

Glasgow Kelvin College
Board of Management – 07 October 2021
Learning and Teaching Quality Review and Enhancement Priorities
Report by Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement
1. Introduction

This report provides an overview and evaluation of learning and teaching related performance indicators for 2020-21. The student outcome and satisfaction data contained in this report was considered in more detail at recent meetings of the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Board. The report also highlights quality enhancement priorities resulting from the analysis and discussion of this performance indication information.

It should be noted that the data presented is indicative student data which whilst almost final, may be subject to minor change.

2. Review of Credit Delivery

A key performance metric for Colleges is the volume of Credits delivered. One Credit equates to 40 hours planned learning for an individual student. As a mid-sized college, Glasgow Kelvin College normally delivers around 79,000 Credits on an annual basis.

The following sections provide an analysis of Credit volumes related to differing aspects of our provision.

A) Evaluation of Core and Subject Area Credit Data

The table below sets out College curriculum volumes delivered by type in relation to its Regional Outcome Agreement targets for session 2020-21.

Curriculum Type:	2020-21 ROA Target	2020-21 Actual	Target Variance	2019-20 Actual	1-year Change
Total credits	79,093	78,691	-402	79,312	-621

Administration, Financial & Business Services	10,500	13,375	2,875	10,247	3,128
Creative and Cultural Industries	11,500	9,412	-2,088	11,319	-1,907
Engineering, Construction & Manufacturing	18,500	21,220	2,720	19,778	1,442
Food, Drink, Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure	8,500	7,480	-1,020	8,816	-1,336
Health, Care and Education	10,500	11,588	1,088	10,332	1,256
Life and Chemical Sciences	4,000	4,648	648	4,220	428
Transition and Supported Learning	15,696	10,968	-4,728	14,600	-3,632

Coronavirus related restrictions in 2020-21 had a very significant effect on College delivery and this made achieving the Core and ESF Credit Targets extremely challenging. In order to keep staff and students safe, the vast majority of our course provision was delivered online, including a period of almost 4 months when all provision was online. Through the efforts of staff across the College, we were able to effectively make this dramatic change to teaching methods and continue to deliver almost all planned courses.

Despite our best efforts, some areas of planned delivery were not possible to achieve. Community outreach and senior phase recruitment was severely reduced due to lockdown measures (e.g. almost all community venues closed and the college unable to take school pupils on campus for much of the year). This significant reduction in course activity made achieving the College Credit target extremely challenging.

In addition, withdrawal levels on FE courses were higher than normal due to the impact of mainly online learning being provided and this meant fewer students than normal stayed on course past the Credit funding claim date, which also impacted on our ability to achieve the College's Credit target.

Overall though, whilst it is disappointing to not achieve our full Credit targets, delivering 99.5% of the College's Credit target in these very challenging circumstances, and doing so with very low levels of deferred learners is a very significant achievement.

In terms of the variances across curriculum subject areas, the following aspects are of note:

- Administration, Financial & Business Services activity increased as the College was able to expand delivery of its partnership with Youth Enterprise Scotland (YES) as this course is mainly delivered online. This allowed YES and the College to increase recruitment of school pupils across Scotland.
- Creative and Cultural Industries activity was lower than the previous year due to reduced recruitment for some programmes, particularly in music business and events management.
- Engineering, Construction & Manufacturing activity increased due to a greater number of pre-apprenticeship programmes which were put in place to respond to a reduction in apprenticeship opportunities.
- Food, Drink, Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure activity reduced mainly as a result of lower application levels for hair and beauty courses.
- Health, Care and Education activity was higher than previous years due to increased demand for entry level social and healthcare courses.
- Transition and Supported Learning activity reduced as this curriculum area includes Community outreach and this was substantially reduced by Coronavirus related restrictions.

B) Evaluation of Senior Phase Credit Levels

Senior Phase activity relates to Credits delivered to School Pupils studying college delivered courses.

In 2020-21, the impact of Coronavirus had a very significant impact on levels of school/college partnership activity. Due to the requirement to maintain 2 metres social distancing on campus, alongside a range of other health related controls, most Senior Phase activity was delivered remotely. This resulted in a substantial reduction in Senior Phase recruitment and courses delivered.

