

Thursday 3 March 2016

Colleges Scotland's Statement on the Post-study Work Steering Group Report

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive, Colleges Scotland said:

“The college sector welcomes the work of the Post-study Work Steering Group and fully supports the findings of the final report and its 10 recommendations.

“The policy changes made by UK Visas and Immigration in recent years have had a significant impact on the recruitment of international students to Scotland's colleges. It is now almost impossible for international students to come to a college in Scotland to study for an HNC or HND.

“It comes as no surprise then that international student numbers in colleges have dropped considerably in recent years, amounting to a loss of just over £5m in income to the sector and £8.6m to local economies in Scotland.

“We are keen to see the recommendations of the report implemented. Not only do international students enrich the experience of Scottish learners by providing a more diverse pool of learners, with a broader global perspective but also the cultural exchange benefits everyone as well as helping to promote Scotland, internationally”.

ENDS

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Notes:

A copy of the report is available on the Scottish Government's website at:

<http://www.gov.scot/poststudyworksteeringgroupreport>

Generally, international students attending Scottish colleges pay fees of up to £6,500 per year. Based on this, the total income for colleges between academic year 2008/9 and 2013/14 reduced by just over £5m (from £17m in 2008/9 to £12m in 2013/14).

Between 2008/9 and 2013/14, international student enrolments at Scottish colleges have fallen by 862, from 2,725 in 2008/9 to 1,863 in 2013/14, a 32% reduction. On the basis of evidence provided by South Lanarkshire College to the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee, that each international student spends £10,000 per year in the local economy, the fall in the number of students over this period indicates a likely loss of £8.62m expenditure in the local economy in Scotland.