



Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education



Outcome Agreement SRUC

(Scotland's Rural College)

Academic Year 2019/20

FINAL

March 2019

Outcome Agreement – Academic Year 2019/20

This Outcome Agreement between Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) sets out the priorities for the development of SRUC and its SFC-funded education provision for the academic year 2019/20.

For the SFC

Signed:

Karen Watt
Chief Executive

Date:

For SRUC

Signed:



Professor Wayne Powell
Chief Executive

Date:

Outcome Agreement

College region: Land-based

College regional grouping: SRUC

Funding

SRUC will receive funding from the SFC for academic year 2019/20 to plan and deliver further and higher education for the land-based sector in Scotland as detailed within this Outcome Agreement.

This funding is provided on the condition that the regional body (SRUC) signs and commits to deliver the outcomes detailed below.

Contents

1. Introduction and Overview	4
1.1 Introduction.....	4
1.2 Strategy	6
1.2.1 Vision.....	7
1.2.2 Mission	7
1.2.3 Equality and Diversity.....	7
1.2.4 Principal Operations.....	10
1.2.5 Knowledge Transfer and Exchange at SRUC.....	10
1.3 SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA).....	11
2. Widening Access.....	13
3. High Quality, Efficient and Effective Learning	19
3.1 Quality and Enhancement.....	20
3.2 Retention and Attainment.....	20
3.3 National Land-Based Strategy	21
3.4 Portfolio Offer and Activity levels for AY 2019/20	21
3.5 Developing Young Workforce	24
3.6 National Student Survey and Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey	26
3.7 Internationalising the Student Experience	27
3.8 ESOL Activity	27
3.9 National Gaelic Language Plan.....	27
3.10 SCQF Credit Rating	27
4. World-leading Research.....	29
4.1 The Context for our Research.....	29
4.2 SRUC Research Strategy	30
4.3 Outcomes	30
5. Effective Knowledge Exchange and Innovation.....	34
5.1 Strategic context.....	34
5.2 Overview	36
5.3 Key Changes in KTE Delivery and Management.....	37
5.4 BEIS / Innovate UK Agri-Tech Strategy	38
5.5 Engagement with SMEs and Innovation Vouchers.....	38
5.6 The Higher Education and Business Community Interaction Survey	38
6. High-performing Institutions	39
APPENDIX 1: Targets for SAC Consulting Services	41
APPENDIX 2: Universities Innovation Fund: Approach adopted by SRUC to deliver the UIF priorities during 2019/20	42
APPENDIX 4: Acronyms used in this document	48

1. Introduction and Overview

Outcome Agreement Construction

The Outcome Agreement for SRUC for Academic Year (AY) 2019/20 addresses the Aims, Outcomes and Measures within the SFC's University Outcome Agreement Guidance (AY 2019/20) and the SFC's Guidance on Delivering College Outcome Agreements AY 2019/20). The outcomes have been combined across HE and FE. We are mindful to ensure that we:

- Support and promote the **achievement** of our students to maximise their level of academic achievement regardless of their point of entry;
- Ensure **retention** of students both within year and between years including promoting articulation both to and from SRUC and other providers;
- Support the **success** of the rural sector now and in the future through our world class teaching, research and consultancy;
- Take a **regional approach** to ensure that we deliver to the rural sector across Scotland.

1.1 Introduction

As outlined below SRUC provides world class translational research, education, skills training and consulting. Our vision is for a new Enterprise University at the heart of the rural economy, delivering positive social, cultural and economic impact for Scotland that is attractive to learners, collaborators and investors.

SRUC delivers comprehensive innovation, skills, education and business support for Scotland's land-based industries, founded on world class and sector-leading research, education and consultancy. The integration of these three complementary 'knowledge exchange' services is of significant value to all with an interest in land-based activities – be they learners, businesses, communities or policy-makers.

SRUC is unique in the UK and one of the largest organisations of its kind in Europe with a diversity of key agricultural and land-based physical assets together with the extensive and up to date skills of our staff. We will utilise this critical mass of strengths and skills as we serve our increasingly wide range of clients.

Our sector faces unprecedented challenges in terms of meeting multiple societal needs in the rural sector against the background of climate change and the need to mitigate against further environmental damage. Furthermore, the uncertainty and confusion caused by Brexit provides both challenges and potential opportunities for the rural sector. EU students, whilst a culturally enriching component of the SRUC student body are not, if their numbers decline, likely to endanger the economic viability of our courses. The unsettling effect on EU nationals on our staff is a somewhat more worrying challenge and we are attempting to mitigate this through staff seminars with Morton Fraser to try and allay staff fears. However, perhaps the biggest challenge and opportunity of Brexit to SRUC are the changes likely to occur in UK agriculture in terms of changing legislative conditions and both labour and trading markets. Recent draft legislation and policy documents from both the Scottish and UK governments refer to the need to identify public goods that should be supported from the public purse, whilst increasing the productivity and sustainability of the sector in a free market situation. The rural sector in Scotland is about to undergo change at a scale not seen in the last 25 years. This will provide challenges but also opportunities to develop new innovations and a new highly skilled workforce to implement such change. As such, the need for SRUC as a unique teaching, research and consultancy provider to support the rural sector in Scotland has never been stronger.

As a tertiary institution, SRUC is unique in its level of provision from SCQF levels 1 to 12, working closely both with academic and industry partners across the rural sector. Widening access opportunities and the learner journey are key, and learners can progress flexibly and appropriately, with recognition given to prior attainment and focusing on the interests of the learner. On that basis SRUC seeks to meet the needs of the rural sector for an appropriately skilled workforce by recognising the importance of the learner journey and focusing on positive purposeful destinations.

A central feature at SRUC is our internationally-respected research, which seeks to address the major challenges of growing global demand for food and nutrition security, climate change and dwindling natural resources with emphasis on resource use efficiency. Drawing on this foundation SRUC will also focus on an extensive programme of education, consultancy and knowledge exchange, using our extensive direct links to the rural industries to foster and encourage the uptake of innovative new processes and systems. Reflecting our ethos of knowledge exchange, we will involve our students and our many stakeholders, customers and clients in the rural sector as we continue to grow and develop. The translation of our innovative research outputs, by close interaction with our Consultancy services, SAC Consulting, a division of SRUC, helps rural industries through the delivery of up to the minute advice and consultancy to approximately 18,000 clients, in Scotland, across the rest of the UK and beyond.

The seven principles underpinning the development of SRUC's new strategy are:

1. Reassert SRUC's status as the **International Institution** for learning, research and advice which connects the science base and industry and drives growth and innovation in the rural economy, building on SRUC's facilities, expertise and geographic spread to support the needs of a dynamic, innovative and competitive rural sector in Scotland and beyond;
2. Through the integration of teaching, research and consulting activities create a model for collaborative team working within SRUC and across Scotland that includes establishing regional alliances to address local skills needs, a gateway for rapid translation and application of the world-leading research taking place at Scotland's scientific institutes and universities to deliver economic and social impact;
3. Ensure that SRUC returns an outstanding UK leading Research Excellence Framework (REF) return in 2022 and joins the top six ranked schools of agriculture in the world;
4. Build on our comparative advantage as a Small Specialist Institution that can collaborate with complementary organisations in Scotland and beyond to develop excellent student-centred teaching and learning, informed by world class research and industry need across the spectrum of tertiary education;
5. Advance the use of our knowledge of data intensive agriculture to deliver profitable sustainable farming and support prosperous rural communities;
6. Drive and maximise commercial opportunities, promoting an entrepreneurial culture throughout SRUC which is outward facing and strongly connected to industry and creating economic growth;
7. Bring an international focus to all we do.

SRUC has integrated its teaching and research activities within a regional faculty model with close linkage to commercial and consultancy services. In doing so we are focused on:

- Developing clear and compelling learner journeys, working with partners in the college and university sector to ensure that we train a future generation to work in the rural

sector. Our model is committed to provision over the FE to HE spectrum providing aspirational targets for all learners whilst offering multiple points of entry and exit with a strong commitment to support of the student over their whole professional career.

- Becoming increasingly strategic in our interaction with the schools sector to inform students of the variety and high quality of jobs within the rural sector and to provide clear paths for students from the most deprived backgrounds to enter this vibrant job market.
- Ensuring that our teaching, research, and consultancy activities help address global challenges on an international scale, whilst also ensuring that the land-based sector in Scotland benefits from and helps shape the opportunities in the developing industrial sector deals.

This Outcome Agreement includes input from across the Divisions of SRUC in line with a project plan which includes consultation and review with staff, the Students' Association - SRUCSA (including wider consultation with students) and the recognised Trade Unions through established SRUC committee structures.

Our new academic leadership team made up of the Academic Director, Heads of Teaching and Learning, Research and Veterinary Services together with our Northern, Central and South and West Faculty Deans will regularly review progress and plan action as appropriate in relation to the Outcome Agreement (and Scottish Government) priorities and the associated challenging targets.

1.2 Strategy

We live in the early stages of a new phase of scientific and technological transformation. A host of innovative forces are gathering pace. Each would be significantly disruptive on its own, but the dynamic interplay between disciplines, such as biotechnology, artificial intelligence and robotics, is driving fundamental change. What that change will look like is far from clear. Coming into view is the striking potential to alter our relationship with nature and natural assets. The so-called fourth industrial revolution – a convenient label for this convergence of diverse scientific advances – will not be driven solely from cities. Science and technology are giving us the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to redesign the interaction between rural and urban economies.

As in previous periods of fundamental change, knowledge and education have a crucial role in guiding the selection of the best route to success and widest social benefit. SRUC has long fulfilled an anchor institution role, connecting society, business and government. Today's difficult, intractable but exciting challenges mean we must now elevate that role. A new kind of rural university is required to provide a space where policy makers, business, investors and, crucially, civil society can draw upon research and evidence to agree new approaches to shared goals. Change of the scale underway must be harnessed through understanding, collaboration, engagement and negotiation.

In building this new model SRUC will:

- Develop and strengthen our **regional presence** ensuring we deliver to all of Scotland;
- Provide a focus on **jobs and business** ensuring that new knowledge is translated into practical application and new skills;
- Provide a **lifetime guarantee** to learners, removing traditional barriers between academic and vocational, to ensure we support student progression from entry level right through to PhD education;
- Be **outcome focused** to deliver to the Scottish Government's Purpose and revised National Performance Framework (NPF) Outcomes.

1.2.1 Vision

SRUC's overarching vision is:

To be a unique, market-led and mission diverse 21st Century University, focused on the green and circular economies, that is recognised for its global and local impact on food and environmental security through world-class research, education, training and consulting.

1.2.2 Mission

SRUC's mission is:

To meet the needs of and shape the future of a dynamic, innovative and competitive rural sector in Scotland and to solve the biggest global agri-food challenges.

To achieve our Vision and Mission, we will

- Work with employers and others to ensure that the skills we provide and the research we undertake are the engine to drive inclusive economic growth in the sector.
- Develop new approaches both to the recruitment of learners and to the promotion of our sector to potential learners to ensure an inclusive approach that widens participation across ethnic, social and gender divides and ensures that that all members of society can benefit from the opportunities that will inevitably be available in our sector.
- Work with other providers to map out learner journeys both for school leavers and for returning learners to help visualise pathways that identify the careers available within the sector, the available points of entry and exit, the progression routes between providers and the opportunities for returning learners to upskill throughout their working lives.
- Within our own provision and with others ensure that all learners have the ability, should they wish, to improve their skill base from FE certificate level through HE degree level training to postgraduate level based solely on ability rather on provision or the stage of their career.

1.2.3 Equality and Diversity

SRUC is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality and human rights. This is based on a human rights based approach which is underpinned by a belief that all should be treated equally regardless of age, race, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexuality, marital status, religious or political belief, nationality or any other status. This increased emphasis and cultural change is ongoing and SRUC will continue to progress this approach in all areas of work which are underpinned by the SRUC values

Respect
Innovate
Support
Excel

The Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires SRUC, in the exercise of the functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other prohibited conduct;

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In meeting the requirements of the Scottish Specific Duties SRUC has developed the following Equality Outcomes for 2017-2021 with an accompanying action plan:

Equality Outcome 1

Equality and diversity are firmly embedded in our management, leadership and governance structures and practice, ensuring equality of opportunity of employees, learners and stakeholders in recruitment, retention and progression.

Equality Outcome 2

SRUC embraces a culture which is underpinned by dignity and respect, values all employees, learners and stakeholders resulting in parity of experience in an inclusive learning and working environment.

Equality Outcome 3

Employees and students from all backgrounds are encouraged to achieve high levels of success and attainment.

The key remit of the SRUC Equality, Human Rights and Inclusion (EHRI) Committee is to foster an inclusive working and learning environment in which all employees and learners can fulfil their full potential. The aim of the Committee is to:

- Determine strategic direction and priorities;
- Agree the Equality and Diversity action plans to deliver the legislative requirements;
- Monitor and evaluate the action plan progress made by each Division;
- Oversee to ensure SRUC's compliance with equality, diversity and human rights legislation;
- Horizon scan from a broad range of relevant information for emerging issues and trends to develop SRUC's future capability; and
- Provide quarterly Equality and Diversity progress reports to the Executive Leadership Team and the SRUC Board.

This will enable SRUC to meet legal duties and responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights and to strive to exceed these and achieve best practice. The membership of the Committee comes from across the SRUC community including a member of the Executive Leadership team, the Company Secretary (to ensure compliance with appropriate legislation), nominated representatives from each Division, SRUCSA and the Trade Unions. There is a nominated NED E&D Champion on each of the SRUC and SACC Boards who join meetings when they are able. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Policy Engagement to ensure there is direct communication into the Executive Leadership Team.

In addition, the Student Liaison Committees, held twice a year at each of the six main campuses, have a standing Equality and Diversity agenda item. They demonstrate a commitment by senior management and the Board to listening to the student voice and provide an important communication channel.

The organisation action plan to support achieving the equality outcomes will take us from 2017 to 2021. While there is ongoing review of the plan at each

EHRI Committee meeting, 2019/20 will see preparation of the plan beyond 2020/21. Some of the main activities undertaken to date include: hate Incident reporting; supporting equality and diversity in education (marketing, curriculum development, curriculum delivery/learning, teaching activities and staff development); updating of the equality, diversity and human rights internet and Sharepoint sites; and the inclusion of equality and diversity focused questions in employee and student surveys. In addition, all SRUC staff are required to undertake training in Equality and Diversity through an online module. A revised student induction was introduced from 2017/18 which shifted the emphasis from legislation to one which promotes mutual respect and tolerance. This work will be further developed with SRUCSA as part of a Student Partnership Agreement project in 2019 and 2020 in the form of periodic campaigns to ensure a shared and clear message is delivered.

Closely allied to this is SRUC's Gender Based Violence (GBV) work focusing on awareness, behaviours and attitudes. Work, through our safeguarding procedures, has laid a foundation on which to develop SRUC's GBV strategy and will fall under the remit of the Equality, Human Rights and Inclusion Committee. An approved programme of work to progress the GBV agenda includes: a strategy being in place by 2019/20; staff awareness and training; further refinement of the safeguarding procedures; and, with SRUCSA, an evaluation of the feasibility of a joint White Ribbon application. In addition, a Student Partnership Agreement project for 2019 and 2020 will focus on the campaign element of Equally Safe and work is underway to involve SRUC campuses in the regional Violence Against Women groups. SRUC has been working with the Equally Safe in HE project team to develop an approach to GBV and will assist with the adaptation of the toolkit for the College sector. Edinburgh based HE students and staff will be invited to participate in the Equally Safe research project contributing to sector and Edinburgh city analysis. SRUC has been working with other HEIs and agencies in the Edinburgh area to develop Fearless Edinburgh, a branded collective to educate about, and support victims of, GBV. Together with the Equally Safe team we are considering a regional staff development approach for the West region.

SRUC's approach to promoting protected characteristics is being reviewed to ensure that the eventual champions for these are appropriately supported by institutional skills, knowledge and experience.

SRUC's Gender Action Plan was published in July 2017 and highlights the work SRUC will undertake to seek to achieve the Scottish Government's benchmarks in the medium and longer term. Applications for 2017/18 (across FE and HE together) showed a split of 65.7% female and 34.3% male whereas for enrolments the split was 55.7% female and 44.2% male. The greatest imbalances are in animal care, engineering, forestry & arboriculture, golf course management & greenkeeping, horse care & forgework, professional golf and veterinary nursing. For HE in 2017/18 the gender gap increased to 11 percentage points compared to 7 percentage points the previous year, but still ahead of the sector gender gap of 15%. Enhanced consideration, through annual monitoring, at programme level is being developed to ensure staff fully engage with the issues.

SRUC concluded its Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) project "Attracting diversity: equality in student recruitment in Scottish Universities and Colleges". Much was learnt from the project, focusing on Veterinary Nursing, although it was acknowledged that the industry also has its part to play. The [SRUC reports](#)

contributed to the project's Festival of Learning and were shared at the SRUC Learning and Teaching conference. We await the final report from Advance HE in order to consider other projects' findings and inform our own developments.

SRUC is actively addressing the requirements of the British Sign Language Act (2015) and its [plan](#) was published in October 2018. Actions to date include both the Principal's induction message and the plan itself having BSL interpreted versions.

SRUC mainstreaming report, equality outcome report, employment and Gender Pay Gap information are published as per the legal requirement and these are available on the [SRUC website](#). Our mainstreaming activities involve the Head of HR and the HR Business Partners supporting the Divisions' equality outcomes work with employees and students, with equality and diversity as a regular agenda item for Board, Executive Leadership and Divisional Management Teams as well as the Student Support and Engagement Committee.