Performance Measure:	2020-21 ROA Target	2020-21 Actual	Target Variance	2019-20 Actual	1-year Change
Number of senior phase age pupils studying at SCQF 5 and above	324	293	-31	344	-51
Volume of School/College Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above	2,000	483	-1,517	5,027	-4,544

Providing Senior Phase learning opportunities is a core part of the College's approach to educational delivery and therefore rebuilding its Senior Phase activity to previous levels is a priority.

C) Evaluation of Widening Access Credit Levels

As highlighted above, the impact of ongoing lockdowns led to a very substantial reduction in community outreach activity for most of the academic year. As a result, the proportion of learning delivered by the College to residents of Scotland's 10% most deprived communities was reduced by 1.4% compared to the previous year. However, it should also be recognised that the level achieved still continues to significantly exceed that of any other college in Scotland (e.g. the average across all colleges is around 17%)

Performance Measure:	2020-21 ROA Target	2020-21 Actual	Target Variance	2019-20 Actual	1-year Change
% of credits delivered to SIMD10 learners	41.1%	36.6%	-4.5%	38.0%	-1.4%

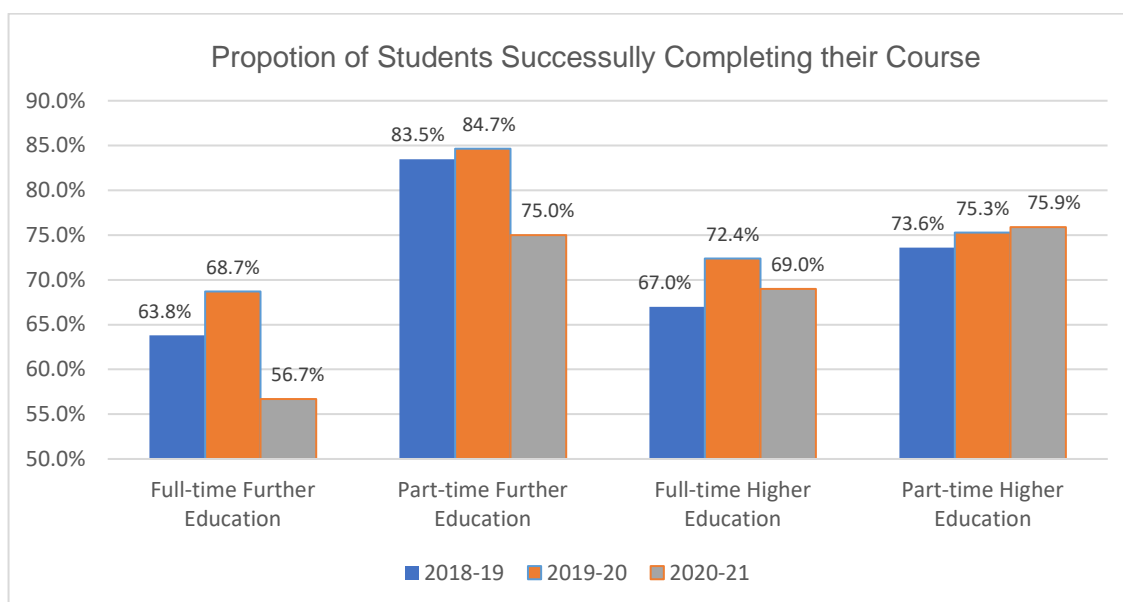
2020-21 Credit data also provides evidence that the College continued deliver high shares of teaching activity to priority and protected groups as demonstrated in the table below:

Performance Measure:	2020-21 ROA Target	2020-21 Actual	Target Variance	2019-20 Actual	1-year Change
Proportion of Credits delivered to BME learners	15.8%	19.0%	3.2%	18.3%	0.7%
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with a known disability	20.2%	18.7%	-1.5%	19.6%	-0.9%
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with Care Experience	8.5%	8.1%	-0.4%	9.3%	-1.2%

Despite the challenges faced in delivering ESOL online, we were able to maintain our ESOL volumes and this helped maintain previous levels of BME learners. The slight reduction in the proportion of learners with care experience will most likely have been related to the reduction in community outreach activity and enrolments.

3. Review of Student Outcomes

The chart below provides three-year trends for successful course completion rates for the four mode/level categories. Note though that the results for 2020-21 are indicative and there are still a small number of outstanding results and this data will therefore change slightly as we work to close all courses.



