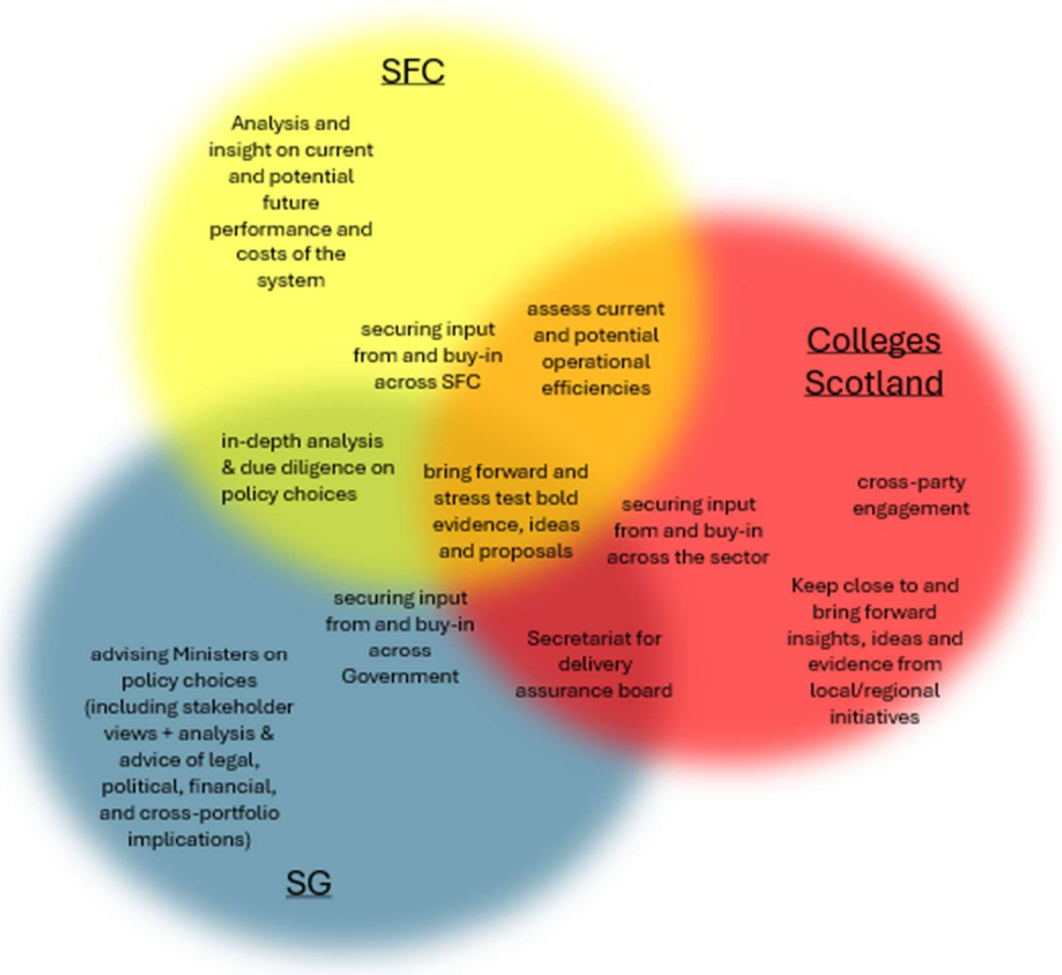
College Sector of The Future

Working Arrangements

The College Sector of The Future Workstream scoping document describes the context, problem statement, aims, scope and method of the workstream.

The work will be delivered in partnership by the Scottish Funding Council, College Sector, and Scottish Government, in the spirit of goodwill and with commitment from all parties to work collaboratively in the best interest of current and future learners. It will be managed by the Work Co-ordination Group, who will meet fortnightly, develop and maintain the workplan, risk register etc, agree allocation of tasks, conduct tasks directly, commission work from others outwith the Group, instigate and steer sub-groups as necessary.

The vast majority[1] of tasks and activities will be taken forward openly and transparently with discussion at the Work Co-ordination Group meetings to ensure all parties are fully aware and able to contribute, support, challenge etc. On the following page, the lead role of each organisation is set out – please note "lead" does not imply working alone – the extent to which things are done individually, bilaterally, and trilaterally will naturally vary in line with the core purpose of our own organisations. This is illustrated below.



[1] "vast majority" = everything allowed. There are some restrictions to what Civil Servants can share.

Scottish Government will:

- Advise Scottish Ministers and Cabinet on policy choices and decisions, drawing on the deliberations, evidence through this work, providing assurance on the quality of evidence, case for change, implications and impacts including Parliamentary handling, budget. This may include further assessment and due diligence of options as needed. (note: advice to Ministers and Cabinet papers are confidential).
- Ensure effective join-up with policy development across the Scottish Government civil service (economy, poverty, place, school education, skills prioritisation, public service reform).
- Lead the strategic preparation and completion of impact assessments of policy choices.
- Prepare for public consultation on policy choices following this workstream as necessary.
- Handle Parliamentary Questions and correspondence relating to the workstream
- Co-ordinate the link between workstream activity and 27-28 budget activity from ~September 2026, with SFC.
- Draw in resource and expertise from across Government as necessary to support working sub-groups and tasks set by the Work Co-ordination Group.
- Support effective synergies with the FFSSU through join up between civil servants working on that project and the college futures workstream.
- Identify and facilitate opportunities for policy ideas to be discussed at existing forums and through bespoke roundtables to complement the contracted Pillar 2 national and regional workshops.
- Provide secretariat function for the Delivery Assurance Group (with support from Colleges Scotland)

SFC will:

- Provide in-depth analysis and due diligence on policy options with respect to funding implications and the coherent provision of further and higher education within the college sector
- Provide project management and administration
- Provide secretariat function for the Working Group
- Provide data analysis and insights
- Procure contract support as necessary through existing frameworks (including procurement and contract management for Pillar 2 national and regional workshops)
- Ensure effective synergies with other transformation projects, including the College Infrastructure Investment Plan, the Fundamental Review of the Funding Allocation Model, the College Transformation Framework, opportunities for shared services and efficiencies.
- Support effective synergies with the FFSSU through involvement in FFSSU working groups.
- Bring forward policy ideas from across SFC
- Procure support for the programme through SFC frameworks or by commissioning others.

Colleges Scotland will:

- Ensure that contributions, ideas, challenges, and concerns from across the college sector are incorporated into the process.
- Maintain awareness of local developments in the college sector, such as collaborations and ideas evolving organically, so they are connected into the workstream.
- Establish and maintain a web-presence for the workstream, and manage publication of all outward facing documents, and minutes of the Delivery Assurance Group
- Support effective synergies with the FFSSU through involvement in FFSSU working groups and regular meetings with Universities Scotland and FFSSU Steering Group Chairs.
- Lead on comms and engagement strategy
- Establish and make effective use of a cross-party reference group
- Work with colleges, as employers, via CES structures
- Co-ordinate and support the wider college sector to:
    - Contribute to working groups.
    - Bring forward policy options and ideas
    - Explore options for reform at local or regional level and bring forward information about what change is needed by SFC and/or Scottish Government to enable reforms to be optimal and effective for current and future learners.