A new equality and human rights impact assessment system was developed and launched in early 2016. The Outcome Agreement has been impact assessed.

1.2.4 Principal Operations

A new SRUC Academic strategy that combines our teaching and research activities in a single structure and aims to build strong regional hubs is now being implemented with the arrival of our Faculty Deans, Professors Argo in the Northern Faculty, Hopkins in the Central Faculty and Sparks in the South and West Faculty.

1.2.5 Knowledge Transfer and Exchange at SRUC

Knowledge transfer and exchange activities are fundamental to achieving SRUC's mission – To drive the future needs of a dynamic, innovative and competitive rural sector in Scotland and to solve the biggest global agri-food challenges.

Our KTE and innovation programme is focused on the rural and food sectors locally, nationally and internationally. Our KE plays a major role in establishing the identity and value (ie. impact) of SRUC's innovative outputs and outcomes from our research to key audience groups of policy makers, public, science and industry. We support our outward facing KE with a programme of internal KTE to ensure that our staff who have different roles (education / research / consultancy) across the organisation appreciate the value and maximise the exploitation of the broad range of facilities and expertise available across our three major campus locations.

Further specific internal activities are designed to promote an enhanced entrepreneurial and innovative approach, not only in our staff, but also in our student population, many of whom leave the college to go into rural based business enterprises or indeed set up enterprises in their own right. This fully accords with our revised SRUC strategy. We have followed up our focus in 2017/18 (as described in the 2018/19 Outcome Agreement) on improving our entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial culture, facilitated by "Entrepreneurial Spark". From these initiatives it is clear that a number of our staff are thinking commercially and are aware of marketing, selling, earnings, billable time and

budget. However, they are not necessarily considering the profitability of that work, the wider offer with cross selling opportunities or acting in an entrepreneurial manner and working with clients in a proactive way.

SRUC as part of its strategy is becoming more commercial, entrepreneurial, outward looking and industry facing. Our strategy aligns with and responds to key pillars of the industrial strategy that will form part of post-Brexit Britain. Enhancing and implementing our Commercialisation and Innovation strategy requires a transformation of where we are now shaping economic, skills and training strategies to provide key selected staff with the ability to foster innovation and commercial outlook going forward.

We therefore intend to set up a place where ideas can be grown, tended, cared for, tested and improved upon, as a progression towards implementing our Innovation strategy. We have called this place “The Orchard” that will allow employees and students to contribute their own ideas towards commercial growth across SRUC through an agile process where they will be provided with the required skills for establishing a commercial mind-set. We intend therefore to set up and implement the “Orchard Hub” to enhance commercial awareness across SRUC through knowledge sharing and provision of appropriate skills and employee training. We intend to identify and support in 2019/20 up to 5 Orchard innovation projects to carry out market research, prototyping and market testing prior to the development of full business cases. These projects will provide good case studies, from which to grow and increase the number of projects in subsequent years.

1.3 SRUC Students’ Association (SRUCSA)

The Students’ Association continues to mature with its Executive Committee actively reviewing how it might best represent, advocate for and engage with its members and partner SRUC. SRUC’s strategic direction dialogue and subsequent strategic change continues to progress, so a working group has been initiated by SRUCSA to review the Students’ Association’s structure and strategic plan. The findings of this review will form the basis of any structural or strategic changes that may be implemented by the Students’ Association, to ensure that SRUCSA can continue to effectively represent the student body as SRUC moves towards a geographical faculty system.

In order to ensure representation of all students, SRUCSA will carry out activities to engage underrepresented groups. Building on the successful development of liberation groups, the Students’ Association has created four voluntary Liberation Officer posts on the SRUCSA Executive Committee. By-elections in 2018/19 have resulted in SRUCSA’s first dedicated LGBT+ Officer. SRUCSA will continue to develop the role of Liberation Officers and elections will take place to elect a Black Students’ Officer, Disabled Students’ Officer, LGBT+ Officer and a Women’s Officer for 2019/20. Social media is also being used to good effect to continue the development of online communities and promote involvement in NUS liberation activity.

SRUCSA is continuing to develop its student experience role though assisting in the development of clubs and societies and has developed a new operating procedure for Campus Councils to allow wider student engagement in the decision making and funding processes of the Students’ Association. Student voice remains a priority for SRUCSA in 2019/20 and SRUCSA is continuing to work with SRUC to engage all students in providing individual and representative collective feedback, as part of the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) ‘Class Reps Project’. SRUCSA held its first ‘Speak Week’ event in 2018 to allow students to provide open and anonymised feedback about what they liked about SRUC and what they would change, following

on from its success the Students' Association are committed to running 'Speak Weak' again in 2019/20.

SRUCSA continues to actively participate in wider student movement and is an affiliated member of the National Union of Students (NUS). The NUS is recognised as the national voice for students and SRUCSA engages with them to ensure that the interests of SRUC students can be represented on a national level. SRUCSA officers and its support staff, the Learner Engagement Officers are members of sparqs forums and working groups including the Academic Representation Co-ordinators group.

The Students' Association is actively involved in College decision making. The Student President is a member of the SRUC Board and a second student member position has been recently created. The second student member of the SRUC Board was elected by the SRUCSA Executive Committee from its members; the Students Association and the SRUC Board are in discussion about how this position will be filled in 2019/20, with both parties agreeing it would be preferable if the second student member was elected from outwith the SRUCSA Executive Committee. The Student President is also a member of the Academic Board and both the President and Vice President are members of a variety of other key SRUC committees. The Campus officers chair student councils on each campus and report to a Student Liaison Committee, where a non-executive SRUC board member can be directly engaged for student input into strategic discussions. SRUC continues to refine its academic and student related policies and procedures and SRUCSA is involved in the review and approval processes.

SRUCSA has read, commented on and contributed to drafts of the Outcome Agreement both independently and through Committee membership. SRUCSA sabbatical officers also participate in the annual teaching and student support services quality dialogues, providing input to the schedule of planned improvement and enhancement activities.

For 2019/20 SRUCSA will continue to be funded by SRUC on its agreed model; SRUC directly pays the salaries, travel and subsistence costs of two sabbatical officers and provides accommodation, dedicated staff support and business services. In addition, a block grant is allocated to the Students' Association. The block grant is managed by SRUCSA to cover operating expenses, a significant part of which relates to payroll costs of elected officers.

2. Widening Access

Priority 1 Access to education for people from the widest range of backgrounds, including implementation of the recommendations of CoWA and addressing gender balance.

A more equal society because learning is accessible and diverse, attracting and providing more equal opportunities for people of all ages, and from all communities and backgrounds.

In summary SRUC will:

- ***Implement a contextual admissions policy that allows school performance data and socio-economic markers to provide context for individual applicants' applications. We will use this approach both to ensure that:***
 - ***Recruitment materials and activities ensure that all students with the potential to succeed, regardless of their background, are encouraged to apply to study with us;***
 - ***We provide support during the application process to ensure that applicants are supported to facilitate their applications and reduce the number of potential applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds who fail to progress initial enquiries to eventual admissions.***
 - ***Our admissions team uses contextual data to recognise a student's achievements and identify their potential to succeed in the context of their background and experience.***
- ***Where appropriate, focus our schools' activities in communities less likely to enter further and higher education to encourage pupils to consider careers in the rural sector.***
- ***Ensure that progression routes both within SRUC and with other providers allow seamless progress of learners from FE to HE pathways.***
- ***Promote the use of prior learning and experience in the admission of returning learners joining SRUC at all stages of their careers.***
- ***Commit to making learning accessible, providing opportunities for all and supporting all learners through their learner journey and to reach a successful conclusion. Recommendations within the SFC commissioned research 'Mapping and Evaluating the use of Contextual Data in Undergraduate Admissions in Scotland' will be considered for their relevance across SRUC's application and selection processes.***
- ***Embed a refreshed access and inclusion strategy which focuses on providing support and guidance to all learners, wherever and however taught, using technology where appropriate. This will be progressed in part through a revised Student Support Policy which sets out SRUC's provision of learning, personal and wellbeing support services.***

With a focus on Higher Education, SRUC continues to support and contribute to Widening Participation partnerships, funded all or in part by **SHEP**, in regional areas across Scotland.

As per previous years, these remain:

- **Lothian Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS):** City of Edinburgh, Scottish Borders, West Lothian, East Lothian, Midlothian, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling.
- **ASPIRENorth:** Northern Scotland

- **Lift Off:** Angus, Dundee and Fife.
- **Focus West:** West of Scotland

In addition, SRUC is involved in the **Kickstart Edinburgh** Programme. The initiative is in a period of review, with plans for a revised programme to be rolled out during 2019. SRUC will continue its involvement along with Edinburgh Napier University, the University of Edinburgh, Heriot Watt University and Queen Margaret University.

SRUC interacts with Widening Participation officers / teams at other institutions and, going forward, seeks to increase and intensify engagement. This is challenging given our involvement in multiple schemes nationally, but we will seek to consolidate our efforts to greater effect overall as part of our commitment to widening participation. Both of these demonstrate SRUC's support of the Scottish Government's widening access priority.

There is a number of courses now being delivered to Senior Phase students both in schools and students attending SRUC, for example Animal Care modules being delivered to pupils in East Lothian. SRUC continues to develop its work with Senior Phase students through discussions with local authorities.

Working with these partnership organisations optimises the impact we can make with the resources we have. SRUC is also a member of **SWAP – the Scottish Wider Access Programme** – attending national and regional meetings and contributing where relevant to the portfolio of progression opportunities.

SRUC aims to use a portion of its allocated University Innovation Fund to fund a Knowledge Exchange focused Community event at our Elmwood and Barony campuses. These events aim to raise awareness of courses in those local communities, widening our reach to the community surrounding the campuses more generally rather than just focusing on the rural sector, and showcase the impact of SRUC research, teaching and services to the land-based sector.

In addition, SRUC will continue to identify education and skills needs in the Food and Drink sector, using our specialism to support the sector, particularly in relation to primary production.

SRUC's relationships with its regional college partners create choice for the local population. The continued recruitment success of HND Business Management Ayrshire College students into the third year of the Rural Business Management degree at the Ayr campus demonstrates that SRUC offers attractive, alternative, land-based progression opportunities for those studying main-stream higher national courses. This approach is being further explored at other campuses with their neighbouring regional colleges.

As a national institution, we have relatively high levels of internal articulation (into HE years 2 and 3). SRUC aims to offer 90% of applicants with HN qualifications entry with advanced standing, with the remaining 10% dominated by those whose HN is not directly relevant to their chosen area of study. The target is similar for both external and internal applicants. In 2017/18 we had 247 students articulating to SRUC HE provision. In addition, there are around 200 students annually who move from FE level study to HE year 1.

SRUC's specific HE aim in 2017/18 was to increase to 28.5% the proportion of MD40 (including MD20) for SDUE (Scottish Domiciled Undergraduate Entrants) from the 2014/15 level of 27.2%. The level did increase to 29.8% in 2016/17 and then dropped back to 28.1% in 2017/18. The total number of MD40 SDUEs was above estimate but the overall SDUE total increased more. With regard to MD20, in order to meet the CoWA target of 16% by 2021, SRUC has been more ambitious with its target than before, originally setting a target of 13.1% for 2017/18 and achieving 13.5%.

SRUC's specific target for FE was to increase the proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas from the 2015/16 level of 5.8%. There was a slight dip in 2017/18 (to 5.3%) but given the specialist rural nature of our course portfolio, at all levels, reaching inner-city urban students is a challenge to SRUC. We continue to try to reach such areas and SRUC's collaboration with New College Lanarkshire (NCL) on NC Animal Care provision is an example of this. There is good progression from this collaborative delivery on to other SRUC courses.

Evaluation of HE students overall has shown that retention and success levels have increased overall and particularly for SIMD20/40 students. In 2017/18 retention was identical for males and females while success was slightly higher for females. As perhaps would be expected students aged under 21 years have slightly better retention - 91% compared to 88% for those aged 21 and over although the older age group has slightly higher success rates. Those coming from SHEP schools have good retention levels, and were above the SRUC overall figure in terms of success, at 90.7%. Those with a declared disability are in line with overall SRUC retention although their success rate at 85.9% is slightly lower than the SRUC figure of 88.3%. However, within that category, when considering those with identified needs (in terms of required adjustments) retention increases to 91.4% and success is also slightly higher.

Access thresholds are currently under review and will be implemented once formally agreed, including specific arrangements for care experienced students who are already 'flagged' at application. Consideration of arrangements for young carers is also underway. Implementation will involve working with our Marketing and Student Recruitment team to ensure appropriate communication of these access thresholds and what SRUC defines as a widening access applicant.

There has been an increase in the offer rate to SIMD20 applicants over the past three years from 30.6% to 50.0% for entry in 2018, and it is now close to the overall rate for all applicants. Acceptances as a percentage of applications has also increased over this period to 35% in 2018 (compared to 30.9% for SRUC overall) and acceptances as a percentage of offers is significantly higher for SIMD applicants at 70%, compared to 55% for SRUC overall.

The SRUC approach to contextualised admissions is being reviewed. Individual consideration is given to each applicant including suitability for the programme/level but is much broader than academic achievement alone. Processes for identifying and tracking SIMD20 (and SIMD40) applicants will be implemented more formally in the forthcoming admissions cycle. Additional guidance will be provided to staff involved in selection, including the importance of individual consideration (including Bridging Programmes), the use of adjusted offers and ongoing communication/tracking through the cycle to enrolment. This will be supported by reporting on conversion rates and successful enrolments.

For both FE and HE, we will continue to review applications on an individual basis with reference to academic grades (achieved and predicted), personal statement and reference. Applicants are required to demonstrate, via their application, their interest in and commitment to their chosen area of study. This is particularly important for those areas which involved an interview as part of the admissions process. Applicants require the motivation, ability and necessary skills to succeed on the course and if appropriate they may be offered an alternative access route.

In future, to further support applicants, SRUC plans to allocate a member of staff and a current student to act as a point of contact. This interaction will start at the point of application and will continue up to the start of the course and beyond, however applicants are also encouraged to contact us to discuss their application before submission). Support will come in the form of regular contact with the applicant, a guaranteed place on an Applicant Day (including financial support where required to help with travel costs) and support in looking for accommodation and in applying for funding.

Specifically for FE applicants, there are discussions around moving away from traditional interviews, but invitation to 'experience' type events instead. These will encourage applicants to visit the campus, meet staff and find out more about student life. Again financial support will be available to help with travel costs.

SRUC seeks to enhance and enrich engagement with secondary schools in some of the more disadvantaged areas of Scotland to help pupils understand the range of career opportunities in rural Scotland, linking to Government priorities. SRUC has been working with the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) to reach and engage with primary schools at many of RHET's Food and Farming days, developing new resources to engage with this age group, such as the "From Cow to Cone" story of ice cream production.

In the FE sector, SRUC remains committed to our unique structure of progression opportunities which allow students to progress through SCQF levels in their chosen subject area. As an FE/HE provider, SRUC delivers progression talks and workshops internally to promote access to Higher Education to our own student body. SRUC highlights progression routes and opportunities extensively in marketing materials and in 2018 SRUC was shortlisted for the "best prospectus from a specialist institution" award at the national HEIST Awards.

Over the past two years SRUC has continued to embed changes in the management of publically provided student funding, developing a more integrated approach with the student MIS and seeking to ensure that students are aware of, and can access, all funds appropriately. Work is undertaken to assess the impact of such funding, together with SRUC Trust Fund support, on completion and success.

SRUC is fully and positively engaged with **Developing Scotland's Young Workforce** and we are making progress in securing appropriate sector representation on the DYW regional groups. Secondments are in place to co-ordinate and develop curriculum delivery and support to schools. Priority areas are being identified, in order to increase schools' delivery from 2018/19, taking into account wider Scottish Government priorities.

As a provider which encompasses both HE and FE, SRUC's activity is designed to have impact at both levels. SRUC continues to have a diverse student body both in terms of our young:mature student ratio (47% for HE SDUE under 21 and 56% of credits delivered to learners aged 16 - 19) and our male:female ratio (HE SDUE around 44% and FE around 55% of credits delivered to male learners). Both age and gender balance within SRUC's FE provision were positively impacted by the transferred in provision from NESCol and Edinburgh College. Student numbers on these courses are not insignificant, totalling 280 equally split between the Aberdeen and Oatridge campuses, and these students are typically young and female. SRUC continues to ensure that mature students and ethnic diversity are well represented in the imagery used in our publicity materials, whilst upholding our ethos of using real photographs of real students.

Historically, agriculture was a predominantly male dominated profession but the number of female agriculture students has steadily increased and the project will review agriculture recruitment initiatives to inform outcomes. It is interesting to note the 2018/19 gender balance for students studying at different levels and at different campuses. Overall 27% of full time FE (NC) agriculture students are female in 2017/18 (up from 21.3% in 2016/17 but lower than the 2017/18 figure of 32.5%). There is less variation across the three campuses involved compared to previously, from 19% (Barony campus) to 33% (Aberdeen campus). However, when considering HNC registered agriculture students the average is 40% female, ranging from 29% to 39%. For HE agriculture students overall (HNC, HND and degree registered) 38% are female (up from 33.6% in 2016/17 and 37.1% in 2017/18), but again there is variation across campuses (26% - 55%).

