

Wednesday 9 September 2015

Colleges Scotland's Response to Scottish Conservatives Claims

Commenting on the claims made by the Scottish Conservatives that colleges are failing to meet the needs of people from deprived areas, Colleges Scotland Chief Executive, Shona Struthers, said:

“Colleges Scotland strongly believes that this interpretation of available data fails to stand up to scrutiny. Contrary to the claims made, our analysis, based on Scottish Government figures, shows that every one of Scotland’s regional colleges delivers a larger (and in some cases, such as in the Scottish Borders, significantly larger) percentage of its learning to students from postcodes (datazones) for the most deprived areas than the percentage of deprived postcode areas in their region.

“For example, in regions as diverse as Aberdeen, Lanarkshire and the Scottish Borders, we are delivering a significantly larger percentage of learning to people from deprived postcode areas than the percentage of the region’s population from these most deprived postcodes. And, to expect colleges in Orkney and Shetland to deliver more than 10 percent of their learning to deprived households when there are none on the islands is clearly not reasonable.

“The Scottish Conservative figures are unfortunately a misrepresentation of the performance of Scottish colleges. The Scottish Funding Council’s own report on how colleges have responded to widening access commends their success in improving opportunities and provision for students from deprived backgrounds and I hope that all political parties will welcome the progress that colleges are making”.

ENDS

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