When reviewing these student attainment trends, it should be noted that the 2019-20 success rates showed an atypical improvement due to the unusual circumstances associated that year, when almost all students received their overall result based on the holistic model introduced by the SQA. In order to make a more realistic comparison, the data from 2018-19 provides a more robust benchmark of normal achievement levels.

It can be seen from the data above that success rates on Further Education level courses (courses up to SCQF level 6) have dropped significantly. A number of factors would have contributed to this but almost all likely related to the impact of Coronavirus related restrictions on our teaching delivery. In particular, we were forced to use very high levels of online learning across all subject areas and this both reduced the volume of practical, hands-on course content, but also reduced opportunities for students and staff to socialise and get to know each other. In addition, there was high levels of uncertainty across the year, both in terms of what we would be able to do on a week to week basis, and also in terms of what SQA's assessment criteria would be. This had a very negative impact on retention with for example, almost one in three full-time further education learners not completing their course. This analysis is further supported by student feedback which indicated that new learners in particular, had more difficulty coping with online learning at the beginning of their programmes.

There is also a reduction in the part-time Further Education figures. These courses will have been impacted in similar ways to our full-time provision, but in addition we have converted some non-accredited programmes to certificated SCQF courses. Previously, the non-accredited programmes would have achieved a much higher pass rate, based on participation, whereas the certificated SCQF courses are assessed and marked as pass or fail. This is likely to have a lasting effect on the FEPT success rate.

Both the part-time and full-time Higher Education figures have held up well and show a slight improvement in comparison to 2018-19. This indicates that these students coped better with the disruption and volume of online study. Many of the Higher Education students would have had some experience of participating in learning and teaching activities in 2019-20 other than face-to-face delivery.

4. Review of Student Satisfaction Levels

The College implemented the national student satisfaction survey in April and May 2021. Participation levels were slightly lower than usual, as a result of Covid-related disruption. However, over 800 students completed the survey with a large number providing comments on their feelings towards their year at college.

As might be expected, students' experience of online learning dominated the comments provided. Whilst the majority of learners were positive about their experience, there were a significant number who felt that the large amount of online and remote learning provided was not as effective as face-to-face learning. This is echoed in the lower than previous overall satisfaction level reported. Going forwards, as Covid restrictions are hopefully relaxed, it should be possible to take a more balanced approach to online delivery to support more effective and inclusive learning.

More positively, a number of other prompts show higher than previous levels of agreement, for example the percentage of students agreeing that their suggestions are taken seriously, or they felt they were treated fairly. The proportion of students who would recommend Glasgow Kelvin College has also remained relatively stable at 91%

Results for the SFC prescribed questions are set out below, with significant reductions highlighted in red, and improvements in green.

Prompt:	2020-21 Strongly Agree/ Agree %	2018-19 Strongly Agree/ Agree %
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience	83	90
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me	85	85
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning	96	95
I am able to influence learning on my course	88	87
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning	87	85
The way I'm taught helps me learn	80	87
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace	85	90
I believe students suggestions are taken seriously	87	76
I believe all students are treated equally and fairly by staff	93	83
Overall, I would recommend Glasgow Kelvin College to a friend/family member	91	92
The College Students' Association influences change for the better	42	49
Any changes in my course or teaching has been communicated well	85	(new question)
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn	83	(new question)

I feel that I am part of the college community	71	(new question)
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The College also set the following additional questions related to college services:

Prompt:	Strongly Agree/Agree %
My online experience met my needs	73
I had access to sufficient ICT resources for my learning	91
My experience for applying for a course was positive	97
When I needed Advice & Guidance, this was available	95
When I needed Learner Support, this was available	92
College Library and Flexible Learning Centre services met my needs	89
Student Funding services (e.g. bursary, childcare, etc. met my needs)	88
College Finance services (fees etc.) met my needs	92

Comments from students provided with their survey responses also highlighted the following aspects:

- Students were extremely appreciative of the efforts of teaching staff and college support provided at a very difficult time. Many students also recognised that we were using online methods to keep staff and students safe, even if this meant that online learning reduced the quality of their learning experience.
- Some students felt that there was an inconsistency of approach to online course delivery from different lecturers and this made the course more challenging.
- There were also a number of comments from students feeling that they weren't given assessment feedback quickly enough or weren't fully aware of course arrangements.
- In a small number of subject areas, students expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of specialist equipment that was available to prepare them for working in industry.

