCL's commitment to the wellbeing of staff and students has been prioritised, with the establishment of Mental Health Mentor and Adviser posts for the respective populations, as well as providing access to Togetherall, the online community supporting individuals with mental health issues. Other mental health activities are also planned within the Staff Development Academy, including the Strengthening Leadership Mental Fitness programme.

The continued challenge for SLC is the single-minded focus on ensuring our students achieve, as well as providing them with financial, digital and health and wellbeing support.

SLC is focussing on all of its students, however the FTFE students have been impacted the most, which is shown in SLC's attainment rates. Leaders and managers have a strong vision and clear priorities for the college that is communicated well to students, staff and other stakeholders. Local community links, including the local authority, are very strong and highly effective in supporting employment and social cohesion.

There has been a renewed focus on SLC's strategic priorities and a whole college staff survey resulting in cross-college action plan focussing on improving culture and staff wellbeing.

Both colleges and the sector are facing a shortfall in recruitment, which again requires a sector wide response to address.

NCL has a suite of financial policies and procedures in place that provide the framework for transparency and accountability for public funding. This includes, most notably, a Scheme of Delegation. The internal framework is supported by a governance structure including the Audit & Risk Committee, the Finance Committee and the full Board of Management. External review to give assurance on transparency and accountability is provided by our Internal Auditors and External Auditors, to ensure that the full and requisite prescriptive disclosure is provided to all stakeholders, internal and external. Both the SFC and Audit Scotland provide another level of external scrutiny to help ensure compliance in these matters.

Once the Financial Statements (Annual Accounts) are laid before and approved by parliament, the Accounts fall into the public domain and can be accessed by the public. Both colleges have a statutory obligation to disclose our accounts through the Charities Regulator (OSCR) who also makes financial information readily accessible to the public.

At NCL, suite of financial policies and procedures are reviewed on a continuum. Those for review in this academic year are: Travelling & Incidental Expenses, Fraud & Corruption, Petty Cash and Donations & Gifts Acceptance Policies. The procedures for review this academic year are: Travelling & Incidental Expenses, Bank and Cash, Sales Authorisation Sheet, Petty Cash, Donations & Gifts Acceptance and Purchasing.

SLC also has an internal audit cycle reporting on finance, student funding, curriculum planning and student voice.

Currently, at NCL, performance is reported through a centralised information portal, which brings data from a range of systems into a single point of view. Critical information is presented in a tabular and graphical format to inform business decisions with the most up-to-date data.

Current reports provide analysis for student timetables, recruitment, enrolments, credits, and attainment as well as developmental reports for HR to show staff absence rates and salaries. Where benchmarking is possible, it is provided to indicate the level of performance with peer groups. Regional data for Lanarkshire is also available to inform reporting requirements for outcome agreements and year-end financial statements.

Many dashboards are available to all staff where there are no data protection implications, to ensure the integrity and transparency of data and to encourage a shared ownership of overall performance. NCL's aim during this academic year is to improve, streamline and simplify reporting starting with a review of the curriculum delivery plan in order to have the revised system in place for next academic year.

SLC has renewed its focus on its strategic priorities, as well as ensuring its students continue to progress despite the pandemic. There has been a clear focus on system development, with a move to Microsoft Outlook email and Power BI reporting, the latter of which enables SLC to focus on performance against KPIs, whilst also giving all levels of the organisation access to data and information enabling planning and improved use of data insights.

CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND SOCIAL RENEWAL

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Both colleges support a wide range of levy employers and SMEs in upskilling/reskilling training through the FWDF and works across a range of sectors including, business, construction, transport, care, housing, food and drink, manufacturing, technology and engineering. From a recent employer survey conducted by NCL, 59 employers responded and 97% rated the impact of upskilling training on business productivity and increased staff skillsets/confidence from good to excellent.

Smart Hub Lanarkshire is a new centre of excellence for manufacturing innovation and robotics based at NCL. Through a partnership between NCL, North Lanarkshire Council and the University of Strathclyde, it provides a dedicated space for SMEs to meet, learn and access business support and academic expertise. Since the virtual launch in April 2021, webinar events have attracted almost 250 attendees and a range of manufacturing businesses are now benefitting from a series of live 'in-person' demonstrations. SLC has undertaken three projects with more than 50 employers, as well as BRE and Glasgow Caledonian University, focusing on the adoption of more sustainable approaches in the construction and operation of domestic and commercial buildings in Scotland. SLC has also been asked to host the National Housing Building Annual conference in April 2022, which would mean that a whole range of employers and sector stakeholders would be able to view the college and its facilities (Covid restrictions permitting).