SRUC continues to enhance the support offered to care experienced students and also those who are carers, combined with improved data gathering relating to these students. This will include identifying best practice both within SRUC and in consultation with other Scottish education institutions with the aim of improving performance. The SRUC care experienced and carer plan, initially created involving CELCIS and synonymous with a corporate parenting plan, is publically available and reported on and updated annually. Work is underway to: refresh awareness for existing and new Board members and senior managers; undertake specific end of year evaluation with identified students; and to work more closely with local authorities close to each campus to raise awareness of the support available. In 2017/18 50 students identified themselves as care experienced (46 FE, 4 HE). At the end of the year, one HE student had successfully completed the year, one had deferred and two did not successfully complete. Of the FE students, 24 successfully completed, 16 withdrew and six did not successfully complete. Of these 50 students, 12 have continued to study with SRUC in 2018/19. We are aware that many of these students tend to declare as care experienced informally and we are seeking to improve our official reporting. In 2018/19 16 HE and 32 FE students have declared a care experience background. In 2017/18 20 HE and 37 FE students declared themselves as carers. At the end of the year 10 HE students successfully completed the year, one had deferred, one had withdrawn and eight did not successfully complete. Of the FE students, 16 successfully completed while the other four withdrew. In total 29 of these students have continued to study with SRUC in 2018/19. Their progress is being monitored and this includes attendance monitoring to enable early pick up of any issues. In 2018/19 58 HE and 28 FE students have declared caring responsibilities. This area of student support work was commended in the institutional led review of student support services. We would hope that increases in funding for care experienced students will mean that financial hardship is less of a contributory factor to poor retention and non-achievement. There are systems in place to ensure care experienced students are made aware of financial support available.

SFC funding used by SRUC to support a wide range of needs in our student population, including support and assistive technology is limited, particularly as it was not increased with the transferred in provision at the Aberdeen and Oatridge campuses. This has proved particularly challenging at Aberdeen where there was previously little FE provision (around 15 FTEs per year). Our commitment to provide equal opportunities at all six campuses for all students has proved difficult to achieve but we have invested in new staff resources at the Aberdeen campus and seek to share expertise and equipment across campuses where possible. Work has been undertaken to make greater use of technology via Moodle and social media for information provision, and remote technology to enable direct support where appropriate. A comprehensive safeguarding and risk assessment programme is in place and GBV will be explicitly referenced within this. Our ambitions include ensuring that our student support service (including personalised needs' reporting and agreed actions) continues to support our learners across the protected characteristics and other key groups (such as veterans and estranged students). Work is being undertaken to improve our reporting and analysis of (and actions resulting from) successful completions and destinations by protected characteristics and student support including the provision of mental health support. More work is required in order to clearly define baseline figures, to set targets and to ensure accessibility (and appropriate interpretation) of information. A Business Intelligence project is underway, aiming to bring together data to create meaningful reports to support timely intervention. SRUC's commitment to supporting mental health is now articulated in a Healthy Learning and Wellbeing Strategy, developed by staff and students and setting out how SRUC will support the physical and mental health of its community. Working with SRUCSA, SRUC has a partnership with the charity SANE, providing access for students (and their teaching and support staff) to online support and out of hours telephone support. SRUC plans to work with SANE to review our students' (confidential) access to telephone support to provide indicators for the service. Shady, our Black Dog, is a symbol and voice for mental health awareness, sharing daily affirmations and relevant news and advice through a Twitter account @shadythedog. We believe SRUC is the first institution in the UK to have created a

personality for our mental health work in order to support accessibility. Other activities include working with Thera-pets, providing mental and physical wellbeing roadshows twice a year and reinforcing the message that its 'ok not to be ok' and that we should look after ourselves and look out for each other.

We will continue to build our capacity in mental health first aid having provided access to training for over 90 staff and student officers in 2017/18. Physical health was the subject of the recent Destination Wellbeing pan-SRUC initiative, focussing on exercise and healthy diet and the role these play in mental wellbeing. SRUC has also introduced a 24/7 confidential helpline for staff (and their families) which provides a range of practical and emotional support services. SRUC and SRUCSA have been part of the NUS Student Mental Health Agreement pilot at the Aberdeen campus and this will be extended across all campuses. SRUC's student support services aim to maximise the impact of our specialist resources wellbeing and mental health across our geographical spread. Specific counselling support is generally outsourced locally as required, although where campuses have been identified as requiring significant support sessional on-campus provision is in place. Providing support to distance and workbased learners is challenging. SRUC is considering the introduction of a new student portal, MyDay, to act as a single digital access point for students and education staff, to improve accessibility and enhance learner engagement. Offering a combination of information and interactive services the portal could also facilitate a level of online personal student support.

We would anticipate signing up to the Veterans Covenant and for both veterans and estranged students we plan to add questions to our online enrolment process to flag up such students. As with care experienced and carers there will also be opportunities to declare during the academic year.

3. High Quality, Efficient and Effective Learning

Priority 2 High quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, including learning which prepares people well for the world of work, prioritising provision that meets known skills gaps in the economy.

An outstanding system of learning where all students are progressing successfully and benefiting from a world-class learning experience, in the hands of expert lecturers delivered in modern facilities.

A more successful economy and society with well prepared and skilled students progressing into jobs with the ability, ideas, and ambition to make a difference.

Scotland is a more equal society because learning is accessible and diverse, attracting and providing more equal opportunities for people of all ages, and from all communities and backgrounds.

In summary, SRUC will:

- *Work with other providers to map out learner journeys both for school leavers and returners to help identify pathways that identify the careers available within the sector, the available points of entry and exit, the progression routes between providers and the opportunities for returning learners to upskill throughout their working lives.*
- *Commit to increase the depth of engagement with Education Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and the Quality Assurance Agency to develop a strategy suited to SRUC's unique status in order to implement a new quality approach and the integration of new quality arrangements, OA evaluation and reporting;*
- *Aim to increase retention and the proportion of students, including protected characteristic (and MD10/20/40) groups, successfully completing their course;*
- *Continue to review the portfolio offer to ensure sustainable delivery and that provision is well aligned with industry demand whilst working with other providers to provide seamless progression opportunities and to help meet future needs for a successful and forward looking rural sector;*
- *Maintain SRUC's proportion of full-time, first year degree students returning to study in year 2;*
- *Aim to increase the overall SRUC satisfaction rate (70% in 2018) in the NSS over the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 in line with the HEFCE benchmark (84%);*
- *Internationalise the student experience, enhance and increase student mobility, particularly outward student mobility;*
- *Establish a baseline of current work placement with reference to the new Work Placement Standard for Colleges and from this we will express our ambitions for growth;*

In addition, focus continues on SRUC's ongoing commitment to STEM, articulation, employer engagement and working in partnership to develop Foundation pathways and technical and graduate apprenticeships.

3.1 Quality and Enhancement

SRUC's approach to enhancing the quality and delivery of learning and support for students is core to our activity. Externally, SRUC will undergo Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in Spring 2019. This process is underpinned by meaningful academic dialogue – through the Academic Governance structure and through annual internal monitoring and annual internal monitoring and Institutional Led Review (ILR) processes and our quality engagement with Education Scotland (ES) for FE delivery. SRUC has developed refreshed policies, procedures and academic governance structures and the focus during 2019/20 will be on further embedding these. ILR has been expanded to include FE provision and an ILR of Research Postgraduate provision was held for the first time in September 2018. Environment and Countryside education provision is to be reviewed in 2019/20. We will work with SRUCSA to continue to enhance student input to our quality monitoring processes in a partnership approach.

Internal self-evaluation and academic dialogue have been enhanced by the introduction of annual departmental review meetings with Senior Managers. The process has matured and SRUC will consider the involvement of an external reviewer in the process.

There is a need to review the processes involving Education Scotland, QAA and internal review in order to reduce the burden on SRUC and to establish an appropriate and effective approach.

SRUC is building on its membership of LANDEX by engaging in networking opportunities, cpd and Peer Review.

3.2 Retention and Attainment

SRUC maintains a high degree of success in its FE learners with 68.3% of full time learners in 2017/18 achieving a recognised qualification (compared to the Scottish national average of 65.3%). In addition, 91.8% of our part time learners also achieved their desired targets, above the target of 88%. For full time students from MD10, in 2017/18 56.6% successfully achieved a recognised qualification, down from 61.4% the previous year. It is planned that improved tracking and intervention will see this completion rate move back up. The equivalent rate for part time students remains high at 90%.

Key data relating to retention and attainment are discussed at the annual dialogue meetings. Departments are expected to review all programmes where attainment is below 65% and devise actions at programme level to effect improvements. This will be monitored by the Quality team.

The proportion of full-time first year students (whether HNC, HND or degree registered) returning to study in year two in 2018/19 is estimated at 79.5%. The definition and therefore the interpretation of the measure is complicated by the fact that SRUC has a high proportion of HNC registered first years and a high level of students articulating directly into years two and three, both within SRUC and from other institutions. SRUC aims to increase this level as it continues its commitment to widening access and the overall learner journey in line with Scottish Government priorities. However, it should be acknowledged that students can leave at the end of year one with an industry sought after HN qualification, even if degree registered.

Analysis of student retention across all levels has been identified as an area for development within the SRUC business intelligence project. The intention is to generate management level reports which will contribute to the development of a set

of risk indicators which can then be used to plan targeted early interventions for learners who may be at higher risk of withdrawing from their programme of study. Moving forward in the new Faculty structure we anticipate there will be closer monitoring of students' attendance and achievement at the Faculty level. Medium term developments include the new student portal (using MyDay), greater clarity for the student on attendance reporting and improved use of such monitoring data to flag students presenting concern and initiate intervention.

The proportion of FE students at SRUC successfully achieving a recognised qualification is good but SRUC aims to increase the rate for full time learners over the next three years to 72% in 2021/22, whilst maintaining the rate for part time learners at 85%.

With regard to graduate destinations, measure 9b, SRUC and SFC have discussed the appropriateness of this measure, as it is currently defined. The sectors which SRUC's vocational academic awards seek to serve are ones which require the work force, particularly in early career, to undertake a variety of responsibilities ranging from very hands-on to supervisory, managerial and leadership. This is particularly the case for our graduates who return to family enterprises or enter the third sector. The current definition of professional within the DLHE is too narrow to appropriately and fairly represent the achievements of our graduates. For example, those graduating in agriculture and taking up a farm management role are not classified as being in a 'professional' employment destination.

3.3 National Land-Based Strategy

The provision of land-based education and training is delivered in part through the regional college structure and in part by SRUC as the National Provider. The National Strategy for Land-Based Education and Training commissioned by the Scottish Funding Council and led by SRUC was published on the SFC website in 2015 and can be accessed [here](#).

As highlighted earlier, during 2017 SRUC has reviewed its future strategy and the implementation process is ongoing.

SRUC will continue to work closely with partner colleges, employers and learners to ensure the needs of the land-based sector are met effectively. We are developing learner journey pathways across the sector with a clear focus on the range and scale of jobs available in the land-based, food and drink sectors and beyond.

3.4 Portfolio Offer and Activity levels for AY 2019/20

SRUC's portfolio offer continues to be reviewed to ensure sustainable delivery that is well aligned with industry demand and the recommendations within the National Strategy. Table A shows the planned provision pathways for 2019/20. The planned new provision of a BSc in Veterinary Nursing commenced in September 2018. This replaces the HND offering and SRUC hopes to recruit a higher number of students due to the remodelling of delivery. A new joint programme was also introduced with the University of Edinburgh with a degree in Agricultural Science starting in 2018/19.

Table A: Provision Pathways for AY 2019/20

Subject area	SCQF Level								
	1-3	4-6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Agriculture		B O Ab	B O Ab Ay Ed	O Ab Ay Ed	Ab Ay Ed	Ab Ay Ed		Ed** DL	Ay Ed
Animal Care & Vet Nursing	B O	B E O Ab DL	B E O Ab	B E O Ab					
Applied Science and Technology			Ay Ed DL	Ay Ed	Ay Ed	Ay Ed	Ed** DL		Ay Ed
Business Management		E	E Ab Ed	E Ab Ed	Ab Ay Ed	Ab Ay Ed		DL	Ed
Environment, Countryside and Conservation	E*	E O Ab	O Ab Ay Ed	O Ab Ay Ed	Ab Ay Ed	Ab Ay Ed	Ed** DL		Ed
Equine		O	O						
Forestry & Arboriculture		B							
Greenkeeping & Golf Management	E*	E	E DL	E DL					
Horticulture and Garden Design	E*	E O	E O GI Ed	Ed	Ed	Ed			
Land-based Engineering	B	B O							
Sport, Tourism and Outdoor Pursuits	E*	E O	E	E					
In addition, new joint provision with the University of Edinburgh - an undergraduate degree in Agricultural Science – started in 2018/19.									
* Broad-based Access to Land-based Studies/Rural Skills provision ** In partnership with the University of Edinburgh. Note: There are also level 12 students at other locations. B = Barony, E = Elmwood, O = Oatridge, Ab = Aberdeen, Ay = Ayr, Ed = Edinburgh, DL = distance learning, GI = Glasgow Botanics									

The provisional allocation of credits across the SRUC campuses delivering FE provision in 2019/20 is shown in Table C. The allocation of credits across the campuses will continue to be refined further in line with the Academic Strategy. A similar exercise has been carried out with regard to the HE (FTEs) for 2019/20 (Table C).

SRUC has had some challenges in meeting HE recruitment targets – both regionally and by subject area. This clearly impacts on sustainability and will impact on the shape of provision going forward. In our new Academic Strategy we will implement a thorough review of provision seeking to identify areas for both future development and sun setting to help drive student recruitment and financial sustainability. We will seek to fully involve SFC in these discussions.

SRUC is embarking on a new phase of investment in Marketing and Student Recruitment activity which will prioritise the development and delivery of an improved website over the coming year. An internal restructure of the Marketing, Recruitment, Communications and Events functions within SRUC will be designed to deliver synergies and smarter use of internal resources with a greater focus on student

recruitment, under the guidance of a newly appointed Director of Marketing, Communications and Digital.

SRUC will offer 9 undergraduate degree programmes (down from 15 in 2015); the necessary streamlining of our course provision will need to be accompanied by the development of new, market researched, courses and significantly revitalised provision in key areas to enhance our portfolio and meet advancing industry requirements. Investments in marketing are paying off – website hits have increased, brand recognition is improving, and we have confidence in our current promotional strategy, but uncertainty over campus longevity (and associated “bad news” stories in local press) does impact negatively on student recruitment particularly in impacted regions. Clarity over strategic direction should improve this in the future. While a significant proportion of our student body is mature, SRUC is also impacted by the reducing school leaver population, which decreases demand for both FE and HE courses and will be in decline until 2020.

Table B: FE Credits and HE FTE targets for AY 2019/20

	SRUC FE credits	SRUC HE activity (FTEs)	SRUC HE activity (FTEs)
	Target 2019/20	Target 2019/20	Actual 2018/19
Aberdeen	3,750	280	269
Ayr	300	200	202
Barony	4,500	135	126
Edinburgh		500	484
Elmwood	6,250	215	193
Glasgow		35	34
Oatridge	8,200	185	168
Total	8,200	1,550	1,476

Table C: HE Pattern of Provision (2018/19 actual at 1 December 2018)

Programme Area	Aberdeen FTEs	Ayr FTEs	Barony FTEs	Edinburgh FTEs	Elmwood FTEs	Glasgow FTEs	Oatridge FTEs	Total FTEs
Agriculture	107.3	43.5	15.0	98.7			33.5	298.0
Horticulture / Garden Design				136.5	14.0	34.0	22.3	206.8
Equine							34.8	34.8
Environment / Countryside / Conservation	69.0	34.8		96.8			30.5	231.1
Applied Science / Technology / Poultry		83.0		84.8				167.8
Animal Care / Vet Nursing	39.0		111.3		53.7		44.0	248.0
Greenkeeping / Golf Management					75.7			75.7
Rural Business Management	46.3	41.5		68.0				155.8
Sport / Hospitality					44.0			44.0
Other	3.0		0.3	1.7	5.1	0.3	1.0	11.4
Total HE Provision	264.6	202.8	126.6	486.5	192.5	34.3	166.1	1473.4

SRUC has a high proportion of HE entrants on STEM programmes. The commitment to STEM programmes remains high with a target of 81.7% SDUE (715 FTE) for HE STEM subjects in AY 2019/20, an increase from the 2015/16 level of 75%.

In the context of the ongoing transformation of SRUC it is important to note that SRUC will not be moving away from its mixed model of FE and HE provision and will continue to offer progression opportunities between the different levels of education. SRUC is currently undertaking market research and stakeholder consultation to inform curriculum review, including coverage of which subjects and qualifications will be offered at the different campuses. A high priority for SRUC is to modernise and revitalise areas of our provision to suit the rapidly changing demands of the rural sector. Whilst we will retain core subjects across all of our regional faculties, our provision at different campuses will also reflect the local specialisms and priorities. Explicit connectivity between research and the HE programmes will be significantly strengthened in our new faculty model so that research-led and research informed teaching will be a much stronger element of our provision.

There is considerable activity undertaken engaging our learners with employers to further develop their practical skills and experience and to give them greater exposure to new and innovative technologies and practices. Whilst all learners are encouraged to gain appropriate vocational work experience some 500 learners undertake formal work experience annually as part of their programme of study. In addition all our supported apprentices, some 400+, are by definition in employed status and learning on-the-job.

We are being increasingly proactive in engaging with innovative and forward-looking employers in seeking and developing skills pathways for our learners, particularly within agriculture. The specialist dairy apprenticeship is example where such collaboration, working with employers and schools, has developed an employability pipeline in support of the sector and has created a model for engagement which can be transferred to other geographies and vocational areas.

