

Sunday, 9 December 2018: For Immediate Release

Comment on Scottish Funding Council Brexit Report

Commenting on the publication of the Scottish Funding Council's *'EU Exit and Scottish Colleges and Universities'* report, Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said:

"The Scottish Funding Council report on the impact of Brexit on colleges and universities highlights a range of concerning issues, including the implications for non-UK EU staff and students as well as funding and cultural exchange programmes.

"More than 16,000 non-UK EU nationals enrolled in Scottish colleges in 2016-17 – approximately 7% of students – and the outcomes of the UK withdrawing from the EU could significantly affect their ability or desire to remain at college and deter other EU citizens to enhance our colleges and themselves by enrolling in future.

"Scottish colleges have greatly benefitted from EU funding programmes and it is currently unclear what would replace those should the UK leave the EU – as it is currently scheduled to do in March 2019.

"EU funding helps Scotland's colleges deliver high-quality courses which are beneficial to students, colleges, Scotland's economy, and our wider society. Through Developing Scotland's Workforce and Youth Employment Initiative some £66 million of EU finance has been invested in our colleges over the past three years, often focussed on those most distant from the workforce, and we are seeking reassurances around how this will be mitigated by the UK and Scottish Governments post-Brexit.

"Scottish colleges have a history of attracting staff and students from around the world and we want to continue developing relationships with our European partners at all levels. We are eager to ensure that Brexit does not diminish the college sector's capacity to continue delivering high-quality learning and skills to our learners and providing employers with the skilled workforce required to support an inclusive, sustainable economic growth."

ENDS

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