



SFC Guidance

Annex B

College Outcome Agreement Guidance AY 2017-18

Annex B: Regional context statement and Outcome Agreement template

College region (enter region here)

College regional grouping (list colleges here)

Funding

College region _____ will receive
£_____ from the Scottish Funding Council for academic year
2017-18 to plan and deliver further and higher education in the region.

This funding is on the condition that the college board / regional body signs and
commits to deliver the outcomes detailed below.

Priority Outcomes to be delivered by end of AY 2017-18

Priority Outputs to be delivered in AY 2017-18

Signed by College Region

Signed by SFC

Date

Date

Regional Context Statement

1. SFC expects regions to set themselves achievable but stretching aspirations to deliver outcomes and meet the priorities set out in this guidance document. These aspirations should be understood relative to the context of each unique college region.
2. Each Outcome Agreement captures information about its region in a regional context statement. This is produced at the beginning of a three-year cycle of Outcome Agreements, and should be refreshed as necessary during that period. The regional context statement is the means through which we expect colleges, on an annual basis, to set out plans for meeting the needs of learners, employers and communities in the region, consistent with Scottish Government priorities – and, where appropriate, cross region.
3. The ambition and robustness of regional context statements in 2017-18 are of particular importance given the central role of colleges in the delivery of the Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy¹.
4. Consistent with last year, this annex sets out the information and analysis we expect colleges to provide in their regional context statements. This aligns with the recommendations relating to colleges contained within DYW: Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy. It is also important to note that although the DYW focuses largely on young people, its messages - particularly in relation to provision which is shaped and supported by employers, and ensuring access to opportunities for all groups - are also highly relevant for all college provision.

Define the region being served, identifying specific areas of need, with reference to:

5. Demographic needs
 - Population size / demographic profile (working age population, 16-24 year old population).
 - Patterns of participation (in post-16 education) across the region, identifying any towns / communities with particularly low levels of participation.
 - Areas of multiple deprivation.
 - School leaver destinations, and in particular schools with low levels of positive destinations.
 - Travel to study patterns.
 - Articulation / progression pattern (using SCQF levels).

¹[Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy](#)

6. Economic needs
 - Economic / employer profile.
 - Levels and areas of unemployment.
 - Skill / qualification levels (using SCQF).
 - Evidence of need/demand.
 - Evidence of declining or growing industries, or businesses/industries with growth potential.

Evidence and alignment

7. We expect regional context statements to be informed by Skills Investment Plans (SIPs), Regional Skills Assessments (RSAs) and the refreshed underpinning data to be made available later this summer, along with any other relevant national and local labour market intelligence. SFC will support college-level planning by providing information on, for example, population and participation and bespoke analytical support where it is possible.
8. We expect to see the linkages and alignment to local authority Single Outcome Agreements backed up with a short description of the arrangements in place to ensure effective engagement with relevant CPPs. DYW has increased the onus on colleges to jointly plan provision with a range of stakeholders including local authorities, CPPs, employers, universities and local employability partnerships.

Show how the college will meet the needs of learners

9. Colleges should set out their curriculum offer, demonstrating how it meets the needs of the region and any wider interests served by the region. By 'wider interests', we mean learners from other regions and national or other employers and business sectors whose needs (for example, niche / specialist provision) can be better met by the college or a consortium of colleges.
10. This should include:
 - The relationship between assessment of need and curriculum planning at strategic level. For example, this might take the form of a set of guiding principles that the region uses in making strategic decisions about the curriculum. Where relevant, this should reflect the principles set out in Putting Learners at the Centre, matching our expectation that a wide range of non-advanced provision be provided in locations across the region - because people are less likely to travel for such provision - with routes through to advanced level provision concentrated in a smaller number of locations (particularly at HND level SCQF Level 8).
 - Any gaps or over-concentration in provision or opportunities that have been identified in the region's assessment of need / curriculum planning,

together with any planned action and a summary of the intended outcomes.

- An assessment of the extent to which the needs of pupils in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence and 16-19 year olds who are not already in learning, training or work (the Opportunities for All guarantee group) in the region are being met effectively, together with an assessment of the implications for the curriculum offer and recruitment strategies and the impact on the region's student profile in the medium term (2-3 years).
- Any learner interests that are being served beyond the region and the reasons for this (for example, provision of courses which meet a wider need or communities / groups of learners from other regions who are better served by this region for geographical / transport reasons).

