

**Regional Outcome
Agreement
2023 - 2024**



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1 Introduction

As one of the largest colleges of higher and further education in Scotland, Fife College is at the forefront of college provision across the sector, with the ambition, talent and assets to help shape the future delivery of education and skills in Fife and beyond. We have an expert and experienced team who are dedicated in providing our learners with the best possible college experience, offering a wide range of flexible and exciting learning and training opportunities, equipping them with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to make a meaningful and valuable contribution to society in whatever they choose to do.

As we continue to face a changing and challenging economic environment, exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, Fife College play a significant role in supporting our learners and providing the highest quality of learning and teaching, which will support social and economic growth.

We are currently developing a new 5-year strategy, which will be shaped by both internal and external factors. We will respond with agility to the changing environment we operate in and we will align our priorities to those of the Scottish Government and the key economic and community stakeholders our region. In a rapidly changing world, we will capitalise on technology to enhance the effectiveness of our learning and teaching, intensify collaboration to create dynamic partnerships and opportunities, maximise institutional efficiency to support the economic environment and sustainability of the college. All of this will be achieved in collaboration with our staff, learners and partners.

As always, our students are at the centre of everything we do. We are committed to supporting and listening to them, equipping them with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need, whilst ensuring an excellent learning experience and positive outcomes which will help shape and secure their future.

In all of this, we are acutely aware of the need to exercise sound stewardship and achieve continuous improvement and value for money across all parts of the College. We will receive £37.9 million core teaching funding, and £2.5 million capital maintenance funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for academic year 2023/24. The total credit target is 118,604 credits, which is inclusive of Foundation Apprenticeship delivery. Core Student Support funding for 2023/24 is £10 million.

Although this funding represents a continuation in cash terms of the position in academic year 2022/23, there is no additional funding to offset cost pressures which will result in a significant financial challenge to the College. The College will continue to work to achieve a break-even cash position, i.e. increasing other non-grant in aid income sources and cost reductions, to work towards financial sustainability for the future.

2 Fair Access, Transitions, Inclusion & Equality

Our learners are at the heart of everything that we do, and we are committed to ensuring fair access and successful transitional pathway opportunities to people from all ages, community and backgrounds into and out of college, going that extra mile for those who need additional support, throughout their learner journey. This includes our Skills and Transitions Working Group, co-led with Fife Council's Education Department to support transitions on the new DLC.

We continue to strive to be a recognised leader in collaboration with schools, colleges, universities and other key stakeholders, developing and enhancing strong and connected partnerships to support economic and social growth regionally, nationally and internationally. Our participation in and strong role within the Local Employability Partnership, including support provided to the delivery of the Multiply UKSPF strand of activity across Fife, ensure that routes into college are widened and well supported.

2.1 Developing the Young Workforce & School College Partnerships

The College's School College Partnership (SCP) team will continue to work closely with Fife Council, DYW Fife and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to ensure curriculum offer meets the needs of young people and Regional Skills Assessments. The College will continue to build and enhance our valued relationships with all 18 Fife secondary schools, which in session 2022-23 enrolled over 1,400 school pupils on SCP programmes. We plan to actively continue in our joint widening access programme with the University of St Andrews in the First Chances Fife programme, which engages annually over 1,000 school pupils from P7 to S6.

2.2 Articulation & HE Pathways

Working closely with fifteen university partners, Fife College will maintain its current articulation routes (over 600) to give full advanced standing for our HNC programmes into year 2 of a degree course and our HND programmes into year 3 of a degree course. We will continue to ensure that all our HND programmes have at least one articulation route of advanced standing into a university degree course. We will continue to be an ambassador with our partners for the Pathways website to help to make articulation routes more accessible (www.pathways.ac.uk). In partnership with the Open University, Queen Margaret University and Abertay University, a key part of our commitment to widening access is to continue to and potentially increase our on-campus University awarded degrees/honours degrees portfolio of 12 courses.

2.3 People from Deprivation

The College supports a high number of learners living in the 10% most deprived postcode areas. We are committed to providing our learners with the tools and support to enhance their experience throughout their learner journey, providing digital equipment and cost of living support (breakfast, lunch, funding). The College will continue to foster participation from the region's more deprived communities through active engagement with community partners to support local course provision and by engaging with external agencies to support specific needs. The College also works closely with the Fife wide employability network to strengthen progression opportunities for beneficiaries of the No One Left Behind (NOLB) provision.

