

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

Learning and Teaching Committee – 22 September 2021

**Transformation and Renewal Plan Implementation - Impact on Learning,
Teaching and the Student Experience**

Report by Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of how the College's Transformation and Renewal Plan is improving the sustainability of the College's curriculum delivery and strengthening support for high quality learning and teaching and the student experience.

2. Transformation and Renewal Plan Implementation – impact on learning, teaching and the student experience

The College's Transformation and Renewal Plan set out three high level operational objectives. Across each of these objectives there were several actions identified which directly impact on delivery of learning and teaching and the student experience. The following sections of this report therefore provide an overview of progress made to date in the implementation of these actions and an outline of how we intend them to positively impact on learning and teaching.

A) Implementation of Transformation Objective 1: A more relevant, effective and efficient curriculum with high levels of learner success.

Optimising student learning activity (Credits) delivered by Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) lecturing staff:

A key action underpinning the achievement of this objective was to deliver an increase in Credits delivered per FTE lecturing staff thus allowing teaching staff reductions where appropriate (Credits per FTE). The parameters which control Credits per FTE are:

- Optimise average class sizes.
- Optimise early retention levels.
- Optimise timetabling and staff deployment.

The College has been undertaking significant actions directed at each of these parameters, aligned to the Voluntary Service scheme implemented recently.

In terms of class sizes, a number of consultation sessions were held over the 2020-21 academic year with Faculty staff and EIS representatives to consider what needs to be achieved and how best to do this. Through these discussions, a class size framework for the college was agreed. This takes account of the Scottish Funding Council classification of college subject areas into funding price groups based on their assessment of the staffing and resource costs associated for each subject area. These funding price groups therefore provide an objective basis on which to define class sizes for financially viable groups. The table below sets out target class sizes

for College courses related to the level of funding the College receives for each learner.

Price Band	Curriculum Category A	Curriculum Category B	Curriculum Category C	Curriculum Category D
Target class size (initial enrolments)	24	22	18	14
Target class size (funded enrolments*)	22	20	16	12

* Only students who complete 25% of their course are funded by SFC

In terms of implementing this class size framework, it is recognised that there will be some courses which face more significant challenges than others in achieving the required average class sizes. A range of options are therefore being used to enable these increased class sizes. This includes increasing the class size capacity of teaching rooms and spaces where these are not sufficient and prior to summer, Faculties identified estate modifications to be made prior to August 2021. Alternatively, some courses are merging smaller class groups for units which can be delivered to larger cohorts (for example more theoretical units). Course teams are also taking advantage of blended learning teaching approaches and providing a mix of online lectures to larger groups and on campus tutorials to smaller groups.

The College is currently seeking to recruit to these target class sizes for the 2021-22 academic year and will be able to review shortly, progress made towards achieving these targets.

Improving student retention:

The college is currently taking action in two broad areas. Firstly, we are reviewing our Class Tutor system to identify opportunities to provide greater support for monitoring and responding to learners' progress. The College invests over £1,000,000 in core funding to enable a Class Tutor system whereby learners have direct support from one of the course team. Whilst in the initial years of implementation of this model there were significant increases in retention, in recent years this progress has fallen back and current College retention levels are below sector averages. We are therefore beginning a collaborative review of the Class Tutor role to refresh our expectations of the role and assess how we can provide staff undertaking the role with greater support. As part of this, we also need to take account of Scottish Funding Guidance which restricts the volume of teaching hours which can be allocated to a full-time learner. The review of Class Tutor arrangements will be undertaken by a short life working group composed of Class Tutors and EIS representation, led by the Director of Learning Innovation. We expect this work to be concluded by end of October.

Secondly, we are developing more comprehensive and consistent early warning systems which flag when learner attendance reduces and initiates a number of positive responses. It is widely recognised that reduced attendance is a key marker of learners most at risk of leaving their course. It is also well understood that responding quickly to students who miss classes can be very effective in affirming the college's commitment to supporting learners to continue their course of study. Therefore, aligned to the work on the Class Tutor role we plan to explore how, as a

College, we can more effectively monitor and respond to learner non-attendance and therefore help them stay the course and achieve a successful outcome.

At present we are focussing our attention on improving our attendance reporting capacity through the implementation of new register software with greater functionality such as automated responses. This is currently being integrated with our new Power BI reporting interface. This new register system is being implemented for the Academic Year (AY) 2021-22 year and we will further develop our use of the system as the year progresses.

Strengthening our capacity to respond to student attendance issues:

In addition to changes to how we manage attendance data, we are seeking to strengthen our capacity to review and respond to student attendance issues. Following significant staff consultations, we will introduce a new support staff capacity focussed on improving retention in October this year. This initiative will extend the work of our admissions team to include a role in monitoring and responding to attendance issues in conjunction with our Class Tutors. A new support role of Retention Manager has been developed for the current Admissions Team Leader, replacing responsibility of discretionary funds which will transfer to Student Funding. In conjunction with Glasgow City Council's Education Services, we are delivering a jointly funded retention improvement service for Glasgow school leavers and we look forward to developing these new services as the Academic Year progresses.

