

## Scottish Funding Council Call for Evidence: A Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability in Further and Higher Education

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<p><b>A).</b> What do you think works well in the current further and higher education arrangements that we should keep in order to secure Scotland's inclusive social and economic recovery from the current pandemic? How can we best preserve and strengthen those features of education and innovation in Scotland that we most prize, in a very challenging funding environment?</p>	<p>Colleges should retain the ability to assess holistically (following robust Internal QA processes) where appropriate and also the flexibility to modify assessment evidence criteria (particularly closed book assessments) to suit remote/online delivery should there be a need to return to stricter lockdown at a local or national level in the future.</p> <p>We need to continue to work collaboratively by sharing resources and good practice both in FE and HE. Inclusion and access for all should continue to be a priority.</p>
<p><b>A).</b> What do you think works well in the current further and higher education arrangements that we should keep in order to secure Scotland's inclusive social and economic recovery from the current pandemic? How can we best preserve and strengthen those features of education and innovation in Scotland that we most prize, in a very challenging funding environment?</p>	<p>Colleges should retain the ability to assess holistically (following robust Internal QA processes) where appropriate and also the flexibility to modify assessment evidence criteria (particularly closed book assessments) to suit remote/online delivery should there be a need to return to stricter lockdown at a local or national level in the future.</p>
<p><b>B).</b> What do you think colleges should stop doing, or do differently, in order to contribute effectively to an inclusive social and economic recovery? (SFC suggest that you may wish to comment on teaching and skills development, sectoral and employer needs and employability, research, innovation and knowledge exchange, widening access and equalities issues.)</p>	<p>We need to work closely with local authorities to identify local needs and respond to changing local skills and employment needs. We should ensure that there are entry points at all levels of education with clear progression pathways to HE. We can achieve this through greater collaboration with partner institutions in HE and by offering Associate Degrees which avoid duplication at SCQF level 7.</p> <p>We need to focus on greater collaboration and sharing of resources. Our focus should continue to be about widening Access and Participation for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and promoting equality and inclusion.</p>
<p><b>C).</b> How can colleges best support Scotland's international connectedness and</p>	<p>Colleges need to adopt a Team Scotland approach and collaboratively exploit Scotland's</p>

competitiveness in the post-pandemic, post-EU membership environment?

advantages i.e. rich history, culture and educational excellence, when promoting the country as a study destination.

<p><b>E).</b> What forms of collaboration within the tertiary education eco-system would best enable a coherent and effective response to these challenges and opportunities?</p>	<p>We should adopt a joined up approach from the College sector to tackling issues such as the digital skills gap. The work undertaken as part of the Digital Ambition project, proposes that the College sector leads on the establishment of a National Digital Skills Academy (NDSA) ensuring that learners experience a better user experience in understanding the digital landscape and opportunities available to them.</p>
<p><b>F).</b> How can SFC, alongside government and other enterprise, skills and education-focused agencies, best support colleges to make their full contribution to Scotland's inclusive, green and education-led recovery? SFC suggest that in particular, you may wish to draw out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How scarce public resources should be prioritised to drive recovery</li> <li>• Particular areas of collaboration between agencies that would best support the sectors' contributions</li> <li>• Adaptations to SFC's funding and accountability frameworks to promote agile and collaborative action by the sectors to build Scotland's recovery</li> <li>• How SFC's funding and accountability frameworks should ensure that equality and wide access to educational opportunity are promoted as key elements of the recovery for younger people and adults</li> <li>• What support SFC and government could give institutions to adapt to a changed environment.</li> </ul>	<p>Fresh Futures, the proposed SG initiative, will offer a college-led (in partnership with SDS) bespoke careers information, advice and guidance service which would profile individuals and support their search to apply to and attend a range of possible college courses. This would also encourage colleges to enhance their part time/remote/distance learning options.</p> <p>The impact of the Coronavirus has highlighted the importance of outdoor learning in supporting sustainability and promoting the health and well-being of people of all ages. Additional support from the SFC would allow colleges to focus efforts on building on existing outdoor learning opportunities.</p>