2.4 People with experience of Care

The College works collaboratively and engages with partner organisations at both strategic and operational levels, leading to improved multi agency working. We will continue to work closely with the Fife High Schools and Fife Council Social Work team, promoting college to school leavers and harder to reach Care Experienced individuals, ensuring a seamless and enhanced transition from school to college, ensuring support arrangements are in place before college courses commence.

The College is working in partnership with MCR (Motivation, Commitment & Resilience Mentoring) Pathways to provide weekly mentoring support for care experienced pupils in four local high schools. We are committed to ensuring care experienced young people receive the service, encouragement, and support that will empower them to follow their educational journey through to a positive and sustained destination.

3 High Quality Learning, Teaching & Support

Outstanding learning is key to the delivery of our strategy. Working in partnership with our Student Association, listening, learning, and responding to our learner voice, we are committed to engaging with our learners in developing and improving all aspects of learning and teaching and the support services we offer to enhance the learner journey and improve experience and outcomes.

We will ensure that our course design and delivery prioritises the development of relevant meta-skills adapted to industry needs. We will focus on hybrid learning approaches designed to increase and improve accessible and flexible learning opportunities tailored to our varied audiences. Work and project-based learning will be further developed to foster coherence and relevance of the learning experience to encourage motivation and engagement and improve our attainment and positive outcomes.

3.1 Quality Assurance

Education Scotland (ES) published our Annual Engagement Visit report in July 2023 and concluded “the college is making satisfactory progress and the college’s quality improvement and enhancement processes are identifying and addressing appropriately issues arising from the pandemic”. Following on from this report, we will develop a cross college, interdisciplinary, improvement action plan to address the areas identified for further improvement, along with findings from our internal audits to embed change for improvement as part of our self-evaluation process (evaluation 4 enhancement), which integrates academic and professional services into an annual review cycle.

Our academic and professional services teams will continue to work collaboratively to provide a holistic learning experience, adopting a flexible, inclusive, and personalised approach to our learning and teaching and support services with a key focus on engagement, wellbeing, and positive outcomes.

We have robust arrangements in place to respond to the fast-evolving learning and working patterns. The college is making sustained investment in the development of digital capacity and capability for learners and staff. Examples include:

- Increasing accessibility to course content with embedded tools such as Blackboard Ally;
- Utilising the Moodle app on phones and tablets to support access to our VLE;
- Training and external collaboration with industry partners to improve and enhance pedagogical approaches and learning and teaching tools and methodologies in line with industry practice (e.g., embracing opportunities with AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools; VR headsets and immersive technologies to support the development of soft skills).

We are committed to supporting, encouraging, and empowering our staff to engage in professional development and career progression, ensuring that they have the right skills and support to deliver a high-quality learning and teaching experience. To support this, we are developing an extensive professional development programme, some of which includes:

- Working with CDN (College Development Network) on the enhancement theme of “Ideation.” This approach aims to encourage colleagues to think differently about their course design and delivery, exploring ideas leading to changes in pedagogical approaches and developments in curriculum innovations to ensure the delivery and content is engaging for learners (and staff);
- Developing our staff’s digital skills continues to be a key priority in supporting new and modern technologies as well as ensuring skills remain current. Aligned to CDNs published report on Digital Capability: A Scottish Landscape Review, we are launching 8 new courses to support staff in upskilling their digital skills which will contribute to enhancing and improving the learner experience.

3.2 Successful Outcomes

Positive outcomes are a key priority for the college, and although there have been slight improvements across many of our KPIs, this is a continued area for improvement and focus in the years ahead. To support improvement across all our KPIs, we are working collaboratively across our Academic and Professional services areas, to ensure close monitoring and early intervention activities are taking place

as well as providing exciting and engaging learning and teaching, supportive and accessible services, which will improve experience, engagement, and successful outcomes.

We recognise through our Education Scotland report that we need to improve our analysis of programme performance indicator data systematically to support action planning for improvement in rates of learner withdrawal and partial success.

3.2.1 Retention

A key focus for the College is to continue to provide targeted interventions to retain our learners most at risk from withdrawal with an overall aim to improve outcomes. We have implemented detailed withdrawal recording, out with the SFC coding, to allow a fuller understanding of our withdrawal reasons particularly for FTFE. We will use our data from point of application to fully understand reasons for withdrawal at various stages, which will support in identifying actions and improvements across our planning, processes, and services. We will focus on our retention rates particularly on FTFE courses and work closely with Education Scotland on enhancement themes and review of learning and teaching practice.