This close relationship with employers across Scotland greatly facilitates progression for young people from school into ultimate employment through appropriate vocational and educational pathways and the close relationship we have with employers helps ensure our provision remains relevant and that our learners can quickly gain exposure to new technologies as they are adopted by industry.

3.5 Developing Young Workforce

The Scottish Government Agricultural Champions Report, published in May 2018, has a focus on barriers and opportunities around school to workplace recruitment rather than the wider and more challenging issue of sector recruitment *per se*. This has afforded SRUC an opportunity to support actions arising from the report, particularly with respect to the wider roll-out of the Pre-apprentice programme, building on our experience gained from both supporting and enhancing the original programme, and for us to seek outcomes within broader sector recruitment. We anticipate supporting the national roll-out of the Pre-apprenticeship programme should Scottish Government funding for a pilot programme be forthcoming.

SRUC influence within the Skills for Farming partnership has helped to raise the profile of the land-based sector within Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) programme which in turn has helped secure representation on Regional DYW Groups. This direct approach is now starting to show positive support for the sector manifesting in improved awareness of opportunities, clearer signposting of pathways and greater collaborative engagements with education bodies and schools. One such success is the specialist Dairy Apprenticeship in the south west, a model for engagement which is being replicated elsewhere for other sectors eg. beef and sheep in the Highlands

regional area. We anticipate that this model of engagement will continue to roll out across regions.

Around these developments, SRUC has been able to have considerable positive, constructive and open dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, not least Skills Development Scotland, which will help SRUC achieve more robust funding streams in support of stakeholder expectations within work-based learning provision going forward.

More broadly the implementation of a Schools Engagement Strategy and the appointment of Schools Co-ordinators has given focus to and will help facilitate the further development of appropriate regional and national partnerships which will help support STEM and vocational opportunity within the school curriculum.

SRUC has received an invitation to be a member of the Scottish Government Rural Skills Action Plan Steering Group which will help shape and confirm this important area of work and which will strongly influence skills development within the sector going forward and which help inform our business transformation strategy.

Flexible Workforce Development Fund

Like many providers SRUC found the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) challenging in 2017/18, however from this experience and the higher level of support being provided by the SFC we anticipate fully utilising this funding within 2018/19.

European Social Funds

SFC European Social Fund (ESF) “Developing Scotland’s Workforce” Project is being utilised in support of 25 eligible candidates who have progressed from regional College HND provision onto degree provision with SRUC at SCQF levels 9 and 10.

Schools Engagement Strategy

The schools’ engagement strategy has provided a blueprint at Regional and National level for schools activity within SRUC. This strategy and the focus by schools on Curriculum for Excellence, Developing the Young Workforce and the Regional Skills Assessments across Scotland encouraged SRUC to develop its schools provision in relation to the rural-based industries. Over the period of the plan SRUC intends to increase schools involvement across a number of council areas including West Lothian, East Lothian, Fife and Aberdeenshire.

The organisation has utilised its geographic reach to develop and provide from each regional hub activity appropriate for that region. To assist with that task Schools Coordinators have been appointed in Dumfries and in Fife and further appointments are proposed in Aberdeenshire and West Lothian. These roles will support and encourage schools to utilise the excellent resources available through SRUC.

There are some exciting developments in the form of partnerships with a wide number of local councils and other industry lead organisations. These industry groups such as the NFUS, Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC), Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) and the Royal Northern Countryside Initiative (RNCI) have been extremely supportive to SRUC in developing programmes and speakers appropriate for the Curriculum for Excellence. RHET and the RNCI are partners in many primary and secondary school visits on various campuses and with various farms. SRUC and RHET have been involved in a teacher training initiative which is validated by the GTC. SRUC is presently developing its own programmes appropriate for later primary and secondary pupils resulting in a number of regional “Farm to Fork” days in partnership with RHET and Developing the Young Workforce across Scotland.

A level SCQF 4 Animal Care opening learning programme has been reviewed and is presently used by 100+ students of all ages. The Rural Skills programme at Level 4 and 5 is being developed and used across four of the campuses with different strands utilised as required. Developments are taking place with West Lothian and East Lothian, offering advanced courses in science and food production at level 6 and 7 for fifth and sixth year pupils. Some Foundation Apprenticeships from East Lothian are involved in practical placement in Edinburgh. Higher Biology labs are taking place with Edinburgh, Aberdeenshire and Inverness schools and material developed by SRUC's behavioural scientists is being adapted for Higher Biology for use across the organisation.

3.6 National Student Survey and Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

SRUC participated in the National Student Survey (NSS) for the sixth time in 2017/18 with, again, only fourth year degree and some second year HND students within the HESA-determined target audience. Consequently, the NSS results are based on 176 responses which accounts for 64% of the eligible target audience and just over 11.5% of our undergraduate HE student population.

Results were disappointing. The overall satisfaction rating fell by 7% points to 70%, to the lowest SRUC has recorded. This is against a SFC benchmark of 84%, a Scotland rating of 83% and HE sector rating of 83%. We, along with other institutions with smaller target audiences, tend to experience greater fluctuation of results year on year. There were marginal improvements in Assessment and Feedback (up one percentage point to 64%), and Organisation and Management (up one percentage point to 61%) but there was a fall greater than those experienced elsewhere in Scotland for all other categories. As part of its new strategy, SRUC has recently appointed three new Faculty Deans with significant experience in Scottish and wider UK universities. They will lead academic development, including implementation of education enhancement and curriculum development.

Action planning to address hotspots is formalised through the annual monitoring and quality enhancement planning processes. Within subject areas where there are ratings which exceed Scotland and the overall HE sector levels opportunities will be created to share best practice. The appointment of SRUC's three faculty Deans has brought an external experience of NSS into this year's consideration. While student participation in the NSS was the highest SRUC has experienced, it remains behind Scotland and sector levels and the role teaching teams play in promoting participation will be reviewed. Improved feedback on students concerns raised at programme level, and the meeting of SRUC's assessment turnaround deadlines will be monitored. Assessment loading and sequencing has been identified as an issue and this is being positively addressed through programme re-validation.

SRUC FE and HNC level students took part in the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) for the third year. The response rate for each category of students was short of the 50% threshold with the exception of FE level distance learners where there was 50% participation. Overall 12% of eligible students participated. Satisfaction with their college experience was very similar for FE and HE (HNC) students, both recording 89% satisfaction.

Work continues to improve participation rates in both external and internal surveys. Recommendations have been developed by the Student Feedback, Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) project and include reducing the length of internal survey lengths, incorporating the SSES into an earlier, modified, SRUC end of year survey and introducing new and dynamic ways to capture and respond to feedback.

Consideration will be given to the combined report on NSS, SSES and SRUC end of year surveys, to identify commonality and differences in feedback trends. The first year highlighted a significant level of commonality both in the positive and negative feedback received. The report will also be informed by findings from SRUCSA's 'speak week' where opportunities are provided at each campus for students to feed back on their most preferred and least preferred aspect of SRUC life.

The Student Partnership Agreement project on class representation, running over two years from 2018, provide further opportunity to develop mechanisms to better understand student issues. It is hoped this might result in improved participation and satisfaction levels. We are aware that late or no communication on issues raised by students causes dissatisfaction and so, to begin to address this at a module/unit level, app technology is being used to pilot in class mid-block/semester module evaluations. The instant results produced using such technology enables a swift response while the module/unit is still 'live'. If this pilot produces positive results in terms of meeting students' expectations it will be rolled out further in 2019/20.

3.7 Internationalising the Student Experience

Despite the uncertainty around Brexit, SRUC continues to be an attractive destination for students and staff from both new and existing partner institutions and we are currently progressing discussions around new bilateral agreements with institutions from France, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal.

Outbound student mobility numbers remain low despite efforts to engage with student groups however it is pleasing to note the positive outcomes for those who do participate. The value of incoming students, either on individual programmes or as part of a partner class visit, is something we will be seeking to evaluate as our international capacity increases. Outbound staff mobility has included staff from student support as well as academic staff.

More strategically the SRUC realignment into a faculty structure is allowing a fundamental review of our international priorities and engagement with staff within the new faculties. We anticipate this will facilitate greater involvement and ownership by both staff and students going forward and will support SRUC ambitions within both a global and vocational context.

3.8 ESOL Activity

ESOL provision is currently focused at the SRUC Elmwood campus with provision being offered to schools (Chatterbox Club), the local community and current students. Online training is provided through Moodle, to enable volunteers to gain the skills needed to provide additional support to existing community students. The ESOL Co-ordinator is an active member of a number of local and national groups concerned with adult literacy and ESOL provision.

3.9 National Gaelic Language Plan

SRUC supports the National Gaelic Language Plan and will ensure the delivery of courses in the Gaelic language when sustainable levels of demand are identified. SRUC will continue to monitor interest from Gaelic speakers and to make appropriate arrangements for individuals with Gaelic language requirements.

3.10 SCQF Credit Rating

SRUC's operating divisions offer a considerable and diverse portfolio of competence and knowledge-based learning provision across the broad range of vocations, and

levels, which we support. To date little of this material has benefitted from credit rating and levelling under the SCQF. To address this we have enhanced our competencies and capabilities in credit rating and we now seek to normalise credit rating as part of the process of developing learning materials, and to utilise the SCQF in promoting this learning internally and externally.

4. World-leading Research

Priority 3 Internationally competitive and impactful research

In summary, SRUC will:

- *Aim to achieve 12% (11% in 2017/18) of all research income from UKRI by 2019/20;*
- *Continue to build on our top ranking in Research Power for Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science in Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 by seeking to grow the excellence and impact of our research via mentoring, strategic investment in new posts, and stimulating and monitoring impact from an early stage in preparation for REF 2021;*
- *Increase Postgraduate Research enrolments by 100% over the period 2014 to 2020 and increase enrolments of Postgraduate Taught students by 35% over the same time period;*
- *Ensure we continue to build a research environment that provides for excellent and high quality research training and development;*
- *Develop the mechanisms to support research-led teaching in 2019/20 and beyond;*
- *Work towards achieving the Bronze standard for Athena Swan;*
- *Ensure that the principles of the Research Integrity Concordat are embedded as part of our Quality Assurance Integrated Management System;*
- *Collaborate fully with our Universities Scotland and SFC partners to engage and implement the principles of the Concordat on Open Research Data;*
- *In accordance with our revised strategy, collaborate strategically to promote interdisciplinary working in response to, and addressing, global challenges*

4.1 The Context for our Research

The growing human population and global demand for food cheaply and significantly more productively requires to be a key driver for our research, education and consulting for the next 30 years. The challenge is to produce food with systems that have significantly improved productivity with reduced resource use. Continuing with traditional agriculture is not an option as natural resources cannot support the increases in productivity required by 2050. There is a need to use the 50% agricultural land that is unproductive to support other functions, such as carbon storage, recreation and biodiversity. Also there is a requirement to radically improve and utilise new disruptive technologies, involving chemical and bio-processing to provide basic feedstock by supporting within-city vertical farms, funding research and innovation in food technologies like bioreactors and next-generation bio-based and bio-degradable packaging. It will be necessary to introduce these alternative systems of food production over two decades to eventually operate at the scale and volume of current traditional farming, even if the outputs will be qualitatively different. This will require a progressive transition over the next 30 years, but will need to be addressed in a world with a potentially dramatically changing climate, with diminishing natural resources, especially fossil fuels, and a shortage of water. A growing range of science, data and technology oriented solutions to these problems are emerging both from SRUC's own research and elsewhere. These solutions need to be developed, combined and applied in a range of contexts to ensure their impact is maximised and any unintended consequences anticipated and dealt with. Addressing these critical and complex inter-related challenges needs world-class, integrated research, education, KE and consulting across a range of disciplines, including life sciences, economics and social sciences. SRUC is uniquely equipped among Scottish HEIs to continue to make a

leading contribution in these areas. As such we will develop collaborative transdisciplinary research centres (TRCs) to be strategic, transdisciplinary, policy and need focused, but research driven and have clear, definable endpoints with impact. TRCs will develop novel areas of cross institutional research between SRUC and other research providers which lead to vibrant new research clusters which:

- address Scottish, national, and international challenges;
- are outcome driven and sector and policy relevant;
- are time limited, competitive, and dynamic in their composition;
- ensure the impact and diversification of our research and diversify its funding.

4.2 SRUC Research Strategy

Our research strategy is to undertake excellent strategic and applied research on the global and local issues mentioned above, and to actively support the translation of research results into practice through excellent knowledge transfer and exchange. Examples of our ongoing research activity can be found [here](#) relating to rural economy, environment and society with further examples on [livestock](#) and [international](#).

We are proud of our heritage as one of the Scottish Government's Main Research Providers (MRPs) for policy relevant rural research. The collective of six institutes previously referred to as MRPs is now called SEFARI (Scottish Environment, Food and Agriculture Research Institutes). As a result of this heritage, we help provide research outputs that inform the Scottish and UK Governments' rural affairs and environment departments and the EU.

Our research ethos is strongly collaborative, and we have a long history of industrial, NGO and academic partnerships, locally and internationally. We have research collaborations in over 50 countries, including many EU countries, North and South America, Australasia, South East Asia, China, Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly with Malawi. We are continuing to grow and strengthen our international research and impact via joint programmes with leading national and international research providers, and partnerships with international funding agencies.

4.3 Outcomes

SRUC delivers a research programme relevant to national and international rural priorities with emphasis on innovation, application and enterprise. We will seek an increasing proportion of research project funding from UKRI, current (2017/18 figures) annual income is £1.836m. The amount SRUC received from RCUK in 2015/16 was 9% of all income in 2017/18 this had increased to 13.8%. **The target for UKRI income for 2019/20 is 15% of all research income. Targets are noted in the Annex. We intend to build on our success in 2017/18 to achieve further funding success from GCRF and ODA. To that end we continue to develop activities with international Partners with partners in Sub-Saharan Africa; India; South East Asia; Brazil and China.**

In addition with the increase in opportunities with industry led and industry focused applications being led by the Research Councils (e.g. Strength in places, Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund) and Innovate UK, we are strengthening our already close links with the agricultural, food and related supply industries to collaborate and respond to appropriate calls for funding. It is our intention to increase the frequency of application for and success of industry led funding, such that in 2019/20, they form an increasing percentage of our research portfolio. **Hence we have set a target of achieving 5% of our income from such proposals by the end of 2019/20.**

As an HEI we have an ambition to grow our research quality and capability further, particularly in preparation for REF 2021 to follow on from our joint submission with the

University of Edinburgh to the REF 2014 (**Sub-panel A6: Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science**). **We aim to build on our top ranking in Research Power for Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science by seeking to grow the excellence and impact of our research via mentoring, strategic investment in new posts, and stimulating and monitoring impact from an early stage.** Utilising REG funding we are in the process of recruiting new research posts to build critical mass in areas relevant to building a strong agricultural technology focus.

Our strategy is to make a difference in addressing the so called “Grand Challenges” in Agri-food include solving global health problems, addressing climate change, significantly improving agricultural productivity and achieving true sustainability. As noted above if nothing is done to address current agricultural production systems natural resources used to produce food related commodities will become increasingly scarce over the next 30 years. We therefore aim to look at new ways to produce food, transitioning towards bioprocessing, involving high volume manufacture of food at reduced cost with reduced waste promoting a new revolution in the production of food hence transforming the current food and drink economy. Key technologies harnessed in a thoughtful connected way to help achieve this transition include **plant and animal genomics and related technologies; human, animal and soil microbiota; digital technologies; new technologies for food processing; and transformation in the food value chain system.** These also require connection to social and cultural factors including healthy living and lifestyles, consumer preference and choice; reduced resource use, significant natural resource savings significantly reducing the effects and impact of food production on the natural environment hence helping to achieving both carbon neutrality effectively reducing the impact on climate.

In Scotland substantial public investment (£48 million) is also made by the Scottish Government in funding a portfolio of strategic rural affairs food and environmental science research making it one of the largest funders of agri-environmental research in the UK. Most of this research is carried out through the MRPs - SRUC, James Hutton Institute, Moredun Institute, the Rowett Institute (part of Aberdeen University) together with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh. This research commission differs from universities in being both **directed by government** and long-term. These attributes are considered important by the Scottish Government to enable them to respond to the complex policy facing challenges they are required to address. Scottish Government funding of science at these organisations forms an important part of Scotland's science base, enhancing Scotland's reputation for excellence and relevance in rural, agricultural and environmental research.

Agricultural and veterinary research is also supported by the Scottish Funding Council through the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow and SRUC. These institutions are major stakeholders and contributors to agriculture related research and education. As part of our revised strategy, and in response to SFC priorities, we are **fully engaged to facilitate deeper collaboration with these universities and institutions and other HEIs to facilitate a coherent approach to address the challenges outlined here.**

The outturn for SRUC of postgraduate research students in 2017/18 was 95, an increase from 61 since AY 2011/12. We plan to fund and recruit a further 15 PhD studentships during 2018/19, so by 2019/20 it is expected our number will grow with an aim to have a cohort of around 110. **It is our aim, to increase enrolments by 100% over the period 2014 to 2020 and increase enrolments of Postgraduate Taught students by 35% over the same time period. Targets for Postgraduate Research students are noted in the Annex.** Increasing student numbers is only one part of our postgraduate strategy. It is important that we also create and maintain a

high-quality research environment (as evidenced by our REF 2014 outcome). To this end our new strategy intends to focus on a three faculty structure. To this end three faculty Deans have been appointed to embed a new structure that combines research and teaching within a new regionally based faculty module and leverages the opportunities from integrating the activities of our existing education, research and veterinary services divisions. Renewed investment will enable us to continue to grow our research critical mass, to support the excellence of our research and provide an excellent environment enabling us to expand further the numbers of postgraduate research students. We also undertake a planned programme of training and skills days in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh covering for example careers planning, skills for researchers (eg. data management); supporting learning and viva preparation. In addition we also hold a separate paper writing workshop, dealing with the skills of writing for publication and goal setting.