Show how the region will deliver *Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)*

11. In the SFC priorities section of the guidance (pages 16-19), we outline the areas in which we expect colleges to make a very significant contribution to the national programme to develop Scotland's young workforce. Given the scale of the ambition, and the sector's central delivery role, each region should build on its DYW Plan as part of its AY 2017-18 regional context statement, setting out the region's key commitments from AY 2017-18. Importantly, it must be jointly developed and agreed with local authorities and schools and other stakeholders such as Skills Development Scotland and employers.

Senior Phase Vocational Pathways

12. Regions should:
 - Explain how they will strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones – at strategic and operational levels - with local authorities, schools, employers and other stakeholders to support the successful expansion of high quality senior phase vocational pathways.
 - With reference to guidance tools such as the Evaluation Report of the Early Adopter Programme² and the School-College Self-Evaluation Tool³, regional partnerships should outline improvement plans to further develop senior phase pathway planning and their offer, using the SCQF levels.

² [Evaluation report for the SFC Early Adopter Programme](#)

³ [School/College Partnership Self-evaluation Guide](#)

- Detail the region’s overarching strategy, jointly developed with these partners, to:
 - Progressively expand the number of senior phase vocational to fully meet regional demand.
 - Work to ensure alignment of supply and demand for vocational pathways.
 - Ensure gender balance and that provision delivers appropriate support for the participation of groups currently experiencing inequalities in vocational education (including specifically young disabled people, care leavers, young people from black and ethnic minorities and others with additional support needs).
 - Enhance the range and relevance of new pathways, ensuring that the region fully meets its regional need for STEM provision and a strong focus on labour market need.
- Detail the number of projected pathways (including details of the qualifications to be achieved - including SCQF levels), progression routes and places to be made available, and the number (and proportion) of schools with which the region will work to deliver these in AY 2017-18. The introduction of the senior phase vocational cohort measure (measure 16) will capture aspirations for the number of learners on pathways and distinguish this activity from overall schools-college partnership delivery.
- Evidence of how planned pathways for AY 2017-18 align to employer needs.
- Detail planned action to improve gender balance and the representation of key equalities groups on pathways to be offered in AY 2017-18.

Gender and equalities

13. Our expectations to address gender imbalances at the subject level within colleges link directly to KPI 8 of the Youth Employment Strategy which states that the Scottish Government will *‘increase by 5 percentage points the minority gender share in each of the 10 largest and most imbalanced superclasses among 16-24 year olds by 2021.’* These superclasses are Hair / Personal Care Services; Childcare Services; IT: Computer Science / Programming / Systems; Engineering / Technology (gen); Mechanical Engineering; Vehicle Maintenance / Repair; Electrical Engineering; Construction (gen); Build / Construction Operations and Building Services.

14. Building on the commitments set out in OAs for AY 2016-17 we ask each college to set clear outcomes focused on the subjects with the greatest gender imbalances at the college. Where these do not correspond with those included within the Government's KPI (as outlined in paragraph 1), this should be discussed with your Outcome Agreement Manager. We also ask institutions to identify where they have an imbalance between male and female students within completion *by subject* and to outline the outcomes they hope to achieve in addressing the imbalance in their OAs. This is the minimum we expect to see within the Outcome Agreement.
15. If appropriate, we encourage each institution to align their commitments to tackle gender imbalances, as well as other protected characteristics, with their PSED equality outcomes and to state these outcomes within their Outcome Agreements.
16. In addition, each college is asked to develop their own gender action plan. We would expect these to be developed by July 2017. These should outline the actions the college will undertake to achieve the outcomes outlined in their Outcome Agreement. These should correspond with the aims of SFC's Gender Action Plan⁴ with a specific focus on actions that enhance:
 - a. Infrastructure.
 - b. Influencing the influencers.
 - c. Raising awareness and aspiration.
 - d. Encouraging applications.
 - e. Supporting success.⁵
17. **Institutional action plans may sit within broader plans (e.g. Equality Outcomes Plans, regional context statements) but should clearly detail the *specific* actions which will contribute to tackling gender imbalances across all five themes (outlined above) and lead to improved outcomes in the subjects of focus for SFC's Gender Action Plan.**
18. Where relevant these actions should be developed in collaboration with regional partners, in particular schools, local authorities and DYW groups and to consider the needs of different groups of students by gender from recruitment and enrolment through to successful completion and employment. We will issue guidance through the OA process giving more detail to support the

⁴ [SFC Gender Action Plan](#)

⁵ These themes are taken from the research of the Higher Education Academy; [Whose Job is it Anyway?](#), commissioned by SFC to underpin the gender action plan. More detail on these five themes and on the areas for potential development in Scotland's work to tackle gender imbalances is given within the executive summary of the research.

development of institutional action plans.

