

Regional Outcome Agreement 2022-23

1. Introduction

The West College Scotland Corporate Strategy 2019-2025 has four main priority areas: **Personalisation, Collaboration, Agile and Adaptive** and **Digital**. The Strategy is currently being refreshed to take account of changes following the pandemic and to ensure that it is in line with key national priorities, including the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET).

In responding to the COVID pandemic, the College has significantly progressed all our Corporate Strategy priorities, proving to be exceptionally agile and adapting quickly and continually as pandemic conditions changed. We have proactively collaborated with others, developed our digital capacity, our working practices, curriculum delivery and provided a more tailored and personalised learning experience for our students.

The financial situation for 2022-23 and the financial predictions for the future bring even greater challenges for us as a College to ensure that we fully meet the needs of our Region, making the best possible use of government funding. As a College we aim to continue to provide the highest quality of support, skills development and life enhancing opportunities for all of our students and for those who would benefit from the College, with the funding available. We are working to make the necessary savings required through more streamlined College processes and staff structures in order to protect student learning opportunities, where at all possible.

Our role is to ensure our students leave West College Scotland equipped with the skills and knowledge to compete in the jobs market and to make a full contribution to the wellbeing of their families, their communities, and the economic growth of the country. As well as scope, we also have scale. As one of Scotland's largest regional colleges, with over 20,000 students, over 1,000 staff and a turnover of £73.5 million, ours is a significant organisation in the region and a major employer, uniquely placed to help shape the West Region's educational and skills landscape and contribute to its social and economic development.

The College will receive £45.4m to deliver 157,235 credits for academic year 2022-23 and is fully committed to delivering value for money and to aim for the very best outcomes for our students and Region. Our targets have been set on the accompanying Measurement Table and we will aim to achieve these figures but also recognise the volatility of the 2022-23 session, particularly in relation to national industrial relations and the cost of living impact on our students. Our success rates for 2021-22 were adversely impacted by both COVID and industrial action. Many of our students, particularly in full time HE did not continue to engage in their learning and left the courses for a variety of reasons, including to take up available employment for financial reasons and for mental health and caring responsibilities. We have a strong focus in 2022-23 on student retention and supporting full attainment and have set challenging but we believe realistic targets to make improvements on 2021-22.

COVID has made our role as a College even more critical to ensure that we provide relevant learning opportunities for our students to gain appropriate skills for now and the future and that we contribute to an education-led economic recovery post-COVID in our Region and beyond.

Recruitment to 2022 August start full-time HE courses has been lower than target, in part due to the additional places provided to universities and availability of employment in sectors such as Hospitality and Care and due to lower progression levels within the College from 2021-22 courses. Our apprenticeship, block release and School College programme activity has increased for 2022-23. We continue to increase options for part-time and shorter upskilling courses, as well as a 'Winter Start' programme in order to meet the needs of students furthest from the labour market and also those who need the skills and qualifications to progress to or within employment.

We are experiencing improved student engagement and retention this session, with students being more on campus through a relaxation of COVID restrictions. The College is however, continuing to experience estates challenges due to the aging estate in Greenock and Paisley. This has resulted in serious disruptions to student learning this session with the rewiring and closure of our Oakshaw Building in Paisley from August to December. We therefore had no Construction nor Engineering workshops and Fine Art specialist facilities in Paisley and adaptations have had to be made to delivery to use other spaces, including in our Greenock Finnart Street campus and limit some practical teaching until the new year. The situation has demonstrated the flexibility and adaptability of our staff and the good support of our partners in working to ensure that student learning can continue.

The College continues to flex and adapt our plans to meet student demand where it exists and work closely with our employer and Local Authority partners in planning provision to meet their needs and those of our communities, within the challenging financial context of the College.

We are fully committed to proactively delivering the key sector priorities and outcomes for students - ensuring fair access, particularly for our most disadvantaged students, enabling student success and progression through the highest quality learning, teaching, and support. We are an ambitious College, keen to take a leading role in our Region, adapt and innovate. We are committed to our role regionally and nationally in contributing to economic recovery and social renewal and being a responsive and collaborative institution. We believe that our work through COVID and within this session demonstrates this commitment and capability. Our progress and successes in the last few years shows our College's capacity to adapt and respond, with our student needs at the centre.

2. Outcomes for students

2.1 Fair Access and Transitions.

West College Scotland is committed to ensuring that we provide the highest quality of learning opportunities for students from all backgrounds and support them all to flourish, achieve and progress to further study or to employment. The College has continued to work towards the recommendations within the Blueprint for Fairness Report, particularly in supporting students and young people from deprived areas and those with a Care Experienced background.

Deprivation

The West Region has some of the most deprived areas in Scotland and as a College we have always recognised and worked to address the many challenges that our students face in attending college and achieving full success. We are acutely aware that communities within our Region have been disproportionately impacted by COVID and post-pandemic recovery will be far more challenging for our deprived communities. The most deprived area in Scotland is now Greenock Town Centre and prior to this, it was Ferguslie in Renfrewshire which remains a seriously deprived community. The College recently won the 2022 [CDN Community Learning Award](#) recognising the valuable work that we do in this area.

The current cost of living crisis is impacting even further on our students and those who potentially would benefit from the College but are not able to afford to study with us. We are working to adapt our course attendance patterns to help enable students to benefit from college whilst in employment or with caring responsibilities - for example [November start school hours](#) course which has recruited well.