Funding has been allocated to faculties to support targeted and innovative intervention activities. This includes breakfast and lunch clubs, the provision of health and well-being support mechanisms, access to “Together All” and to counselling sessions.

3.2.2 Attainment

We have recently introduced a robust data dashboard using Power BI which will make analysis of key performance indicators easier for curriculum teams at individual course level. We are enhancing this by developing a new unit level dashboard for more detailed analysis to identify root cause of underperformance and support improved planning and decision making in relation to course design and delivery.

Our mid-year course performance review will continue to be a key focus to ensuring proactive in year action planning to support retention and successful completions. The data and findings will be used to inform our future curriculum planning, considering delivery modes and best-fit attendance models, qualification aim and appropriate awarding body.

3.2.3 Student Experience, Engagement & Satisfaction

We continue to have strong engagement with our learner surveys coupled with high levels of satisfaction, however there are key areas that require improvement. Based on the feedback gathered through our learner survey, we are in a strong position to address areas for development such as looking at hybrid delivery and assessment models, increased use of our Virtual Learning Environment (iLearn), accessibility guidelines and standardisation of the digital tools being used. Action planning at faculty and professional services team level support a focus for implementation and subsequent feedback to learners via a “You Said, We Did” format.

Our Student Association (FCSA) plays a key role in our review and future planning of the learning experience through their participation in the Academic Quality and Learning and Teaching Committee, academic and support services team meetings and at Board level. An annual FCSA Student Engagement Plan details themed engagement topics and specific weeks the activity takes place and the FCSA work in partnership with the college to feedback and feedforward, influencing improvements and celebrating good practice.

4 Coherent Learning Provision

Our Portfolio offering, partnerships and collaborations are key to our success, as well as the central role we play in economic recovery and social renewal. We are committed to meet the needs of our regional economy and its growing industries and sectors, equipping our learners with the skills they need to make a positive contribution to our economy and society.

4.1 Curriculum Planning & Offering

The planning of our provision aligns to all programmes of action set out in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and the recently adopted Fife's Economic Strategy 2023-30. Our portfolio offer is designed to foster personal development and enhance employability by equipping our learners with the life skills and attributes they need to thrive in the workplace and contribute to a fast-evolving economy. Aligned to the needs of the regional and wider economy where there is an increasing demand for a higher skilled workforce, we continue to have a focus on increasing the proportion of our portfolio that is dedicated to the provision of education at SCQF level 6 and above.

Our portfolio planning is based on robust Labour Market Information, including the use of Lightcast and of the SDS Data Matrix, and is further enhanced through our existing and emerging partnerships and collaboration in national initiatives such as the ESES and Cities Region Deals or the Forth Green Free Ports large scale project.

4.2 Partnership Engagement

The College is represented / leads on all main regional partnership groups including: Fife Partnership Board, Recovery & Renewal Board, Leading Economic Recovery Delivery Board, Addressing Climate Change Delivery Board, Community Wealth Building Support Delivery Board, Fife Partnership Executive Group, Opportunities Fife, DYW Fife Board, No One Left Behind Strategic Oversight Group, and Foundation Apprenticeship Oversight Group and School College Partnership Strategy Group.

In addition to our well-established regional school links, we are working on enhanced shared strategic planning within the Dunfermline Learning Campus project. We also collaborate with a large network of Higher Education Institutions to provide seamless learner pathways, co-designing and co-delivering programmes that support workforce development and planning e.g. bespoke programme for Babcock Engineering with a course specifically designed for Production Support Operatives.

We actively participated in the review and development of the recently refreshed Fife Economic Strategy. Fife's Economic Strategy 2023-30 is set to tackle long-standing economic challenges and improve wealth for the benefit of all. The strategy's three key priorities, bolstered by a Community Wealth Building approach, are: Supporting businesses, investing in business premises and infrastructure and delivering skills, training and fair employment. The college's focus remains primarily on the latter, including the growing need for part time provision in response to upskilling and reskilling needs. Additionally, our evolving curriculum strategy and wider college planning in relation to estates development and study / work patterns will contribute to the first two priorities, with a focus on addressing the increased need for entrepreneurial and green skills across all industry sectors to support a just transition to net zero.