SAC was unique in the UK in combining research, education and consulting services, based on the US land grant university model. SRUC retains these elements, while further strengthening our range of education and training provision. While many HEIs aspire to research-led teaching, we believe that as a Institution with an applied research focus, **we will develop research-informed teaching in both FE and HE. Mechanisms for this will continue to develop in AY 2019/20 and beyond and fits well to our three faculty based model outlined above.**

SRUC is fully committed to the principles of the Research Integrity Concordat. In order to ensure that these commitments are embedded into our research culture and actively acted upon at SRUC, we maintain an integrated management system where all our research processes and procedures are written down, regularly reviewed and periodically audited. As such we have Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place for all aspects of the five commitments above. These are regularly internally audited and also subject to periodic independent external audit by the British Standards Institute (BSI) as part of our fully certified ISO9001/2015 approved Integrated Management System (certificate number BS 94274). As noted previously in 2017-2018 we increased our activity on ethical and integrity issues and formed an SRUC Ethics Committee. The remit of this group is to advise SRUC, through its Academic Board, on the development, implementation and review of the institutional procedures and guidelines relating to ethical, legal and professional frameworks and standards, and integrity issues arising from teaching, research, consulting, KTE and other related institutional activities. The committee is now embedded and proactive in relation to emerging issues of institutional, national or international significance. In addition, the committee has a role to help guide and promote good practice within SRUC as well as further develop our culture and underpin existing governance for the ethics and integrity in all our activities. We have had in place for many years a committee to oversee and approve all animal experiments at SRUC. We also have a clear process in place for dealing with allegations of research misconduct. These form part of our Quality Management procedures, as noted above.

In terms of Equality, Diversity and Human Rights, our policies recognise the value and contribution of every individual and seek to enable them to achieve their full potential and aspirations without suffering discrimination of any kind. Our policy helps meet our obligations within the Equality Act 2010 and through the Public Sector Equality Duty. SRUC has developed a Single Equality Scheme with the express aim of eliminating any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation in relation to the identified protected characteristics, and promoting equality across the organisation and in our interactions with our clients and, students. However, we also have much to contribute and gain by fully participating with the wider HEI community and would wish to do so to better aid our positive promotion of equality and diversity values to all our staff. We

are therefore working proactively to address the equality and diversity issues identified in REF 2014 and address these issues in REF 2021. We continue the process of preparing the institution including reviews and update of institutional policies with the aim of making an application in late 2019 to achieve the Bronze award in Athena Swan.

We are fully committed to the principles contained within the Concordat on Open Research Data from publically funded research and development. This is clearly an ongoing and developing process. We will seek to fully collaborate and fully engage with our partners in Universities Scotland to develop approaches that will enable us to fully address the principles of the concordat and consider solutions that would enable us, as a SSI, to fully develop practical mechanisms e.g. data curation, at reasonable cost to fully enable our publically funded data to be available to those that wish to access it. We see particular advantages of promoting this, as in our sector the use of “big data” is seen as part of the necessary transformative process to facilitate the step changes required to address the global challenges fully recognised in our revised strategy for SRUC.

5. Effective Knowledge Exchange and Innovation

Priority 4 Effective knowledge exchange and innovation including excellent collaboration between universities and industry

Priority 4 Effective knowledge exchange and innovation including excellent collaboration between universities and industry

5.1 Strategic context

The application of innovation and promotion of enterprise in the rural and land-based industries is our core unifying objective across SRUC. Tackling the biggest agri-food challenges requires scientific excellence, harnessing complex data (see above regarding open research data) and new ways of working, together with engaging with both industry and public partners. These are key to gain relevant knowledge to drive new agricultural services, products and commercial applications. Innovation is vital for success and SRUC's strategic focus is on delivering impact at the appropriate scale and maximising strategic collaboration opportunities with existing and new partners to increase capacity to tackle major challenges. For example we continue to support and promote transition towards a circular bio-economy, leading to more sustainable and economical use of natural resources.

SRUC undertakes **research** where marketable exploitations are likely, exploiting SRUC's unique combination of attributes including an applied and translational research programme and associated farm systems research platforms fully engaged with the farming and food industries. SRUC research innovations are fully exploited through appropriate knowledge exchange and exploitation of IP (funded in part by the Universities Innovation Fund), as well as development of value added services through our specialist **consultancy** staff. SRUC provides a comprehensive service of innovative **consultancy** in the agricultural and rural sector that has reputation, impact and reach in Scotland, UK and beyond.

An example of applied research leading to a clear application is the provision our "EGENES" genetic evaluation service. The application of genetic improvement of cows by the dairy industry has an enormous impact on economic output, the environment and sustainability.

SRUC has undertaken much of the research into new genetic indices deployed by AHDB Dairy and customers to generate genetic cattle improvement. This is achieved by selecting the highest merit bulls and mating to the highest merit cows to create even better replacements. Genetic indices are also used to remove surplus animals. Research involves blending and salvaging data from different sources. Many commercial cattle databases contain a subset of the entire national cattle data set. Edinburgh Genetic Evaluation Services (EGENES) merges these data providing improved evaluation algorithms. Records are improved by adding data from another source for the same animal e.g. milk yield from one database and date of birth from another. This is highly innovative and employed by EGENES long before "Big Data" became fashionable.

EGENES has copies of most of the national farmed animal datasets and utilises billions of data points from millions of animals collected over decades. An innovative example is predicting new phenotypes using milk mid infra-red spectral data from routine milk recording. This enables world leading predictions for pregnancy, fatty acids, ketosis, methane emissions and feed intake. Of particular note is the creation of an index for TB resistance called TB Advantage. Calculated from government databases on TB incidence and animal movements combined with milk records data from the 2 national milk recording companies and the national pedigree file compiled

by EGENES from all sources. First published by AHDB Dairy in 2016, this guides optimal selection of bulls and is the world's first TB resistance index for dairy cattle. Selection for disease traits takes years to see an effect but this will be vital in improving the health and profitability of the future UK herd. Genetic improvement is permanent, cumulative and cost effective. Annual changes appear small at farm level but spectacular nationally. Genetic gain review shows benefits of genetic improvement in the UK dairy industry are estimated at between £2.2 billion and £2.4 billion over 30 years. This equates to an average aggregate benefit of about £76.6M per year. The ability to preferentially import specific superior bulls that matched UK requirements by using national genetic evaluations in 2008 and 2009 was estimated to be £8.3 and £15.3 million respectively. Today's genetic progress figures uses estimates based on current genetic gains achieved.

Since £PLI is a Lifetime profit index, we can express changes over time as yearly profit figures. Animals born in 2013/14 will lactate in 2016/17. Between 2016 and 2017 the national average figure for £PLI rose from 57 to 86.1 (+£28.1). Making these adjustments and extrapolating this to the national herd of 1.9M cows, industry benefit due to genetic improvement was estimated at £30.5M in 2016/17. **We can estimate cumulative benefits over the next 5 years at around £596M.** This work has been shortlisted for the Times Higher Education Award for Scientific Innovation 2018.

SRUC's main objectives for enterprise and innovation are to:

- **Implement a comprehensive, specific programme of externally focused KTE for the rural and land-based industries to multiple audiences (industry, policy, public) with emphasis on promoting innovation, enterprise and impact during 2018/19 in response to SFC, Scottish Government (RESAS), and other funding sources for KTE activities;**
- **To fully participate in contributing to the priorities for UIF ie. Promote entrepreneurial opportunities to students during their studies; provide entrepreneurial training opportunities to staff; encourage mobility of staff between business and universities; provide professional development for key staff involved in KTE; continue to directly interact with the rural industries and look for ways to enhance that interaction; develop strategic relationships between SRUC, other universities and the rural and food producing sector. Fully participate in implementing enhanced template contract arrangements to engage with SMEs (SRUC is a member of the "Contracts" group and has a key role in endorsing the agreed revised templates). Fully participate with other HEIs to develop a framework for monitoring and evaluation of the success of the UIF approach. With other HEIs, and where appropriate for SRUC, promote societal and arts related activities. To provide business support and advice to rural businesses to trade effectively in Europe and globally. To participate in re-thinking the innovative support system in Scotland.**
- **Maintain the proportion of UIF funding to the rural industries (especially SMEs) focused on KTE to encourage innovation, enterprise and impact to 25% of the SFC UIF grant during 2019/20;**
- **Continue to deliver KTE to policy audiences to facilitate the sustainability of the rural industries and the formulation of appropriate Scottish and UK government policy towards the rural and land based industries Funding for these activities will be maintained at 10% of the SFC UIF;**
- **Maintain engagement with the public through key events, in particular to a schools audience with a defined schools engagement KTE strategy, with the purpose of delivering a defined relevant programme of KTE from our R&D programme to facilitate (a) awareness of the rural industries and current issues**

(b) contribute to appropriate curriculum development in schools. Funding for these activities will be maintained at 10% of the SFC UIF;

- To promote opportunities for entrepreneurial training to our students and staff to engender culture change within the organisation (ie being more innovative and entrepreneurial). Our undergraduate courses supply business skills required for the rural industries. During 2019/20 will have introduced a “safe space” (what we call the “Orchard”) where ideas can be grown, tended, cared for and improved upon, very much to allow employees and students to contribute their own ideas towards commercial growth across SRUC. We would use some UIF funding to promote this “safe space”. We fully expect that by 2019/20 the “Orchard” will be fully operational, promoting entrepreneurial and commercial training couple with facilities to “grow” commercial ideas. Funding this activity will come from UIF funding from SFC;***
- Support our research, education and consulting staff to delivering a comprehensive programme of KTE. We will target UIF funding with specific calls for KTE projects (a) that effectively transfer the results of R&D outputs to key audience groupings (industry, policy, public) (b) we will also provide ongoing training to maximise the impact of our KTE and to measure this by systematic evaluation (see below) (c) to provide support for KTE through appropriate communications, media, web based resources and support staff.***
- Complete the Higher Education and Business Community Interaction Survey (HEBCI). The activities and targets above will be reflected in the metrics submitted, such that the total consulting activity to our many SME (farmer and land based industry clients) will be recorded, with the aim of providing direct consultancy to the farming and rural industries to a minimum of 12,000 clients across Scotland.***
- To undertake a systematic sampled evaluation of selected KTE projects and activities, with the purpose of assessing effectiveness, impact and reach. Such evaluation will be used to feedback in training days to those delivering KTE with the aim of achieving continuous improvement in KTE methodology and hence effectiveness and impact to key audience groupings (industry, public, policy).***
- To fully collaborate with the HEI community in Scotland to (i) promote staff expertise and training in enterprise and innovation; (ii) fully engage with promoting common approaches to engage with the SME base in Scotland eg. common contracts; (iii) fully engage with relevant industry groupings (eg. Scotland Food and Drink) promote specific innovative ventures; (iv) fully participate in a refocus of the innovation support system in Scotland.***

5.2 Overview

Knowledge transfer and exchange are the core, uniting competences central to achieving the SRUC mission: committed to excellence and impact in the advancement, communication and translation of knowledge throughout the rural sector. In addition, SRUC aims to contribute to many outcomes described in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and SRUC's Strategic Plan 208-23.

In summary the key strategic actions for SRUC for 2019/20 include:

- Implementing the new SRUC strategy which has innovation for impact; integration; being industry facing; international and being inspiring as its key tenets. This is in response to the Scottish Government, SFC and other key stakeholder priorities for KTE; with a key emphasis on promoting innovation and enterprise for the rural industries;***
- Using UIF in specifically commissioned projects utilising the outputs from research across SRUC involving staff located across its main functions of education,***

research and consulting. Projects will have clearly defined outcomes, link to one or more of the agreed UIF priorities to produce the best quality KTE and have defined impact on clearly specified end users eg. industry, policy, public;

- Helping, through the projects described above, to deliver on both Scottish Government objectives and SFC priorities. Where appropriate we will deliver appropriately funded projects and the UIF priorities in collaboration and cooperation with our colleagues in the other HEIs. We will also fully participate and engage with our colleagues in other HEIs to help achieve a co-ordinated approach to the UIF priorities. For example we will work openly and proactively through our representation on the Research and Commercialisation Directors Group of Universities Scotland and with the UIF manager;
- Co-ordinating activities, where appropriate, with the delivery of KTE activities from our Scottish Government RESAS Research Programme in line with their KTE strategy 2016-21 to ensure added value to both programmes;
- Continuing to fully engage with Interface, where we have been successful in continuing to increase the number of innovation vouchers during 2017/18, especially in the area of Food and Drink. We will also fully engage with relevant Innovation Centres, particularly the Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre.
- We always ensure any activities that we carry out are fully state-aid compliant;
- Responding to the evolving reporting and policy requirements for the SFC and RESAS and securing new funding opportunities in KTE;
- As noted previously we have many direct linkages with the rural industry across Scotland. It is one of our key objectives to support sustainable and sustained economic development of rural communities. In addition we also work at the urban/rural interface. Where appropriate, and depending on the nature of the activity, we will engage with City Deal partnerships and Community Planning Partnerships. We will also encourage partnership with industry and Universities to apply for Industrial Strategy Challenge Funding. In addition we will partner with our industry colleagues for industry led initiatives funded by innovate UK.
- As noted in the Research section above we are actively engaged in collaboration with other Universities and overseas partners to help address the “intractable” global challenges through ODA/UKRI e.g. grand challenges Research Funding. We will continue to build such partnerships and initiatives during 2019/20.

Appendix 2 details the approach adopted by SRUC to deliver the UIF priorities during 2019/20.

5.3 Key Changes in KTE Delivery and Management

In 2019/20 a series of co-ordinated KTE activities and events will continue to be scheduled aimed at target audiences especially from industry, commerce, policy and the public (including Schools). The main drivers of change for the programme are: (i) the agreed UIF outcomes priorities (ii) Scottish Government and SFC policies and priorities; (iii) Agreed joint priorities from Universities Scotland RKEC and its subgroup RDCG; (iii) continuing Innovate UK opportunities (via the Agri-Tech Strategy), especially the Agri-Tech Innovation Centres, various key funders' strategic plans eg. the UK Research Councils, which emphasise KTE to underpin innovation in UK industry; (iv) the Global Challenges Research Fund and Newton Fund that strengthen not only research capability but innovation within the UK and in developing countries (v) The Industrial Strategy Research Fund and (v) continued participation in the EU Horizon 2020 programme, despite “Brexit”, that continues to emphasise innovation and excellent KTE.

Delivery of the plan is presented in two main sections containing a) External and b) Internal audience KTE programmes.

In SRUC, the KTE and innovation platform funded from the UIF gains added value from the delivery and management of KTE associated with the RESAS research programme (2016-2021).

5.4 BEIS / Innovate UK Agri-Tech Strategy

SRUC will support KE and innovation activities associated with current and new projects from UK Agri-Tech initiatives.

We have a growing portfolio of individual Agri-Tech projects funded from Innovate UK, and are partners in three of the four Agri-Tech Innovation Centres, established as limited companies: the Centre for Agri-Informatics and Metrics of Sustainability, (Agrimetrix Ltd), a centre for Precision Agriculture Innovation and Engineering (Agri-EPI Centre Ltd) and the Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock (CIEL Ltd). These Innovation centres are in collaboration with key industry partners as well as University partners across the UK. The public funding for these centres is likely to continue for 2019/20, although this has yet to be formally announced by BEIS/ Innovate UK.

5.5 Engagement with SMEs and Innovation Vouchers

As noted above in outline, engagement with SMEs is a priority for SRUC – SAC Consulting to approximately 18,000 farmer and rural SME industry clients generates approximately £20m of income per annum for SRUC and the majority of this work involves engagement with SMEs or small owner businesses. As such, SRUC has strong direct engagement with the rural and land-based industries from owner businesses, SMEs and larger industry. Given our focus we undertake less business outside of our target industries, most of which focuses on the secondary food and drink sector. We therefore actively engage with Interface to respond to all opportunities provided by them. This activity is increasing, as noted in the Annex.

5.6 The Higher Education and Business Community Interaction Survey

As noted above, we complete annually the **Higher Education and Business Community Interaction Survey (HEBCI)**, and will do so for AY 2019/20.

6. High-performing Institutions

Priority 5 Ensuring provision of quality learning in Scottish higher education institutions, *ie.* HE strategic futures, Quality Assurance and HE governance.

Greater innovation in the economy – a national culture of enterprise and innovation leading to a more productive and sustainable economy.

A coherent system of high-performing, sustainable institutions with modern, transparent and accountable governance arrangements.

SRUC aims to meet and exceed the provisions of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. Our Articles of Association will ensure compliance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

SRUC is governed by the SRUC Group Board which currently consists of one Executive Director and 14 non-executive directors including a student sabbatical officer, another student representative and two elected members of staff. Of the 15 SRUC Board members, five are female. The students and elected staff members are 50:50 male:female. SRUC is committed to achieve a 50:50 ratio female: male by 2020 in line with the Scottish Government's Partnership for Change, working towards removing barriers and encouraging applications from protected characteristic groups, especially women. Recent interviews for new non-executive directors feature an all female candidate list and SRUC, where appropriate, will seek to maintain this until a 50:50 ratio is achieved.