The overall satisfaction level dropped last session from 90%, in 2019-20, to 83% for 2020-21. This was coupled with a reduction, over the same period, in satisfaction in the way that students were taught from 87% to 80%, and a reduction in the perception that the College has helped to prepare students to develop the knowledge and skills for the workplace from 90% to 85%. There are a number of factors that are likely to have had an impact on these figures, including:

- Due to the restrictions in place at the start of the session, it was necessary to trial new approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.
- All programmes were delivered online from day one, with limited opportunity to attend in person, which was largely concentrated towards the end of the session.

- There was a considerable degree of uncertainty regarding permissible assessment arrangements until the second half of the session.
- In courses with mandatory work placements, these were either reduced in duration or replaced by alternative learning activities and assessments.

There was an increased satisfaction in both the belief that suggestions are taken seriously and that all students are treated equally and fairly by staff. Factors that are likely to have impacted upon this are:

- Teaching staff reported that they asked for more feedback from the class during online lessons.
- The online teaching platform was perceived to be more democratic whereby digital hands were used by students who wanted to contribute. This reduced the possibility of individual students dominating a lesson and made it easier for staff to monitor activity.

It is also notable that of students surveyed, 91% reported that they had access to sufficient ICT resources for their learning as prior to the 2020-21 academic year, the College had very few devices for students and much less experience in providing resources for online learning.

5. Quality Enhancement Priorities

Based on the above evaluation of performance data and student feedback, the following College-level quality enhancement priorities for learning and teaching related are planned:

1. Continue to review, develop and embed digital approaches to learning, teaching, assessment and the wider student experience.

Faculties will review their experience of remote learning in session 2020-21 to identify areas of good practice which can be built upon and shared with colleagues, and highlight challenges to delivering effective learning and teaching online and consider how they might be overcome. The College will continue to provide a professional development programme for teaching staff which enhances their digital capacity and promotes reflection and continuous improvement in the professional practice. The College will also continue to enhance support for students using College digital platforms, including training, skills development and provision of ICT resources.

2. Provide a more effective balance of on campus and online engagement by increasing the volume of face to face delivery when safe to do so.

Teaching teams will consider an appropriate balance of remote learning and face-to-face learning for each of their programmes to ensure that students are provided with a flexible delivery model which meets their needs, whilst at the same time, ensuring that a high-quality learning, teaching and assessment experience is maintained. As part of these considerations, a priority will be placed on providing increased levels of face to face tuition and support for Further Education courses, with a particular focus on entry level, practical courses and those with more vulnerable learners.

3. Rebuild our Community and Senior Phase portfolio and enrolment volumes.

Working in partnership with our community groups, school staff and Education Services representatives, we will identify opportunities for course provision which

will attract local residents and secondary school pupils. As face to face delivery becomes safer and more manageable, we will expand our course offer for these two cohorts with new provision and approaches.

4. Continue to develop approaches and actions which support improved course retention.

Higher than average course withdrawal levels continue to be the most significant factor in reducing College attainment rates. The College will therefore consider Faculty and support area actions which support retention. These actions will take advantage of the improved level of data reporting achieved this year and prioritise responding quickly and effectively to non-attendance issues.

These quality enhancement priorities will be integrated into, and monitored through, College operational planning and cross-college quality enhancement activity.

6. Resource Implications

The shortfall between the College's overall Credit delivery volumes and its targets means there is a risk that the Scottish Funding Council clawback resource in future years. Currently, it is assessed that the value of this potential clawback is in the region of £125k. The College will therefore have to set aside a contingency for this amount. We would expect any decision on a clawback to be confirmed within the next two to three months.

7. Equalities Implications

This report highlights evidence of high levels of participation in college learning by priority and protected characteristic groups.

8. Risk and Assurance

This report provides assurance that despite the very significant operational challenges faced in 2020-21, the College effectively delivered high quality learning and achieved 99.5% of its Credit targets.

9. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report.

10. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- i) Consider the performance data and the highlighted quality enhancement priorities.

11. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Robin Ashton, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement, or John Gallagher, Head of Quality Enhancement