NCL continue to engage with the business community through the hosting of monthly virtual Lanarkshire Business Hub events. Recent key themes for this award-winning initiative have included business innovation/diversification, resilience, skills development, sustainability and economic regeneration. 30–50 business members are represented at each of the events to hear from industry experts, take part in workshops and network with partners and other businesses.

Joint quarterly partnership events with Federation of Small Businesses, Lanarkshire Chamber of Commerce, RBS and Business Gateway enables a more aligned regional partnership approach to stakeholder engagement and more than 1,000 members currently benefit from access to the Hub's online LinkedIn platform.

SPECIFIC NEEDS EMPLOYERS/INDUSTRY IDENTIFIED, BOTH SHORT-TERM AND LONGER-TERM

As a result of the impact of the pandemic, NCL saw a shift in terms of the demand for the types of upskilling training from employers, with the demand for IT/digital skills training increasing to 37% followed by leadership, management and health & safety. New provision being delivered this academic year in response to these needs include specialist IT/health & safety training, and strategy development and business improvement techniques, all designed to upskill employees and improve business productivity.

The results of an extensive employer consultation to understand the ongoing short and longer-term development needs of levy employers and SMEs will be available in December 2021, with the findings being used to support curriculum development and to enable NCL to

continue to provide a flexible and fit-for-purpose service to effectively meet the needs of business and support economic recovery.

SLC has an established reputation in Lanark for delivering high quality training which empowers learners to access employment and worked closely with the Jobcentre staff to promote the previous course to suitable candidates.

GROUPS AND ISSUES THAT THE COLLEGES ARE PARTICULARLY RESPONDING

SLC is working in partnership with local authorities, PACE partners and the Lanarkshire Employment Partnership to develop further programmes that actively support young people through the Youth Guarantee. It is also delivering a Pathway to Apprenticeship in Construction Crafts for 56 young people ac4ross South Lanarkshire. After completion of this programme they can progress onto a modern apprenticeship. These are aimed at those who are unemployed (excluding those in full time education); about to leave school without a positive destination; those in low paid employment; at risk of redundancy; at risk of losing an apprenticeship; leaving training; volunteering; about to leave college or university without a positive destination; without qualifications at SCQF 5 or above; or underemployed.

Close collaboration with Smart Sustainable East Kilbride has emerged in the development of a number of employability initiatives for the development of our "green" curriculum. Through the Skills Development Scotland Employability Fund (EF) contract, SLC is supporting 68 learners at various points on the Employability Pipeline. Stage 2 covers those who are furthest from the job market, while Stage 3 supports those nearer to the job market with Vocational and personalised interventions. Recruitment and engagement on both programmes have remained buoyant. Participants have responded very positively to online support and outputs are positive.

SLC is engaging with unemployed residents in rural South Lanarkshire through the Rural Academy. A team of dedicated employability experts have supported an average of 100 participants every year since 2018. Working from premises in Lanark, the Rural Academy provides employability support and delivers accredited courses linked to job opportunities. A PDA Support Assistant is currently being delivered through DWP sector-based work academy.

Through the SDS EF contract, NCL are supporting 58 individuals with positive progressions into employment, MAs, FE and other training programmes. Following agreement with NHS Lanarkshire, our Clinical Support Worker stage 4 programme will shortly recommence, offering individuals the opportunity to retrain for NHS Clinical Support positions. This is assisting NHS Lanarkshire to meet staffing needs to address the impact of the ongoing COVD-19 pandemic.

In partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions and through the National Transition Training Fund, NCL has create, and is delivering, training to support targeted recruitment for Social Security Scotland Agency vacancies. Childcare focussed employability provision is also currently being delivered to help the childcare sector to meet the demand in response to the government's promise of guaranteed childcare places.

As part of a collaborative partnership with ACS Clothing, NCL has been delivering employability skills and first aid training, focussing on developing the skills of young people employed through the Kickstart funding scheme.

WORK BASED LEARNING AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF COURSE PROVISION

SLC's modern apprenticeship (MA) contract is larger than it has ever been with 180 modern apprentices being trained through SLC's own contract with Skills Development Scotland (SDS). For the 2021/22 academic year, recruitment for construction crafts and plumbing was particularly successful. Some frameworks (e.g. hospitality, tourism) will be difficult to deliver considering the Covid situation, and employers being reluctant to employ new staff.

The SLC Training and Employment team have continued to maintain on-going engagement with modern apprentices and employers through continuous pastoral support. Monitoring of furlough and redundancies has allowed for support to be extended to identifying appropriate support for individuals, including additional training opportunities relevant to their work environment and their career plans, and with the view, in some cases, to seeking new employment opportunities for those losing their job.