19. Colleges' OA commitments and gender action plans should include their contribution to implementing SDS' Equalities Action Plan for Modern Apprenticeships.

STEM

20. Where baseline assessments identify a gap between STEM provision and employer need, colleges should detail plans to meet that gap, including stretching but realistic targets for progress in AY 2016-17, including on equalities. We expect college regions to undertake regional mapping of STEM provision in AY 2017-18 in the development of STEM Strategies.

Work Experience

21. Regions should:
 - With reference to the College Work Placement Standard⁶ provide evidence of how college provision meets the standard across curriculum areas and outline improvement plans.
 - Set stretching targets for expansion of work place experience and work placement places in 2017-18, detailing the number of places to be offered and the curriculum areas covered.
 - Make clear the arrangements in place to work with key partners, especially employers, to expand work place experience / work placement in future years, in line with the national expectation that all vocational courses should include a significant element of this.
 - Adopt a joint approach involving schools and local authorities with shared responsibility to grow work experience within senior phase vocational pathways.

Employer Engagement

22. We want to ensure that colleges are responding to employer need within their region and better demonstrate effective engagement with employers.
23. Regions should:
 - Outline arrangements to work with Regional DYW Groups to enhance employer engagement in their region.

⁶ [Developing the Young Workforce Work Placements Standard](#)

- Make clear how the region will work with local industry, local authorities, and local employability partnership groups to develop new partnerships, explicitly targeting key regional employers and sectors not currently engaging with the region.
- Maximise existing partnerships to provide additional opportunities and better employment outcomes, (e.g. through more work experience and deeper engagement on the design and delivery of courses).
- Articulate the expected outcomes from this enhanced and expanded employer engagement, including e.g. more relevant course content, enhanced learning and teaching, more and better quality work experience, enhance the employability prospect of students.
- Detail mechanisms developed to ensure provision is significantly informed by labour market need, including through direct engagement with employers and through use of SIPs, RSAs and labour market intelligence.

Apprenticeships

- MAs are a key vehicle for effective workforce development. The recent announcement to increase the number of MAs to 30,000 by 2020 highlights the potential for colleges to make a greater contribution to the development and delivery of high quality MAs and for MAs to form a key part of the overall measurement of colleges' performance.
- College regions should also consider outlining the number of all apprenticeships supported in the region and their aspirations for this area of work. Continuing improvement of quality and flexibility around delivery are key to colleges wishing to increase activity in this area.
- For Measure 5, SFC expects colleges to report on the total number of MA starts contracted from SDS and other industry bodies such as SECTT and CITB.

Show how the region is meeting the needs of groups of vulnerable learners

- Responding to the National Ambition for Care Experienced Students⁷, outline the number of care experienced learners in the region and how the college/s in the region are meeting their needs pre-college, during college and after to support these students into a positive destination.

⁷ [College Outcome Agreement Guidance AY 2016-17 Annex H: National ambition for care experienced students](#)

- Explain the rationale for the region’s ambitions, in terms of participation and progression, for the following groups of learners. This should make specific reference to the range of non-advanced provision on offer for the region and progression routes within the curriculum):
 - The priority is for reporting on those who reside in the 10% most deprived postcodes in Scotland, (though we acknowledge that for some regions, SIMD20 may be a more relevant figure).
 - Learners with profound and complex needs.
 - Learners from different protected characteristic groups specifically groups which are under-represented as a student cohort comparative to the region.
 - Communities of interest – including, for example, care experienced, carers.
 - Other groups deemed relevant to the region.

Show how the region has the necessary capacity and capability to deliver regional and national priorities

- Outline the region’s CPD plan, demonstrating how it aligns to and supports delivery of, the regional context statement and associated leadership, planning and management.
- Given the priority attached to delivery of the national programme to Develop the Young Workforce, the plan should make explicit the specific needs of management, teaching and support staff. The region should consider this with partners and set out in the plan the jointly agreed priorities for AY 2017-18.
- Demonstrate how the region will contribute to the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan.
- The plan should include specific reference to CPD for relevant staff who work with Senior Phase pupils to ensure all staff who advise, support and teach learners can provide relevant employment advice and support. It should also demonstrate how colleges plan to develop cross sector joint CPD activities to develop a better understanding of senior phase vocational pathways across sectors.

Further information

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