The design and delivery of our courses are tailored to the demands of the external stakeholders we work with and adapted to the needs of our increasingly varied learner population. We have extensive employer relationships, and we also work closely with employability pipeline providers (e.g. SDS, DWP, Fife's Third Sector and Health and Social Care partners) through our participation in regional groups. The intelligence gathered and shared through these partnerships allows us to respond effectively to a broad range of needs, including for learners with protected characteristics by working with Opportunities Fife, and to facilitate transitions within a well-connected and increasingly coherent regional provision.

5 Work-based Learning & Skills

We play a pivotal role in accelerating and supporting economic and business growth through strong industry engagement, increasing our collaboration with businesses and stakeholders to ensure our collective delivery of learning and employer engagement is coherent and optimises opportunities for learners.

We are committed to providing our learners with the benefits of experiential learning opportunities, working collaboratively with industry, to enhance readiness, confidence, and skills for the future. We have therefore ensured that a large number of our programmes, where appropriate, include work experience/placement opportunities with appropriate recognition or formal certification as required by the related industry.

5.1 Employer Engagement

Fife College continues to develop and maintain strong employer relationships to ensure that our portfolio is fit for purpose for both current and future workforce requirements. Working closely with industry and sectoral bodies and utilising labour market intelligence (Regional Skills Investment Plans, SIPs, City Deals), the College ensures that it is well positioned to respond to current and future demands for both full time, part time and apprenticeship training provision.

The Employer Engagement Strategy provides a clear direction for the College through an integrated cross college strategy that ensures engagement with employers is effective, streamlined and aligned to the relevant College objectives. This engagement with employers is essential to be able to deliver a wide range of strategic and operational objectives that include the achievement of non-SFC income targets, employability skills for our learners through work placements, the delivery of work based learning qualifications and developing philanthropic relationships to provide additional opportunities for our learners through scholarships.

Working with employers to meet their recruitment demands, we will build on a proven successful model of bespoke pre-recruitment and pre-apprenticeship programmes, that are tailored in design to a particular employer or industry. Wider partnerships with SDS, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Fife Council and Opportunities Fife will continue to inform our planning, including the targeting of individuals who are often harder to reach and to engage them in shorter and focused curriculum, designed to break down barriers to enter employment or boost skills and confidence to secure a sustained positive destination.

To understand and respond to the current and prospective skills needs of employers, we will continue to build on the strong foundations of our Industry Advisory Boards to review our current and inform our future curriculum offer. We will engage with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and our business partners to ensure curriculum alignment to workforce planning and the need for upskilling and reskilling of those in employment. Current plans are to increase data sharing with Fife Council and make increased use of the SDS DataHub information of the planned future pathways of the young people in Fife.

5.2 Foundation & Graduate Apprenticeships (FAs & GAs)

Fife College are committed to continue to support and deliver Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 to pupils in the 18 Fife secondary schools. We are in early discussions to look at partnership working in the area of Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs), which Fife College currently do not deliver. We want to review GAs and explore widening participation to create new pathways for HNC and HND learners who progress into work and would normally stop their qualification journey. By working with university partners and completing curriculum mapping we plan to explore opportunities for articulation with advanced standing for HNC, HND and Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) into GA programmes. Partnership delivery models will also be reviewed to support increased access for learners on these programmes.

5.3 Modern Apprenticeships (MAs)

Our successful SDS MA contract of over 400 new starts is a key focus for us to ensure the apprentices are successful on their chosen career pathway. Fife College supports the training and development of over 1,000 active MAs across 22 different occupational frameworks. Shared delivery models will also be considered to ensure a wider breadth and reach of our offer, building on partnerships such as Energy Skills Partnership (ESP) and UHI Inverness College to deliver the MA Local Authority Building Standards to apprentices from all of Scotland's Councils.

6 Net Zero & Environmental Sustainability

Fife College has led the way in the college sector in many areas of climate change mitigation and sectoral collaboration. This includes reducing our emissions by almost half in the past seven years. We are committed to do even more, with a vision of achieving net zero by 2035 and embed social responsibility for climate change in everything we do.

We have developed our [Climate Change Strategy](#) which sets out our 3 aims (summarised below), supported by specific actions and outcomes. Our strategy is supported by an ambitious, comprehensive, and focussed Net Zero Action Plan. We have also developed strategies to focus on Travel, Waste Management, and will finalise a Procurement Net Zero Action Plan in the coming year.

Our actions are not just about cutting carbon emissions in our physical estate, it also focusses on ensuring that our curriculum and the way we run our business is fully aligned to the climate change agenda and equips our learners and staff in developing green skills.

