



Strategic Plan for Colleges Scotland 1 August 2015 – 31 July 2018





Strategic Plan for Colleges Scotland 2015-2018

Message from the Chief Executive



The college sector in Scotland is facing an exciting and challenging time after a radical transformation which led to a new landscape for education in Scotland.

As Colleges Scotland develops its role in the college sector, and as the Employers' Association, the focus will be on enabling colleges to deliver the best opportunities for those learners in colleges in Scotland.

As the collective voice of the sector, our role is to provide a consistent and compelling case for Scotland's colleges and to use our influence to ensure that they are in a position to provide quality education choices to Scotland's people, long into the future.

The success of the college sector is known and celebrated in Scotland. We want to make sure that issues relating to individual colleges are seen in an appropriate context and don't detract from the overall journey to world class provision.

It is essential that we keep abreast of what is happening in Scotland's colleges, but it is important that we keep in perspective the wider context and use the strength of our collective voice to address sector-wide issues and proactively publicise our successes, to encourage future learners and inform employers.

Our three year Strategic Plan will shape our approach to supporting colleges in Scotland to play their part in providing opportunities for all learners, have sustainable funding and contribute to the Scottish Government's *Scotland's Economic Strategy*.

Over the next few years I hope that you will join us in partnership on our journey to ensure Colleges Scotland is at the heart of a world class college sector.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shona Struthers" with a horizontal line underneath.

Shona Struthers
Chief Executive
Colleges Scotland



Introduction

Colleges Scotland has been reinvigorated by an overhaul which has seen it demerge from College Development Network in 2014, with new governance arrangements, staff, processes and procedures now in place.

The refreshed Colleges Scotland is as yet a young organisation, formed in August 2014, with its new board operational since October 2014 and a full team in place since January 2015.

As a membership organisation and Employers' Association, the chairs and principals of all Scotland's 26 colleges developed the new organisation's strategic objectives.

The Colleges Scotland board is made up of the 13 regional chairs – 12 of whom are publicly appointed, with the other being a University of the Highlands and Islands court appointment – plus four principals and the Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland.

This Strategic Plan sets out our key aims and targets over the period 1 August 2015 – 31 July 2018. It provides the means by which we secure Colleges Scotland's vision and mission. It enables us to build on the success we have already achieved and it provides clarity on where we will focus our efforts as we provide policy leadership over the coming years.

Our Vision

Colleges Scotland's Vision

Colleges Scotland aims to be at the heart of a world class college sector that is recognised, valued and available to all.

Our Mission

Colleges Scotland's Mission

Colleges Scotland is the collective voice of the college sector in Scotland; striving to create cohesive and sustainable partnerships, demonstrate positive impact, acting as representatives, and campaigning for the sector.

Our Values

Do the Right Thing

- We will act with integrity, openness and honesty, promoting ethical standards.
- We will never put self-interest ahead of sector interests and will always respect others in any decision making process.
- We will challenge each other, and openly invite challenge, but when debate concludes and decisions are made, these will be fully respected and supported.

Provide Exceptional Services

- We will strive for excellence, provide effective leadership, understand and respond to members' needs.
- We will not promise what we cannot deliver – but we will deliver what we promise, always being helpful, contributing and seizing opportunities.
- We will make good practice our standard practice and through collaboration improve services.

Build and Sustain Relationships

- We will listen, respect, and value others.
- We will have the right discussions with the right people in the right place, removing barriers for effective collaboration.

Always be Attentive

- We will harness ambition and release potential.
 - We will be an advocate for diversity, equality and equity.
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Objectives

1. Representing the Sector

We will do this by:

- Developing clear positions on policy
- Speaking with a strong voice and a unity of purpose
- Influencing key stakeholders
- Distilling complex messages to the appropriate audience.

The resulting outcome will be:

Ensuring that colleges are supported to be the provider of choice for skills and training opportunities, to help businesses grow and boost the economy.

2. Supporting Members' Needs and Representing Member Interests

We will do this by:

- Delivering advice and shaping policy
- Securing investment for the sector through advocacy for sustainable funding
- Influencing and leading negotiations with key stakeholders surrounding priority issues
- Providing appropriate and effective internal governance structures.

The resulting outcome will be:

Providing a cohesive voice to the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council and other key decision makers and stakeholders, in order to deliver a fair, workable and sustainable position for the sector.

3. Promoting the Sector

We will do this by:

- Championing the sector, including promoting learning for all and the economic value of colleges
- Delivering a national campaign to raise general public awareness of the value of colleges
- Developing an integrated communications strategy, with proactive media engagement
- Horizon scanning / intelligence gathering.

The resulting outcome will be:

Raising the profile of the sector and sector wide issues, identifying opportunities and celebrating successes.

4. Engaging and Influencing

We will do this by:

- Providing professional and confidential advice on strategic and operational matters to our members
- Creating sustainable partnerships and ensuring effective dialogue on behalf of the college sector with stakeholders, in particular the Scottish Government, parliamentarians and the Scottish Funding Council
- Promoting the contribution of the sector to the economy and the skills agenda
- Communicating with the public to ensure the sector is better understood.

The resulting outcome will be:

Securing the position of the sector as the key deliverer of quality skills and training opportunities both for Scotland's learners and the business community.

5 .Employers' Association

We will do this by:

- Developing a framework to re-introduce National Bargaining to the college sector
- Implementing a consultation and decision-making process to inform the National Bargaining process
- Provision of resources to support the National Bargaining process
- Providing support and advice on employment matters
- Developing a vision and strategy for the Workforce for the Future.

The resulting outcome will be:

Re-introduction of National Bargaining to the sector and creating a college workforce that is fit for the future.

Report Card

Colleges Scotland will commit to publishing an annual report card to measure our performance and impact against our objectives.



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