SLC has further developed its modern apprenticeship offer through working with a construction organisation to support 23 apprentices in a range of sectors and crafts, as well as establishing its External and Internal Wall Insulation academies.

NCL have seen a real increase in demand for apprenticeships in areas including engineering, fire and security systems and sport, with additional contract places being awarded by SDS to deliver on these.

In March 2021, NCL were able to support 15 businesses in being awarded the Apprenticeship Employment Grant which was a contribution towards the costs of employing new apprentices.

With the fund no longer being available, we are working in partnership with Lanarkshire Housing Association, to establish an apprentice sponsorship model to benefit both individuals looking to secure employment and SMEs.

LANARKSHIRE OUTCOME AGREEMENT IMPACT FRAMEWORK: SUPPORTING DATA

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Percentage of students overall satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)	Proportion of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	Number of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	Total number of full-time HE college qualifiers (in confirmed destinations)	Proportion of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	Number of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	Total number of full-time FE college qualifiers (in confirmed destinations)	Proportion of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	Number of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	Number of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses	Total number of PTHE students	Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time HE)	Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time HE)	Total number of FTHE students	Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time HE)	Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time HE)	Total number of PTFE students	Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time FE	Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time FE	Total number of FTFE students	Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time FE)	Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time FE)	Number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges	Proportion of credits delivered to care-experienced learners	Volume of credits delivered to care-experienced learners	Proportion of Credits delivered to 10% most deprived postcode areas	Volume of Credits Delivered to 10% most deprived postcode areas	Credits Delivered (Core + ESF)	Credits Delivered (ESF)	Credits Delivered (Core)		MEASURE
Cancelled due to COVID - SFC	90.0%	2,022	2,247	90.4%	2,383	2,636	53.3%	346	649	980	794	80.9%	3,688	2,702	73.3%	8,799	6,227	70.8%	5,021	3,247	64.7%	1,333	3.7%	6,842	18.5%	33,948	183,884	14,837	169,047	Region	
Cancelled due to COVID - SFC	88.7%	1,450	1,634	89.5%	1,753	1,959	50.8%	240	472	615	482	78.4%	2,646	1,893	71.5%	7,144	4,949	69.3%	3,636	2,262	62.2%	1,204	3.4%	4,534	18.7%	25,006	133,407	6,986	126,421	NCL	2019-20
Cancelled due to COVID - SFC	93.3%	572	613	94.5%	630	677	59.9%	106	177	365	312	86.0%	1,042	809	77.6%	1,655	1,278	77.2%	1,385	985	71.1%	129	4.6%	2,308	17.7%	8,942	50,477	7,851	42,626	SLC	
86.1%	96.1%	1,884	1,964	95.3%	2,433	2,591	55.5%	395	741	1,078	996	92.5%	3,199	2,513	79.9%	7,022	6,319	90.1%	3,773	2,557	69.5%	707	3.7%	5,934	18.6%	31,962	172,983	14,011	158,972	Region	
83.4%	95.6%	1,295	1,355	92.9%	1,899	2,045	48.9%	241	493	630	578	91.7%	2,236	1,713	76.6%	5,273	4,741	89.9%	2,904	1,927	66.4%	348	3.1%	3,798	18.4%	22,604	122,966	7,482	115,484	NCL	2020-21
88.7%	96.7%	589	609	97.8%	534	546	62.1%	154	248	448	418	93.3%	963	800	83.1%	1,749	1,578	90.2%	869	630	72.5%	359	4.3%	2,136	18.7%	9,358	50,017	6,529	43,488	SLC	
91.0%	90.0%	2,022	2,247	90.4%	2,383	2,636	52.1%	586	1,121	1,061	813	78.7%	3,345	2,338	71.6%	9,584	6,969	74.2%	4,703	2,923	62.4%	1,019	2.7%	5,099	18.2%	33,971	186,335	6,472	179,863	Region	
92.0%	88.7%	1,450	1,634	89.5%	1,753	1,959	50.8%	240	472	828	621	75.0%	2,452	1,667	68.0%	7,846	5,649	72.0%	3,231	1,994	61.7%	596	4.8%	6,300	18.2%	24,060	132,287	3,332	128,955	NCL	2021-22
90.0%	93.3%	572	613	94.5%	630	677	53.3%	346	649	233	192	82.3%	893	671	75.2%	1,738	1,320	76.3%	1,472	929	63.1%	261	2.5%	1,294	17.0%	8,558	50,435	3,140	47,295	SLC	