1. **Tackle our greenhouse gas emissions and embed resilience in our operations and infrastructure.** The College's greenhouse gas emission reduction plan is set out in our [Net Zero Strategy](#) with our target to be Net Zero by 2035, for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions from procurement and commuting. Our emissions have reduced significantly, 49% since our baseline year. With estimated scope 3 emissions for procurement added in accordance with Scottish Government, EAUC and SSN guidance in the report year of 2022, our reported emissions increased 70% on the previous year.

Figure 1: Fife College carbon emissions in tCO2e for academic years

Reference year	Year	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	Total	% reduction on previous year	% reduction on baseline
Baseline Year	2013/14	2,008	2,929	464	5,401		
Without procurement	2021/22	1,774	760	198	2,732	6%	49%
With procurement	2021/22	1,774	760	5,774	8,308	-70%	-53%

The new Dunfermline Learning Campus (DLC) is progressing with a dedicated Net Zero Champion in place, who works within the newly formed Sustainability team and the DLC Project team. The campus building is a Pathfinder project for implementing the new Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard, and as such will not have heating and hot water supplied by gas. Instead, heating and hot water will be produced via Air Source Heat Pumps, which will significantly reduce the College's scope 1 emissions. The standard also allows the participant to choose their own environmental objectives to achieve alongside those which are mandated. We have selected four additional environmental objectives (Biodiversity Net Gain, Adaption to Climate Change, Active Travel, and Health & Wellbeing) to work towards which will commence in the new academic year.

Net Zero Strategy actions for this coming year include:

- Feasibility studies for our buildings to move away from fossil fuels.
- We have commissioned Energy Modelling which will inform our route to Net Zero for building energy consumption. This will inform Green Public Sector Estates Decarbonisation Scheme (GPSEDS) bids for capital funds, without which we are unlikely to achieve net zero aims.
- Running a pilot investigating the use of sensors to incorporate into building management control for utilisation of our spaces and the energy use, with an aim to reduce energy consumption.

2. **Act in a socially responsible way across all our campuses and operations.** Communications and Engagement with staff and learners will be a large part of our planned activities in the next year. We will educate our staff and learners on how to be more sustainable, and this will be linked to our Transport and Waste Management strategies. Fife College is a Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation and is working towards Silver, with a programme of Climate Literacy that will be implemented this academic year, starting with the re-formed Sustainability Committee and our Principal.
3. **Act collaboratively to develop and maintain a ‘green skills’ workforce.** The workforce of the future will need to install and maintain solar PV cells, hydrogen boilers, air source heat pumps among other less familiar technologies. Upskilling Fife’s workforce and making sure our learners leave with these adaptable skills is key to Scotland’s ability to act on climate change. We are working with SGN on a domestic hydrogen boiler project on our Levenmouth Campus and are continuing to collaborate with Climate Action Fife’s Chefs of the Future, building capacity in making low carbon meals and Staycation events, highlighting the beauty and value of a Scottish vacation abroad with our tourism learners.

Fife College also recognises its role in the broader community of Fife, Scotland, and the UK. To this effect we participate in several groups and projects:

- Addressing the Climate Emergency Board, one of the boards within the Plan 4 Fife. Participating in shaping the regional actions for the coming year and advocating for green skills prioritisation.
- The Fife Environmental Partnership, we are facilitating the delivery of the 2nd Fife Conference of the Partners at our Carnegie Conference Centre in November.
- Leven Programme, facilitating learner involvement in the heritage and media strands of the programme.
- Climate Action Fife, a National Lottery Climate Action Funded project. Fife College is one of the founding partners of this 5-year project that aims to deliver an ambitious programme of climate action to tackle the key areas of emissions, work with all sectors and stakeholders and build capacity and resilience in communities and organisations across Fife.
- The Sustainability Team are active members of the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC). The team sit on multiple working groups including Biodiversity Community of Practice, EAUC Scotland Smaller Institutions, Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC) and Waste.
- The College is also one of two colleges represented on the Adaptation Benchmarking Working Group, the body that works with all public bodies across Scotland on climate change adaptation administered by Sniffer for Scottish Government.



Outcome Agreement between Fife College and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2023-24

On behalf of Fife College:

Signed:

Print name:

Jim Metcalfe

Position:

Principal and Chief Executive

Date:

28 November 2023

Signed:

Print name:

David C Watt

Position:

Chair, Board of Governors

Date:

28 November 2023

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed:

Print name:

Karen Watt

Position:

Chief Executive

Date:

15 January 2024