SRUC has renewed its efforts to secure Athena SWAN Bronze award. An Operations Manager has been appointed who is progressing SRUC's activities with a Self Assessment Team which is co-chaired by the Academic Director and a senior researcher. The Self Assessment Team includes a membership drawn from all divisions, stages of career, genders, geographic locations and the Trade Unions.

Academic governance has been further developed during academic year 2018/19 with a renewed Academic Board membership and updated remit, to take account of both internal re-structure and the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. The academic governance structure streamlines the committee structure and integrates Education and Research to encourage and support closer working. SRUC has a staff engagement area on its intranet which includes a range of staff development modules, some of which are compulsory for all staff. These compulsory / compliance modules include health and safety, data protection, diversity, safeguarding and bribery. In addition there is a range of management development modules and an induction module for new staff.

SRUC has been a living wage employer since November 2014 and continues to recognise the positive impact that the payment of a living wage has on employees, their families, and the communities in which they live.

An estate strategy has been agreed (Estate Strategy 2018 – 2023) and provides part of the link between the SRUC Infrastructure Strategy and the business cases that are being prepared per faculty. An Outline Business Case for the South and West (S&W) Faculty has been published indicating that the preferred option is a single main campus to be located at the existing SRUC site at Barony near Dumfries and that this main campus would use a network of partners and the Kirkton Hill & Mountain Research Centre to enhance the reach, impact and quality of delivery in the region. The Full Business Case for the S&W Faculty is due to commence in late 2018/19. Outline Business Cases for the North and Central faculties will also commence late 2018/19. The first phase of the Craibstone development has been acquired and we are working with the developer to plan for subsequent phases. The sale of the surplus elements of Auchincruive did not complete, and we are therefore considering options for disposal in the future. High priority backlog maintenance items identified by SFC are being addressed using SFC funding, and we aim to conclude these works by summer 2019.

SRUC's Education activity works with a wide range of commercial partners. These strong industry links are mutually beneficial to both partners and importantly allow our students to have access to the latest technologies, equipment and resources. An increasing number of our programmes are co-designed in partnership with relevant key stakeholders, both for the national and international market. Because of our national remit, SRUC, through a strong regional presence, will aim to support key land-based industry sectors along with rural communities across Scotland. We will continue to build strong regional partnerships which increase learning opportunities for those wishing to study programmes in the land-based sector. SRUC will work with the Scottish Government as a member of the Rural Skills steering group to develop the actions and outputs from the Agriculture Champions Report ([A Future Strategy for Scottish Agriculture](#)) and thus in supporting the development of an Agricultural Strategy to guide the long term sustainable future of Scottish farming. One key area of activity within this project is considering the future education and training needs within the agricultural sector.

SRUC continues to win research funding in collaboration with other academic partners to strengthen and broaden our interdisciplinary approach. Increasingly we are engaged with a mix of public and private institutions (eg. see reference to Agri-tech Strategy above) to deliver impact focused 'trans-disciplinary' research projects. Such collaborations enable SRUC to share resources with collaborators for mutual benefit. In addition, SRUC is continuing its collaboration with the University of Edinburgh, Global Academy in Agriculture and Food Security, with taught undergraduate programmes as noted previously and builds on the current successful programmes of PGT and PGR education validated by the University and jointly resourced with it. SRUC also continues to build on existing, and develop new, collaborative ventures. For example, SRUC has applied for and won a number of Global Challenges Research Fund and Newton funded projects. This is helping us to achieve our strategy of being more International, building on our existing partnerships across the world, with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, eg. Malawi, where we are expanding our dairy and poultry genetics activities with key academic and aid organisations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). Closer to home we are progressing our ambition to partner with others in closer strategic alliances. Our association with Teagasc in Ireland has resulted in numerous joint PhD studentships and a number of further joint initiatives are planned. Our recent strategic partnership with Moredun Research Institute focusing on livestock health, welfare, production and resilience in support of Scottish and global rural development, food security and food safety, has resulted in plans approved to build a new SRUC veterinary centre on the Moredun campus at Bush Estate. We will therefore seek to maximise opportunities to share facilities and expertise and create critical mass in selected areas of research where we have recognised strength or the potential to create world-class presence and impact rapidly.

SRUC's Carbon Management Plan (CMP) was published in March 2016, and identified performance and future actions to deliver the 40% carbon reduction by financial year 2019/20, based on 2014/15 as the reference year. The CMP will be updated in 2019/20 and will reflect updated project lists, and the impact of the Business Cases described in section 6. The baseline figure for 2014/15 remains at 9,668t CO₂e with a 2017/18 figure of 6,930t CO₂e and a target of 5,559t CO₂e by 2019/20.

SRUC is strongly committed to conducting all of its procurement activities in a sustainable, open and transparent manner. Our aim is to obtain value for money through good procurement practice while recognising SRUC's wider responsibilities in terms of its legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact. The Procurement function utilises the Scottish Government's Procurement Journey to plan and manage procurement activities and we play a significant role in supporting SRUC's Strategic Plan. A detailed summary of our procurement activities, including regulated procurements completed during 2017/18 and our planned activities in 2018/20, can be found in SRUC's Annual Procurement Report ([https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3725/sruc annual procurement report 2017-18](https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3725/sruc%20annual%20procurement%20report%202017-18)).

When carrying out regulated procurements every care is taken to ensure that SRUC awards its business to suppliers who are capable, reliable and who can demonstrate that they meet high ethical standards and values in the conduct of their business. Further, SRUC continues to use its expertise to lead in collaborative procurement opportunities as they arise, and we continue to support APUC, having directly participated in the evaluation of three of their recent framework awards.

APPENDIX 1: Targets for SAC Consulting Services

SAC Consulting Targets	Targets for 2019/20
SAC Consulting Solutions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and agree with Scottish Government the 2019/20 Farm Advisory Service (FAS) business plan. Deliver all of the agreed business plan targets for the FAS in 2019/20. 	Meet FAS targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and agree group financial targets for 2019/20. Deliver on budget Group contribution to SRUC. 	Meet financial targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop high level business development plans for the Income stream identified in 2019. Complete works to Client Portal and internal collaboration tool. Develop further value-add for Subscribers by improvement of internal process and varied methods of communication. Respond to impacts of Brexit on rural areas by revitalisation / upskilling our consultants in business tools, advice and de-risking farm businesses. 	Meet customer targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set clear expectations for consulting behaviours, targets and competencies; reward high performance as well focus on performance management of under performers to meet headcount expectation. 	Meet financial targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete career paths and role descriptions for all positions. 	Meet staff targets
SAC Veterinary Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a first class Disease Surveillance Programme for our stakeholders, including the Scottish Government. 	Meet target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver on budget Group surplus by increasing income and improving efficiency. 	Meet targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain status as a top UK veterinary and analytical laboratory testing facility which provides customers with solutions based on practical and innovative laboratory based products and services. Improve efficiency of all management systems through the use of LEAN process analysis and the implementation of arising efficiency improvements. 	Meet targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a high level of customer focus as measured by our customer satisfaction survey. 	Meet targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the reconfiguration of the disease surveillance network to accommodate the 20% cut to Scottish Government funding for farm animal disease surveillance. Complete plan by end of 2018/19. Complete the move to the central laboratory facility within the Pentland Science Park, by the end of February 2019 with no loss in service provision. 	Meet target

APPENDIX 2: Universities Innovation Fund: Approach adopted by SRUC to deliver the UIF priorities during 2019/20

Introduction

Knowledge exchange to promote innovation is the core, uniting competence required to help achieve the SRUC Mission – “*to drive the future needs of a dynamic, innovative and competitive rural sector in Scotland and to solve the biggest global agri-food challenges*”. SRUC has a long established framework for KE delivery of innovation from its R&D programme (funded from a number of sources including Scottish Government, SFC, UKRI and industry). For SFC funding this is documented in this Outcome Agreement for 2019/20. This appendix to the Outcome agreement outlines for 2019/20 how SRUC proposes to use UIF in support of national and individual outcomes. SRUC will continue to address and develop these national priorities as part of its UIF funding, within the context of its particular mission and focus. Outside of UIF, we collaborate closely with other Universities in joint approaches to undergraduate provision (especially with Glasgow and Edinburgh), and are currently discussing closer research collaboration with UHI. We also undertake many activities collaboratively with other Scottish universities. This collaborative approach is co-ordinated through the Research and Commercialisation Directors Group (RCDG), that, in discussion with Scottish Funding Council has agreed the best mechanism to work at a sector level to deliver the national outcomes. SRUC, while having specialist expertise of relevance to the primary and secondary food producing industries (ie. the rural sector and food and drink), also has wide, extensive and long standing experience of interacting directly with industry to effect translation and uptake of research outputs and outcomes into practice. SRUC therefore will continue to share this experience with the wider HEI community, through deepening collaboration and through various collaborative initiatives through Universities Scotland and its relevant Committees, particularly RKEC, and especially through RCDG, and the UIF manager to help achieve the nationally agreed UIF outcomes.

Priority Outcomes

The national outcomes for UIF were identified through a sector-wise workshop facilitated by SFC in October 2016. SRUC’s approaches to these outcomes are given below:

Outcome one (demand stimulation); *Working with Scotland’s enterprise agencies, Scottish Government, business networks, Interface and others to increase the demand and quality of engagement from businesses and the public sector for university services.*

SRUC specialises in the primary food and land-based sector and currently has over 16,000 SME (mostly farmer and grower) clients and approximately a further 2,000 food industry related clients from a diversity of companies. We directly interact with these to translate and exchange the outputs of our R&D programme as specific KE initiatives that promote innovation to the farming and land-based industries organised as part of the UIF funding. To maximise impact we also use a network of well-known and respected advisory colleagues, staff who are well regarded by industry and trusted. It takes time to build this trust. In addition to “one to one” relationships we extensively use various KE mechanisms (“one to many” e.g. various targeted events / farmer days etc. to translate key KE messages from our research outputs directly to the rural industries. In addition, we are always open to learn from others on where other approaches have been effective, therefore through active participation in US RKEC (the SRUC Principal is currently convenor of RKEC) and RCDG we will continue to fully participate with HEIs on defining best practice in this area.

Further support to industry is provided through a fully structured advisory programme (worth £12m per annum, partly funded from Scottish Government (for policy relevant initiatives) and through farmer subscriptions). UIF KE activities complement and reinforce such activities. We also fully interact with Interface. Most enquiries from Interface come from the Food and Drink sector, rather than primary producers. We have continued to increase our activity as

evidenced by an increasing number of completed innovation vouchers during 2017/18 and in 2018/19 and we fully expect continued growth in 2019/20. We will continue to fully participate with the wider HEI sector in collaboration to understand how we can further promote demand for our services and participate in promoting the services of the wider university sector. Emphasis in 2019/20 will continue to be through strategic collaboration. A key and central part of our strategy is being industry facing, producing outputs designed to have impact and be inspiring. We therefore actively promote and seek greater collaborative linkages. We will do that in association with Scottish HEI's, who reach out with like minded attitudes and related expertise. For example we have begun a process to strengthen strategic linkages to the Moredun Research Institute; discussions and activities (e.g. a joint conference) with Teagasc, closer collaboration with UHI as noted above as well as strategic discussions with key rural industry players across the UK. Together with other established collaborations (e.g. with the University of Edinburgh) these activities are all designed to grow engagement and increase demand for our expertise, outputs and services.

Outcome two (simplification/commercialisation): *in partnership with the Enterprise Agencies (EAs) and Interface, Scottish HEIs as a sector will have demonstrably simplified access to the knowledge and expertise in Scottish Universities.*

SRUC is an organisation that is designed to enable easy access to businesses (see outcome one above) who mainly wish to access innovative services and advice. However, we also work closely with the wider HEI sector to ensure easy access to knowledge and expertise, particularly at the research / innovation interface. Our model is to provide for the transfer and exchange of innovative paid for novel services (rather than mainly through protected IP) to the food and land-based sector. We are, however, open to deepen our collaboration with other HEIs to ensure the better transfer of new IP to new business start ups. We are actively working to deepen collaboration within Scotland with other research institutes and wider afield, including key HEIs, other research organisations and the Scottish and UK governments. Further, we have much experience of direct contact with industry to access our knowledge and expertise (mainly as noted above through the provision of services). We will continue to fully share our experience with all HEIs to contribute to mechanisms that will simplify access to knowledge and expertise in the Scottish Universities.

Although emphasis has been and will continue to be on provision of services and advice we have recently strengthened our staffing for our commercialisation activities. We are in the process of improving the delivery route of innovative new knowledge/ products/processes to industry by promoting the imperative of commercial thinking to key identified staff in SRUC. This includes consideration of profitability and acting in an entrepreneurial manner, working directly with industry clients proactively. This accords with SRUC's transformation plan, that is fully aligned to the Government's Industrial Strategy, developing the skills of our staff in commercialisation and exploitation. We are currently planning a centre where both employees and students can contribute their ideas towards commercial growth in an agile process, where they will be provided with the required skills to help achieve a viable commercial outcome for their ideas. Where possible and sensible, we are fully open to collaboration & exchanging experiences with like-minded institutions to promote and widen this approach to endearing and embedding a commercial "mind-set" in key staff aimed at increasing entrepreneurialism and realistic commercialisation.

Outcome three (simplification/greater innovation): *In partnership with the EAs and Interface, Scottish HEIs will, at a national level, have made strategic use of their sectoral knowledge to promote greater innovation in the economy.*

SRUC actively promotes knowledge, innovation and enterprise to the primary food and land-based (ie. rural) sector (working with others (see below)).

We continue to work for more flexible interventions for innovation led growth that do not assume a one size fits all model, and encourages traction in high growth sectors such as Food and Drink, where R&D spend has been low but sector growth projections are high.

We will continue to work in collaboration with Queen Margaret and Abertay Universities to look at the alignment of resources focused on collaborative academic capacity building. We will further develop this partnership and engagement with the Food and Drink Industry via our joint work with the Food and Drink Industry Liaison Group. This will support ongoing inter-institutional initiatives in support of graduate start up and employability in the Food and Drink sector.

In SRUC researchers working closely with consultancy colleagues ensure that links and networks with industry are effective. Many our research projects are “applied-specific” in nature and are collaborative with industry or indeed deliver directly to industry. We encourage our younger staff to become members of local business groups, as it is from such experience that benefits accrue and help facilitate building of trust as well as effective mechanisms for promoting innovation and enterprise within our staff.

SRUC will continue to fully engage with RKEC/RCDG to continue to develop a national approach to enterprise and innovation, and for us to learn lessons that we can transfer to our staff. In 2018/19 we repeated our student “Entrepreneur Week” activities and intend to further develop this during 2019/20 with further activities, including our promotion of commercialisation and entrepreneurial behaviour as noted in outcome 2 above.

Further, SRUC is an active member of the contracts group of RCDG who have produced agreed contract templates that are being used across the sector.

Given our close linkages to industry, we have long experience of collaborating with both government and industry in applied specific rural based research aimed at promoting innovation into the economy. Given the increase in industry led innovation and research, we will use UIF to promote a co-ordinated approach to various industry led initiatives for example the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) and other similar initiatives operated by Innovate UK and other funders, collaborating not only with industry but other universities. Our close industry linkages provide an advantage for project applications to such funding. For SRUC, the ISCF transforming food production challenge provides us with our focus for this initiative. This challenge requires the UK to produce resilient and sustainable food more efficiently. For SRUC this challenge is key to our vision and strategy and the research we undertake. Hence we will apply for opportunities through this funding partnering with key agricultural industry collaborators. We envisage opportunities to fully participate in the challenge platform networks. The specific subject areas will be around improving efficiency of conversion of feedstuffs into animal protein and the authenticity of foodstuffs. For example animal agriculture will be a key component of agricultural systems into the future especially in the developing world, as well as in the UK due to constraints of geography. Understanding the microbiome in ruminants is but one example to help make step changes in efficiency of feed conversion, hence reducing waste, greenhouse gases but enhancing conversion of feed into protein. Related work on alternative feeds will also be undertaken such as use of insect protein and seaweed. Further, we are developing a research interest in block-chain with industry to authenticate and certify foodstuffs, key to effective food traceability and authenticity building resilience into food producing systems. These are but two examples of a “Food and Feed for Alba” co-ordinated approach that we propose will transform food production in Scotland. Our approach will be fully collaborative with a number of universities, research institutes and key industries across Scotland and the UK. We will therefore propose to lead on our “Feed and Food for Alba” targeting the Transforming Food Production theme in ISCF and will collaborate with Scottish HEIs to co-ordinate and target specific calls that build proposals relevant for and with industry key partners. Such initiatives will have the positive effect of further deepening productive collaboration over time. For such an approach to be

successful it will need to be simple to operate and primarily based on sectoral specialisms and fully support any such initiatives promoted by RCDG.

Outcome four (entrepreneurialism): *Scottish HEIs as a sector will have made a significant and positive change in the way entrepreneurial opportunities are promoted and delivered to students, HEI staff and businesses.*

At SRUC we deliver courses that are vocational and focused on supplying skills needs for the rural industries. They are applied in nature and feature units/modules that train and help prepare students to run a business. Many of our graduating students will have careers within a rural enterprise.

Beyond formal training we aim to promote an innovation culture in our students. We equip students with the skills and attitudes to be open to new ideas, to think of novel solutions, to adopt new technology *ie.* be entrepreneurial; we do this by using our specialist farm resources to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. These research farms can be used to demonstrate state of the art activities and facilities e.g. measuring greenhouse gas emissions from farmed animals; “smart” monitoring equipment for optimising production; precision agriculture.