Improving timetabling:

In terms of improving timetabling and staff deployment we are seeking to strengthen the College's long term improvement capacity by implementing new timetabling software for use this Academic Year. Our new Celcat timetable system provides a much higher level of functionality than the previous system and students and staff are already benefitting from the ability to see their lesson schedule within their personal diaries. Longer term, the system will allow College Faculty Managers to directly manage their data within the system and enable better utilisation and deployment of staff.

B) Implementation of Transformation Objective 2: A more agile and efficient organisational structure with improved workplace effectiveness.

Objective 2 of the College's Transformation and Renewal Plan aims to deliver a more agile and efficient organisational structure with improved workplace effectiveness. Enabled by staff consultation and our Voluntary Severance scheme, we are simplifying access to Student Services by redefining our Student Services provision into three coherent teams. This involves integrating library services and learner engagement within Student Support Services; bringing all student funding into one Student Funding Team; and increasing the scope of Student Information Services to include all admissions, a new retention support service and increased information reporting responsibility.

A summary of the main responsibilities of the three student support services is set out overleaf.

	Student Support Services	Student Funding Services	Student Information Services
Responsibilities	Advice and Guidance. Library services. Extended Learning Support. Student Counsellors. Learner Engagement.	SAAS awards. Bursary Funds. Discretionary Funds.	MIS. Timetabling and staff utilisation. All admissions. Student retention support. Data reporting linked to ICT and Power BI.

The intended impacts of these changes are to:

- give stronger definition of front facing student services providing more accessible and coherent service offer;
- create greater opportunities for more flexible staffing across service areas (more multi-skill and adaptable roles);
- increase the quality of student information, supporting more informed and responsive management decisions and greater control of income and expenditure;
- provide a basis to merge in-person student support services and create single 'student zone' service areas in each campus, encompassing study and relaxation areas with access to front facing student services (guidance, additional needs, counselling, libraries, digital devices, etc.);
- bring together student funding streams into a single service that integrates with wider finance services; and
- increase the scope and impact of student information services, bringing admissions fully into the digital Unit-e offer and expanding capacity for reporting and student attendance support.

Other supporting changes will include transferring Senior Phase administration from Advice and Guidance to the Foundation Apprenticeship team which will bring all school/college coordination and liaison into one team and moving responsibility for coordinating learner surveys and the CLD return from Learner Engagement Officer to the Quality Team.

Following extensive discussion with staff affected and with Unison, we plan to have implemented these changes to our student support services by October this year.

C) Implementation of Transformation Objective 3: Maximise income, reduce non-staff costs, and optimise estate utilisation.

A key goal within this objective is to improve our estate so that it better supports learning, teaching and the overall student experience. Supported by the actions outlined above, we are making significant investments in, and changes to, our campus environments. We are still discussing and consulting, however, we plan to have identified and implemented estate changes for next academic year. Two broad aspects have been highlighted during our early discussions:

Extending College specialist teaching spaces to increase community access:

Improving learner pathways and progression from community-outreach learning into mainstream vocational provision is a priority for the College. However, whilst our Easterhouse campus has a very successful youth access programme, it has no onsite teaching in Engineering and Sport, both subject areas which are specialisms of the College and provide a range of successful progression opportunities into work or further study. We therefore plan to create an engineering workshop and sports facility within the Easterhouse campus so that local residents can begin to experience the opportunities provided by these subject areas.

In addition to these Easterhouse changes, over the summer, building work began within the Springburn campus to create a dedicated space for green technologies to complement our STEM facility. The College engineering curriculum is developing a range of courses responding to increasing need for skills training related to the green economy, including heat pumps and renewable technologies. Training equipment is currently being fitted to our green skills space and we expect the facility to be ready for use from October this year.

Creating more accessible, inclusive and engaging student spaces:

Supported by the consolidation of student advice and guidance and library services, we plan to create more attractive 'Student Zone' areas in our campuses rather than the current discrete spaces (such as our student common rooms which are not well used). By bringing services together in more informal spaces where students can study and socialise, we hope to improve the student experience and encourage students to spend more time on campus and reduce course withdrawals.

Once the new academic year is fully underway, we will continue an in-depth engagement with staff and students on how we can redevelop our estate to better meet student and staff needs.

3. Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications arising directly from this specific report.

The College's Transformation and Renewal Plan seeks to create a more financially sustainable, operationally effective and high performing College. The actions highlighted above will contribute to more efficient and effective use of College resources.

4. Equalities

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

5. Risk and Assurance

This report provides assurance that the College is effectively implementing its Transformation and Renewal Plan in support of our College Strategy to significantly improve our ability to deliver: the highest quality of learning and teaching; an excellent student experience; a reduction in students leaving their programme of study before completion (reduced withdrawal rates); optimised student activity volumes (optimised Credits) and improved student outcomes and success (improved success rates). All within a framework of financial sustainability.

6. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report

7. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- i. note the contents of this report and the actions being taken to implement the College's Transformation and Renewal Plan.

8. Further Information

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

Glasgow Kelvin College
RA
26/08/2021