

**Tuesday 11 October 2016**

**Comment on College Mergers**

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive, Colleges Scotland said:

“The context within which the mergers were implemented was complex so we would concur with the Auditor General that it would be difficult to go back now and begin a process of assessing cost savings solely from mergers.

“We are pleased that Audit Scotland has recognised that colleges are performing well and that they continue to meet their activity targets set by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

“A recent report by the SFC on the impact of college mergers, shows that overall colleges planned and implemented the mergers well, have made good progress and that mergers can be regarded as successful, against the backdrop of significant wide-ranging changes which included regionalisation, the reclassification of colleges as public bodies by the Office for National Statistics and the re-introduction of National Bargaining to the sector.

“It is important that we now look forward. Post-merger colleges are delivering benefits for society and the economy – significantly in driving positive and improved outcomes for students, integrating curriculum, and providing a better landscape for the delivery of skills across Scotland.”

**ENDS**

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**Notes:**

For an overview of the changes which have affected the sector, please refer to p10, Exhibit 1, of the *Scotland's Colleges 2016* report by Audit Scotland which can be viewed at <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/report/scotlands-colleges-2016>