We also promote through UIF the use of external speakers from Scottish Universities and other organisations (eg. Scotland Food and Drink) as well as invitees from our well developed industry; links to specifically promote aspects of innovation and entrepreneurialism as part of the formal delivery of our undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses.

SRUC staff in addition specialise in research, consultancy or education activities with many operating across more than one area. Researchers working with consultancy colleagues ensure that links and networks with the rural industries are very close. Many research projects are collaborative with industry or indeed deliver directly to industry. However, within this already productive framework, we intend to continue to encourage development of further networks with industry (SRUC is already a member of local business groups), especially for our younger staff. In our experience, it is from such activities that added benefits accrue, not only for future collaborative research, but also from the development of trust, that facilitate and enable the effective uptake of innovation and innovative new approaches.

During 2017/18 we engaged with Entrepreneurial Spark, to provide training in their “Catalyst” programme to 15 staff, as well as appointing an Entrepreneurial Fellow to progress a business idea to the marketplace. We have been planning a follow this up to this in 2018/19, linked to Outcome 2 above, and are in the process of setting up a “safe space” (what we call the “Orchard”) where ideas can be grown, tended, cared for and improved upon, very much to allow employees and students to contribute their own ideas towards commercial growth across SRUC. We would use some UIF funding to promote this “safe space”. We fully expect that by 2019/20 the “Orchard” will be fully operational, promoting entrepreneurial and commercial training couple with facilities to “grow” commercial ideas.

Being more commercial is one way we see of actually improving entrepreneurialism within the institution. We would also very much like to participate in generic entrepreneurial training for staff provided in a connected way across the Scottish HEIs. We fully recognised that a relatively small, focused institution like SRUC can promote such activity to our staff and make a difference. It is perhaps is much more difficult for a larger multi faculty, multidisciplinary university, but sharing common experiences may be one positive way to make collective progress.

Outcome five (international): *In partnership with Scottish Development International, Connected Scotland and others, Scottish HEIs will have pooled their knowledge and networks, and shared good practice to promote and engage Scotland internationally.*

Having international impact is a cornerstone of our new strategy. SRUC is involved in a number of international funded initiatives (eg. the Gates funded Centre for Tropical Livestock Genetics and Health (CTLGH) with other HEIs. SRUC has undertaken joint initiatives and collaboration with other HEIs across various sectors to promote more effective international engagement. Agri-food industries face substantial challenges to feed a world population of up to 10bn by 2030; not just scientific, but also cultural, economic and social. Solutions must be grounded in multidisciplinary, multifaceted approaches. We aim to work together with others in a smart, connected way to address these “grand” challenges. We will deepen collaboration with key HEIs and with Government to develop and fully engage with a coherent programme of international agriculture and primary food production. As such we are interested in ensuring that we are involved with the development of best practice in these activities. We aim to grow our international programme of activity, and will use UIF to deepen collaboration with others, to make a step change difference in international agriculture, with emphasis on improving sustainability, application of appropriate technology and reduction in food waste. To further foster good practice in this area SRUC will continue to fully collaborate with all other HEIs in Scotland through participation in the RCDG sector group to find ways to build international collaboration and to promote Scotland internationally more effectively.

Outcome six (inclusive growth and social impact). *Building on current and good practice Scottish HEIs will have scaled up their support of the Scottish Government’s ambitions for inclusive growth.*

Taking consideration of the Scottish Government’s policy framework for inclusive growth, SRUC is well positioned to make a significant contribution in specific aspects of each of the three main pillars of this framework.

In regard to *multi-dimensional social justice*, we promote and contribute to equality of opportunity, participation and environmental sustainability. Specifically, for opportunity and participation, our courses are designed to provide training opportunities from secondary (NC) through to tertiary, HNC/ HND, Degree and PhD in land-based and rural disciplines, all of which are vocationally oriented, preparing students for diverse careers in all aspects of the rural sector. All courses have well designed articulation, allowing entry and transfer at all points. We have embedded flexibility for entrance of students from a diverse range of backgrounds and outlooks. The purpose of these mechanisms is to allow students to progress (ie. perform as well as they are able) as far they wish. This is coupled with a support system to provide advice and tutoring at each stage of their student career. Use of UIF in particular with students (tailored by course) is to provide opportunity to engage with practitioners to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship (as noted above). Further, promoting environmental sustainability within the rural sector is at the core of what we do, with a portfolio of relevant research, translated (with the aid of funding from UIF) for our education courses (at various levels), and for specific KE events with key end users, especially our diverse industry clients (as noted in outcome one above), providing direct consulting services for a range of appropriate rural end users.

In terms of *tackling inequality*, this is coupled with our philosophy of flexibility of progression to allow students to enter courses at a range of entry points, together with support to progress as noted above. In terms of the wider rural community, SRUC provides consulting services (see outcome one above) to the whole rural sector (accomplished by a number of regional offices across Scotland). The aim of these services is to provide equality of opportunity to all participants in the rural industries regardless of size / remoteness (ie. place) of the rural enterprise. We aim to reach and influence all types of rural enterprise promoting the outputs of our research through innovative changes in various farming practices that will benefit in terms of improved quality, profitability and competitiveness.

Tackling inequality is linked to our approach to pro-growth and improving competitiveness. Our structure is such that research, education and consultancy services are all linked to

provide an effective means to disseminate advances in innovation in the rural industries. SRUC is primarily a KE organisation whether that is to our education, research or consulting clients. Our primary aim is to encourage the effective diffusion of knowledge generated through our R&D programmes through well designed KE activities. As such we will utilise UIF to undertake KE training of our staff to ensure that they are up to date in the latest mechanisms to deliver innovation to the full range of our industry clients and learners.

Much of what we do is aimed at improving the competitiveness of the rural sector. Linked to outcome five, we also take an international perspective, in particular, through association with international networks and linkages encouraging the uptake of innovation that can be applied collaboratively to the benefit to rural industries and at home and abroad.

We recognise, however, that much can be done here by adopting effective collaborative approaches with other HEIs and will continue to develop deeper collaboration with HEIs in the area. Therefore we will link where appropriate with other HEI's to lever joint funding applications with initiatives, such as ISCF and GCRF, to promote pro-growth, improved productivity, yet sustainable initiatives in Scotland, the UK and internationally.

Outcome 7 (equality and diversity). *Building on current and good practice HEIs will have ensured positive promotion of equality and diversity in staff and all who are affected by the use of UIF).*

This is central to everything we do, whether in relation to activities associated with the UIF or any of our other activities. Our policies in SRUC recognise the value and contribution of every individual and seek to enable them to achieve their full potential and aspirations without suffering discrimination of any kind. Our policy helps meet our obligations within the Equality Act 2010 and through the Public Sector Equality Duty. SRUC has developed a Single Equality Scheme with the express aim of eliminating any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation in relation to the identified Protected Characteristics, and promoting equality across the organisation and in our interactions with our clients and, students.

Platform Grant

As noted above SRUC uses UIF, guided by its objectives, to undertake a comprehensive programme of KE focused on rural industry across Scotland, promoting the uptake of innovative outputs from our R&D. In addition we also have a major commitment to the public audience, through school based KE and our participation in science festivals and key agricultural events such as the Royal Highland Show. SRUC would use the Platform Grant to partly support the administrative and managerial costs of producing an enhanced programme of KE. This includes a contribution to specialist activities such as communications, publications, web development and marketing services. It would also provide a contribution to senior staff time to actively participate, leading where appropriate, in cross university groupings such as RKEC and RCDG, together with interaction with Interface, Scotland Food and Drink, Innovation Centres, Scottish and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and other organisations. In addition, specific KE co-ordinators have been identified within the institution to ensure a cross institution approach across the institution. We also allocate resources to train staff in KE approaches as well undertake a specific project to systematically evaluate our UIF activities to help facilitate continuous improvement and maximise impact.

The current SRUC cost of such necessary support (including initiatives to the public and for cultural engagement) is £500K. Current cost to support communications/marketing and senior staff is £450K. In future, assuming a platform grant of around £250K, SRUC would be able to support such service activities for KE to around the same levels as now.

APPENDIX 4: Acronyms used in this document

AHDB	Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
APUC	Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges
BEIS	Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
BSI	British Standards Institute
C02e	Carbon Dioxide equivalent
CELCIS	Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland
CIEL	Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock
CMP	Carbon Management Plan
CoWA	Commission on Widening Access
CTLGH	Centre for Tropical Livestock Genetics and Health
DLHE	Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Survey
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce
EAs	Enterprise Agencies
ECU	Equality Challenge Unit
EHRI	Equality, Human Rights and Inclusion
ELIR	Enhancement-led Institutional Review
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FAS	Farm Advisory Service
FWDF	Flexible Workforce Development Fund
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCRF	Global Challenges Research Fund
GTC	General Teaching Council
HEBCI	Higher Education and Business Community Interaction Survey
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
ILR	Institution-led Review
IP	Intellectual Property
ISCF	Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund
MIS	Management Information System
MRPs	Main Research Providers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPF	National Performance Framework
NSS	National Student Survey
NUS	National Union of Students
OA	Outcome Agreement
ODA	Official Development Assistance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RESAS	Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services
RHET	Royal Highland Education Trust
RNCI	Royal Northern Countryside Initiative
SANE	a leading mental health charity
SAYFC	Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework
SDUE	Scottish Domiciled Undergraduate Entrants
SEFARI	Scottish Environment, Food and Agriculture Research Institutes
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
SHEP	Schools for Higher Education Programme
SME	Small or Medium Enterprise
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SPA	Student Partnership Agreement
sparqs	Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland
SSES	Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

SSI	Small Specialist Institution
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SWAP	Scottish Wider Access Programme
TRCs	Transdisciplinary Research Centres
UIF	University Innovation Fund
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation



Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA)

EHRIAs support SFC to meet the statutory duties stipulated under the Equality Act 2010 and support Public Bodies in Scotland demonstrate that Equality and diversity is at the heart of their policies, practices and decisions are fair. EHRIAs are the thorough and systematic analysis of a new or revised policy to determine whether they have a differential impact on a particular group in relation to equality, diversity and human rights.

In our strategic plan 2015-18, we commit to a system of further and higher education which will be accessible and diverse. We will contribute to a more equal society by embedding equality and diversity across all our functions, supporting participation, tackling prejudice, and by placing good relations at the heart of our organisation.

The process can be seen as a quality control mechanism which SFC can use to evaluate new or revised policy and best meet the equality, diversity and human rights needs of staff and students in the institutions that we fund, our stakeholders, and for SFC staff as an employer.

In Scotland, the specific duties require us to assess and review new and revised policies and practices against the three needs of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), use evidence, act on the results and publish the EIA accessibly.

‘Policy’ needs to be understood broadly to embrace the full range of functions, practices, activities and decisions for which the Scottish Funding Council is responsible: essentially everything the Scottish Funding Council does. This includes both current policies and new policies under development.

SFC has developed an equivalent Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment model to incorporate equality, diversity and human rights considerations, referred to here as an ‘EHRIA’.

Guidance on how to complete an EHRIA can be found in the Annex section of this document.

Template to be completed by the person leading the EHRIA

Policy Owner	Linda Whillans
SFC Directorate	Outcome Agreement
EHRIA Commenced	12 November 2018
Version number	2
EHRIA Completed	20 March 2019
New/revised policy/practice signed off by Management	
EHRIA actions due for review on:	
Quality Assessed	
Publication	

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Publication Document

Our intention is that this template will support you to complete an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) and for us as a collective organisation to complete our statutory requirements.

Prior to the publication on the SFC's website, every EHRIA will be assessed by the Equality & Diversity Group who will be responsible for displaying the publishing document on the SFC external website. Guidance on how to complete an EHRIA can be found in the Annex section of this document.

Stage 1: Background information

Title of Policy:	SRUC Outcome Agreement 2019-20		
EHRIA Lead Person:	Linda Whillans		
Who else is involved in the EHRIA?	Jamie Newbold, Sarah Skerratt		
Date EHRIA completed:		Is this a new or revised policy?	New <input type="checkbox"/>
Date EHRIA published and where:	Comms will complete this section		Revised <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Review date and frequency:	November 2019 as next Outcome Agreement drafted.		

Stage 2: Scoping and evidence gathering

Why are you introducing the new policy, or why are you revising an existing policy?	Annual Outcome Agreement.
What is the intended outcome(s) and impact of the new policy, or making the changes to an existing policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of grant for University and College funding • Scottish Government priorities • SRUC strategic planning
What quantitative and/or qualitative evidence as well as case law relating to equality and human rights have you considered when deciding to develop new or revise current policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG reports/priorities • Information provided to HESA • FES data sets • Outcome Agreements • Information provided to SFC from universities/colleges • Evidence from involvement, engagement and consultations
Who did you consult with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff groups • Students • Trade unions

What did you learn?	Feedback received and incorporated as appropriate. Additional information included on some protected characteristics and future plans for clarity.
How did the consultation shape the policy?	As above. Prompt feedback requested but also an opportunity given for later feedback which could still be considered.

Stage 3: Identifying outcomes and impact

Delivering on the SFC's Public Sector Equality Duty	
Consider the equality risk assessment within the context of broader staff or student journey which includes recruitment, retention, progression, promotion, training etc.	
1. How does your policy contribute to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation? Please describe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises awareness of our SRUC and Scottish Government vision and values for equality and diversity • Details included in relation to current and future involvement/commitment, particularly in priority areas 	Positive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Negative <input type="checkbox"/>
	No effect <input type="checkbox"/>
2. State how your policy advances equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not? Please describe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates SRUC's commitment to remove or minimise disadvantage • Seeks to meet the needs of equality groups that are different from the needs of others • Supports participation in further and higher education 	Positive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Negative <input type="checkbox"/>
	No effect <input type="checkbox"/>
3. In which ways does this policy fosters good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not? Please describe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes understanding and positive actions aimed at tackling prejudice 	Positive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Negative <input type="checkbox"/>
	No effect <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does your policy ensure Human Rights articles compliances? Compliant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Breach <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Please indicate which articles your policy relates to: Consider: Article 1 - Free and equal <input type="checkbox"/> Article 2 - Right to life <input type="checkbox"/> Article 3 - Prohibition of torture <input type="checkbox"/> Article 4 - Prohibition of slavery & forced labour <input type="checkbox"/> Article 5 - Right to liberty & security <input type="checkbox"/> Article 6 - Right to a fair trial (e.g. disciplinary procedures) <input type="checkbox"/> Article 7 - No punishment without law (e.g. disciplinary procedures) <input type="checkbox"/> Article 8 - Right to respect for private & family life <input type="checkbox"/> Article 9 - Freedom of thought, conscience & religion <input type="checkbox"/> Article 10 - Freedom of expression <input type="checkbox"/>	

Article 11 - Freedom of assembly & association (e.g. trade union recognition) <input type="checkbox"/>
Article 12 - Right to marry <input type="checkbox"/>
(N.B.) Article 13 has been removed
Article 14 - Prohibition of discrimination (e.g. people part of protected characteristic groups) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Protocol 1 Article 1 – Protection of property <input type="checkbox"/>
Protocol 1 Article 2 – Right to education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Detail the positive impact here:

Commitment to right to education for all.

Please select which group(s) will be affected by the positive impact:

Age (e.g. older people or younger people)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (e.g. people from black or any minority ethnic groups)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender (e.g. women or men)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability (e.g. people with visible or non-visible disabilities, physical impairments or mental health conditions)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender Identity (e.g. people who will change/have changed/ are changing their gender from that assigned at birth)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or Belief (e.g. belonging to a particular religion, holding a particular belief, or have no affiliation to any particular religion or belief)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maternity and Pregnancy (e.g. women who are pregnant/on maternity leave/breastfeeding)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economic groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Human rights compliance (e.g. civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Stage 4: Analysis of impact/outcomes

You have indicated that this new or revised policy will have an impact/outcome on one or more of the 3 main duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty and Human Rights articles for staff or students. Use these sections below to indicate whether the impact is positive or negative, and justify your assessment using the data and evidence you have already gathered (via statistics, consultation, etc.)

Detail the negative impact here:

Potential impact:	Mitigating response:
Potential impact:	Mitigating response:

Please select which group(s) will be affected by the negative impact:

Age (e.g. older people or younger people)	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

Race (e.g. people from black or any minority ethnic groups)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender (e.g. women or men)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability (e.g. people with visible or non-visible disabilities, physical impairments or mental health conditions)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender Identity (e.g. people who will change/have changed/ are changing their gender from that assigned at birth)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or Belief (e.g. belonging to a particular religion, holding a particular belief, or have no affiliation to any particular religion or belief)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maternity and Pregnancy (e.g. women who are pregnant/on maternity leave/breastfeeding)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economic groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human rights compliance (e.g. civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Stage 5: Identifying options and course of action

Select a recommended course of action:	
Outcome 1: Proceed – no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact or breach of human rights articles has been identified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 2: Proceed with adjustments to remove barriers identified for discrimination, advancement of equality of opportunity and fostering good relations or breach of human rights articles.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified some potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to advance equality and human rights (justification to be clearly set out).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink as actual or potential unlawful discrimination or breach of human rights articles has been identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outline plans to action and review the impact of the new or revised policy

- Note: **any** evidence that raises concern would trigger an **early review** rather than the scheduled date
- Indicate if there is any data which needs to be collected as part of action to be taken and how often it will be analysed
- Indicate how the person responsible will continue to involve relevant groups and communities in the implementation and monitoring of the new or changed policy

WHAT	WHY	WHO	WHEN	REVIEW POINT
------	-----	-----	------	--------------

WHAT	WHY	WHO	WHEN	REVIEW POINT
Outcome Agreement will be published	Available to all	SRUC/SFC	Summer 2019	November 2019

Summary of results, including the likely impact of the proposed policy advancing-equality and human rights
The Outcome Agreement reinforces SRUC's commitment to wider participation in education and opportunities for all.

Next Steps
Outcome Agreement measures will be reviewed and reported on.

Stage 6: Publishing

The completed EHRIA and Publishing Document must:

- Be sent to the Equality and Diversity Lead at e&d@sfc.ac.uk
- Please note that the final EHRIA, or reference to it will be published on the SFC website once the EHRIA has received Director approval.
- As part of a transparent process, and to support decision making, EHRIsAs will also be attached to Funding, Board or Committee papers where relevant.

Annex: Guidance to support completion of EHRIA

What is an EHRIA?

The integrated approach of looking at equality and human rights together in SFC reflects the statutory requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties set out in the Equality Act (2010) underpinned by the priority to human rights and FAIR process. Through completion of the EHRIA, SFC ensure that policies, and the ways we carry out our functions, do what they are intended to do and for everybody. The Scotland Act 1998 established the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government. It ensures that the Scottish Parliament can only pass laws that are compatible with human rights. This means that human rights must be respected and realised at all levels of governance in Scotland. SFC considers that an inter-disciplinary approach to assessing new or revised policy ensures that we are able to inform decision making relating to both under-representation and socio-economic disadvantage.

Why do we carry out EHRIA?

The main reasons for carrying out EHRIAs are to ensure fairness, ensure compliance with legislation, and improve SFC effectiveness. They are a tool for meaningful and informed decision making for new or revised practice. The process helps to identify and measure their effect in terms of equality, diversity and human rights on relevant groups.

They permit impacts and outcomes to be predicted, monitored and, if necessary, avoided or mitigated. When undertaken and led by the decision or policy maker, EHRIAs serve to raise awareness of sector, staff and our stakeholder's interests and ensure they are factored into policy development at the earliest possible stage.

The legislative requirements that are met when carrying out EHRIA are the Public Sector Equality Duties from the Equality Act 2010. The Scotland Act (1998) makes provisions for the protection of human rights within Scotland and when any subordinate legislation is made it must not be incompatible with any of the Human Rights Legislation. The consideration of socio-economic factors included in the EHRIA is part of our contribution to achieving relevant government objectives for fairness, participation and tackling inequalities set out in the Programme for Government and Post-16 (Scotland) Act 2014, although is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. There is a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people, in particular those with the poorest outcomes and this should be taken into account with carrying out EHRIA.

Delivering on SFC'S Public Sector Equality Duties

Under Public Sector Equality Duties, SFC is required to have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Across all aspects of any SFC decision-making process we need to be consciously thinking about the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duties. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by SFC – such as in how we act as employers; how we develop, evaluate and review policy; how we design, deliver and evaluate services, and how we commission and procure from others.

The Public Sector Equality Duties require consideration of how new or revised policy will eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to eight of the nine protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The ninth protected characteristic, marriage and civil partnership, is not covered by the Public Sector Equality Duties. However when carrying out EHRIAs you will be asked to consider how this policy/practice will impact on or what outcomes are there for people belonging to a protected characteristic group, including the ninth protected characteristic. SFC supports individuals who are care experienced, to support those who achieve the lowest educational outcomes, as if a protected characteristic group.

Within the Scottish Specific Duties of the Public Sector Equality Duties, SFC is required to demonstrate how we have considered evidence of the impact that key policy will have on equality and diversity.

SFC must:

- Consider relevant evidence relating to people with protected characteristics, including any evidence received from those people
- Take account of the results of any assessment
- Publish the result of any assessment within a reasonable time period

When do you carry out EHRIA?

When the decision is made for a new or revised policy or procedure, you should commence your EHRIA. The EHRIA should be conducted at the beginning of the process. Evidence gathered will inform policy developments. An EHRIA is a transparent and shared document and should be embraced as an effective tool for thinking through opportunities and challenges, rather than feared.

There are 6 stages have to be followed when carrying out EHRIAs:



The Equality and Diversity Lead is there to support if there is anything that is not clear but they are not able to develop the EHRIA as they will not be the decision makers or implementers of the proposed changes.

The process of developing an EHRIA may be a one off meeting with relevant people or an ongoing process over time depending on time it takes to develop the new or revised policy.

How do you carry out EHRIA?

Stage 1: Background information

A clarify whether the policy is new or revised. If the policy is revised the original impact assessment must be used to build on the previous findings.

Identify the Lead Author/Policy Owner of the EHRIA with consideration to balancing 'ownership' of the process and deciding who is best able to lead the work.

The Lead Author/Policy Owner must select a team of contributors who have a thorough understanding of the policy and its context as this is vital to being able to undertake a proper EHRIA and to the ability to suggest appropriate alternative policies where negative impacts are identified.

Stage 2: Scoping and evidence gathering

All EHRIAs should include a description of the policy and its aims, why it has been developed and what the intended outcomes/impact. Some of the questions that might be asked include:

- Who initiated the policy?
- Who has responsibility for implementation of the policy?
- What is the legal, policy and practice context of the proposal?
- How does it relate to other policy?
- Does it seek to fulfil any targets set, for example, by Scottish Government?
- What are the resource implications of the policy?
- Who do we need to gather information from?

Identifying the evidence that might be needed, and where it might be found is a key part of the scoping stage. This may involve highlighting gaps in existing evidence and possibly commissioning research to fill the gaps (depending on the scope, scale and severity of impacts).

The Lead Author/ Policy Owner must evidence impacts on the equality, diversity and human rights that the new or revised policy may have. This is the information that will inform analysis of the policy. The types of evidence are qualitative, quantitative and case law. The qualitative and quantitative evidence can be internal and/or external. An example of external benchmarking and information that needs to be considered at this stage is the Scottish Government Equality Toolkit and SFC's Learning for All publication, Equality Challenge Unit's statistical reports Colleges in Scotland, HESA.

Consultation ensures the voices of those (likely to be) affected by the policy are heard and taken into account in the EHRIA process

Stage 3: Identifying outcomes and impact

The options provided for the Public Sector Equality Duties and Human Rights articles should be used to consider the outcomes and impact.

If the policy has no effect on the Public Sector Equality Duties and does not breach human rights then justification must be provided for this decision.

Equality and Diversity is included within the SFC Improvement schedule of work in 2016-18.

Stage 4: Analysis of impact

The details of the positive impact on the groups identified must be listed at this stage.

The negative impact must be mitigated to a reasonable, objective justifiable level or the policy must be abandoned if this is not possible as it would be illegal.

Stage 5: Identifying options and course of action

A decision has to be made from a choice of the 4 options for the outcome of the EHRIA and a summary why the decision has been made with any other recommendations must be provided. The options are:

Outcome 1: Proceed – no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact or breach of human rights articles has been identified.

Outcome 2: Proceed with adjustments to remove barriers identified for discrimination, advancement of equality of opportunity and fostering good relations or breach of human rights articles.

Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified some potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to advance equality and human rights (justification to be clearly set out).

Outcome 4: Stop and rethink as actual or potential unlawful discrimination or breach of human rights articles has been identified.

The planned actions to be taken and how the impact of the new or revised policy must be detailed and include the lead person who will ensure this will be done in the timescales set. This is to make sure that the EHRIA is not a one off process but an on-going cycle of review of policy.

Stage 6: Publishing

The Lead Author/Policy Owner should then follow these 6 steps to publish their EHRIA:

1. Policy Owner completes the six-stage EHRIA template and save draft to Links
Draft EHRIsAs
<http://links.sfc.ac.uk/livelink/livelink.exe/properties/245261663>



2. Policy Owner sends notification and a link to the completed form to
e&d@sfc.ac.uk



3. The form will be checked, process will be evaluated and finalisation of the form discussed with the policy owner.



4. The Policy Owner will move the finalised form to the Completed EHRIA folder on Links
<http://links.sfc.ac.uk/livelink/livelink.exe/properties/243024477>



5. Policy Owner must ensure version control of the EHRIA and seek Director approval before progressing to publication. Communications Team should be sent a single, final link to the document, confirming Director approval. The publication and review dates should be added to the EHRIA before publishing.



6. A log of completed EHRIsAs will be published on the SFC website and are expected to be reviewed when there is a revision or review to the policy it covers.

Queries

If you have any queries regarding the process please contact e&d@sfc.ac.uk

SFC FE Outcome Agreement Targets for 2019-20 to 2021-22

- * denotes priority measure
 ** denotes successful completion figures where the underlying proportion is likely less than 50, meaning projections are subject to greater change

OA National Measure	Actual 2017-18	Projection 2019-20	Projection 2020-21	Projection 2021-22
1(a)* The volume of Credits delivered				
The volume of Credits delivered (core)	23,167	23,250	23,750	24,250
Core Credits target (region)	22,867	22,747	23,500	24,000
% towards core Credits target (region)	101.3%	102.2%	101.1%	101.0%
The volume of Credits delivered (ESF)	0			
The volume of Credits delivered (core + ESF)	23,167	23,250	23,750	24,250
1(b)* Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas				
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners in the most deprived 10% postcode areas	5.3%	6.0%	7.0%	8.0%
1(c) The volume and proportion of Credits relating to learners from different protected characteristic groups and Care Experienced				
Proportion of Credits delivered to Male learners	55.2%	55.0%	54.9%	54.8%
Proportion of Credits delivered to Female learners	44.5%	44.6%	44.5%	44.4%
Proportion of Credits delivered to Other learners	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%
Proportion of Credits delivered to BME learners	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with a known disability	20.7%	22.0%	24.0%	26.0%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged under 16	4.6%	6.0%	7.0%	8.0%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 16-19	55.6%	55.0%	54.0%	53.0%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners aged 20-24	19.3%	19.0%	19.0%	19.0%
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners age 25 and over	20.5%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Proportion of Credits delivered to students with Care Experience	0.6%	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%
2* The number of senior phase pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges				
Proportion of Credits delivered to senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges	1.6%	1.7%	1.9%	2.1%
The proportion of Credits delivered to learners at S3 and above as part of 'school-college' provision	6.9%	6.5%	6.7%	7.0%

Proportion of Credits delivered at HE level to learners from SHEP schools				
3. Volume and proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses				
Proportion of Credits delivered to learners enrolled on STEM courses	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%
4(a)* Proportion of enrolled students successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	68.3%	70.2%	71.2%	72.1%
The percentage of PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	92.6%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%
The percentage of FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	Higher education figures are reported in the SRUC HE summary table.			
The percentage of PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification				
4(b)* Proportion of enrolled MD10 students successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of MD10 FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	66.7%	62.9%	63.1%	64.3%
The percentage of MD10 PT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	93.1%	90.0%	89.8%	90.0%
The percentage of MD10 FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	Higher education figures are reported in the SRUC HE summary table.			
The percentage of MD10 PT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification				
4(c)* Proportion of senior phase age pupils successfully achieving a vocational qualification delivered by colleges				
The percentage of senior phase FT FE pupils achieving a vocational qualification**	50.0%			
The percentage of senior phase PT FE pupils achieving a vocational qualification	72.4%			
The percentage of senior phase FT HE pupils achieving a vocational qualification**	Higher education figures are reported in the SRUC HE summary table.			
The percentage of senior phase PT HE pupils achieving a vocational qualification**				
4(d)* Proportion of full-time enrolled Care Experienced students successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of CE FT FE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	42.9%	60.0%	60.9%	64.0%
The percentage of CE FT HE enrolled students achieving a recognised qualification	Higher education figures are reported in the SRUC HE summary table.			
4(e)* Proportion of full-time FE enrolled students aged 16-19 successfully achieving a recognised qualification				
The percentage of FT FE enrolled students aged 16-19 achieving a recognised qualification	64.8%	70.0%	70.9%	71.8%
5. The number of starts for contracted apprenticeships (including industry bodies such as CITB and SECTT)	190	200	210	220
6. Number and proportion of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study				
Proportion of full-time learners with substantial 'work placement experience' as part of their programme of study	11.3%	11.3%	11.8%	11.9%
7.* The number and proportion of successful students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing				
The proportion of successful students who have achieved HNC or HND qualifications articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

8.* The number and proportion of full-time college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying				
The proportion of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	-	94.2%	94.3%	94.4%
The proportion of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training and/or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	Higher education figures are reported in the SRUC HE summary table.			
9. The percentage of students overall, satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)	89.0%	89.0%	90.0%	91.0%
Response rate				
Full-time				
Part-time				
Distance Learning				
10 Gross carbon footprint (tCO2e)				

SFC HE Outcome Agreement Targets for 2019-20 to 2021-22

* denotes priority measure

** denotes retention figures where the underlying proportion is likely less than 50, meaning projections are subject to greater change

	2017-18 baseline	2019-20 Projection	2020-21 Projection	2021-22 Projection	
Scottish Government strategic priority: Access to education for people from the widest range of backgrounds, including implementation of the recommendations of the CoWA and addressing gender balance					
Measure 1: Articulation - The number and proportion of Scotland-domiciled learners articulating from college to degree level courses with advanced standing					
Proportion of Scotland-domiciled HN entrants articulating with Advanced Standing	85.4%	90.0%	90.0%	90.9%	*
Measure 2: Deprivation - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the 20% and 40% most deprived postcodes					
2a: Proportion of SDUEs from 20% most deprived postcodes	13.4%	13.9%	14.9%	15.4%	*
2b: Proportion of SDUEs from 40% most deprived postcode	28.0%	30.3%	31.4%	32.0%	
2c: Additional CoWA target: proportion of full-time first degree SDUEs entrants from the 20% most deprived data zones	10.4%	14.2%	14.9%	15.9%	
Measure 3: SHEP Schools - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the SHEP schools (i.e. schools with consistently low rates of progression to higher education)					
Proportion of SDUE from SHEP Schools	2.0%	4.6%	4.8%	5.1%	
Measure 4: Protected Characteristics - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants by different protected characteristic groups and care leavers					
Male Proportion	41.9%	44.0%	44.6%	45.1%	
Female Proportion	58.0%	55.9%	55.2%	54.5%	
Under 21 Proportion	51.3%	54.3%	53.7%	53.1%	
21 and over Proportion	48.7%	45.7%	46.3%	46.9%	
Proportion – BME	2.5%	2.3%	2.4%	2.5%	
Proportion – Disability	20.2%	22.3%	22.9%	23.4%	
Proportion - Care Experience	0.1%	0.7%	0.9%	1.1%	*
Measure 5: Retention by Protected Characteristics - The proportion of full-time first year Scotland-domiciled entrants from different characteristic groups returning to study in year two					
Proportion MD20 retained	74.2%	78.7%	79.2%	79.6%	*
Proportion MD20/40 retained	79.3%	82.5%	83.3%	83.7%	
Proportion of Males retained	72.2%	77.9%	78.4%	78.7%	
Proportion of Females retained	87.9%	80.5%	80.8%	81.2%	
Proportion of Under 21s retained	80.0%	80.4%	80.8%	81.3%	
Proportion of 21 and over retained	81.8%	79.0%	79.3%	79.5%	
Proportion retained – BME	83.3%	80.0%	80.0%	81.0%	
Proportion retained – Disability	78.4%	80.0%	81.0%	81.5%	
Proportion retained - Care Experience	60.0%	40.0%	50.0%	50.0%	*

Scottish Government strategic priority: High quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, including learning which prepares people well for the world of work, prioritising provision that meets known skills gaps in the economy				
Measure 6: Retention - The proportion of full-time first year Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants returning to study in year two				
Proportion retained	80.7%	80.1%	80.3%	80.4%
Measure 7: Satisfaction - The difference (+/-) from the individual institution's benchmark figure for students satisfied with the overall quality of their course of study in the National Student Survey				
% Satisfaction	70	75	80	84
Measure 8: STEM - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants to STEM courses				
Proportion of SDUE to STEM courses	81.3%	81.7%	81.7%	81.7%
Measure 9a: Graduate Destinations - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled graduates entering positive destinations				
Proportion of graduates in positive destinations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 9b: Graduate Destinations - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled full-time first degree respondents entering professional occupations				
Proportion of FT first degree respondents in professional occupations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Scottish government priority: internationally competitive and impactful research				
Measure 10: The number of research postgraduate students				
RPG students	95	110	115	120
Measure 11: Total income from the UK Research Councils				
RCUK income	£1,484,000	£1,900,000	£1,950,000	£2,000,000
Measure 12: Total research income from all sources				
Research income	£13,103,000	£15,000,000	£15,500,000	£16,000,000
Scottish Government priority: effective knowledge exchange and innovation including excellent collaboration between universities and industry				
Measure 13: IVs - The number of SFC innovation Vouchers (IVs), Follow-on IVs				
Innovation Vouchers (IVs)	7	15	18	20
Follow-on IVs	1	2	2	2
Scottish Government priority: ensuring provision of quality learning in Scottish higher education institutions, i.e. HE strategic futures, Quality Assurance and HE governance				
Measure 14: Carbon - Gross carbon footprint				
Tonnes CO2e	6,930.0	5,559	5,450	5,340



**Outcome Agreement between the SRUC and the Scottish Funding Council for
AY 2019-20**

On behalf of the SRUC:

Signed: *Wayne Powell*
Print name: WAYNE POWELL
Position: Principal
Date: 8/8/19

Signed: *Sandy Cummins*
Print name: SANDY CUMMINS
Position: Chair
Date: 8/8/19

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed: *KWatt*
Print name: Karen Watt
Position: Chief Executive
Date: 2 August 2019