As a College, we are experienced in continually adapting learning and support services to better meet our student needs, particularly in relation to building resilience and improving mental health and wellbeing. Through COVID this focus has been even more critical, and we responded by supporting those in digital poverty to provide vital access to digital equipment to enable learning and providing enhanced student support, particularly for health and wellbeing. In 2022-23 this focus has continued by providing a greater range of IT devices, depending on specific course needs and access to MiFi for those requiring Wi-Fi access at home. Our approach to meeting our student specific needs was recognised in the [Herald Diversity Awards 2021](#) with the College winning the **Diversity in Education Award**, then [The Herald Digital Transformation Awards 2021](#) winning the **Diversity Category** for our work to address digital exclusion and more recently at The Herald Top Employer Awards November 2022 for **Best Use of Digital Technology**.

The College is committed to providing digital devices to students to enable and enhance their learning. Our processes for distributing devices are now very responsive and efficient and we have over 3,000 digital devices now out on loan to West College Scotland students this session.

COVID continued to impact on our Community Learning in 2021-22 but this session we can deliver more provision face to face. The College has worked very hard to re-engage our Community Learners after the COVID pandemic and its associated challenges and will continue to prioritise this work.

In line with the Adult Learning Strategy for Scotland (2022-2027) we endeavour to improve life chances for adult learners by providing accessible, flexible local opportunities for learning. Most of the classes have returned to face-to-face delivery as this is the preferred learning method for most students. The College has kept some on-line delivery, where this is beneficial for the students, due to them being unable to attend in person due financial, time and other personal barriers. Face- to-face delivery is still challenging due to lack of venues for local provision.

Several community venues have not re-opened or have been re-purposed so are now not available for local community learning with the increased cost of running some of the venues has made their use prohibitive. Despite this, working with our partners, the College has enrolled 484 learners, on 38 programmes across three local authority (LA) areas (West Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, and Inverclyde). This is almost the same number as the pre-pandemic level, at this

point in academic session 2022-23, demonstrating the need for and engagement in this learning. Feedback is that it enables learners to move on from the effects of the pandemic to help them gain the skills and knowledge required to improve their employment opportunities and reduce the effect of the cost-of-living crisis on their lives.

The Community Outreach Team are currently working in collaboration with our Local Authority partners to deliver shared CLD priorities as outlined in the Community Learning and development plans (2021-2024). College team members are active contributors to strategic and operational groups across all partners. With all groups currently evaluating previous plans and working on developing shared operational objectives to meet the priorities of community-based adult learning.

Care Experienced, Carers and Estranged Students

Each Care Experienced, Estranged, Young Adult Carer and any unpaid Carer student has a named person who welcomes the student to the College, supports with paperwork and funding applications, establishes adjustments that may be necessary and ensures these are communicated sensitively to their lecturers. The Named Person carries out a wellbeing check with the student at 12-week intervals or sooner if there is a concern or if the students are seeking support and learning adaptations. The Named Person also works closely with Local Authorities and external services.

The College has refreshed its [Corporate Parenting Action Plan](#). Our Corporate Parenting Plan outlines both existing support practice and our ambition to ensure we complete our role to the best of our abilities for our care experienced students - potential, current and in the future

The College continues to work closely with Who Cares? Scotland and the delivery of The Promise Plan 21-24 (#KeepThePromise), where we have created and continue to evolve local promises from our teaching and support teams to help enhance the route map for a Care Experienced student and provide direction during and after study.

Launched in June 2021, Each and Every Child is a new initiative to change hearts and minds on care experience in Scotland, aiming to create a fresh, inspiring narrative to shift public attitudes and improve life chances of children, young people and their families. The resource is valuable to all staff and used as a tool to help understand and support our student population to the best of all our capabilities.

Unfortunately, due to budget constraints we have had to discontinue our work with Action for Children on the STAY PROJECT partnership. This project was aimed at improving the retention rates and life chances of our Care Experienced students and other vulnerable student groups through light-touch and/or intensive support sessions.

The complexity of issues and annual increases in students with declared disabilities and with mental health conditions, puts considerable pressure on our Student Services team and lecturing staff in providing the continued support as set out by national agenda programmes.

Health and Wellbeing

We have seen a significant increase in students declaring that they are a vulnerable group student year on year. In 2021-22, there were 5,270 students declared a disability, an increase of almost 100 students, which follows the previous year's significant increase. Almost 200 additional students reported a mental health condition, bringing this total to almost 2,000. We recognise

that the work we do to support students with health and wellbeing is critical for their success in College and in life.

This increase has resulted in a significant growth in the requirements for student support across the College and a time when we are under pressure to reduce staffing to meet our financial challenges. We aim to protect our student support and minimise the impact of staffing cuts on our students but we recognise the strain placed on our support staff providing critical student support. For 2021-22 we reported the following to our Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee:

- 200% increase in Safeguarding referrals.
- 151% increase in uptake of wellbeing support offered.
- 1,703 counselling appointments were offered with 1,347 appointments attended.

With the significant increase of student support required, the College has created a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy for both student and staff, [RISE](#) for taking us through 2022-23 and beyond:

- **READY** to face recovery from COVID, conflict and cost of living trauma (CCC), building resilience in their college and future lives.
- **INTOUCH** with their own health and wellbeing needs, recognising the necessity of seeking additional help with their journey through CCC
- **SUPPORTED** to cope with the many and varied challenges faced after CCC, building positive relationships with tailor made access to wellbeing services.
- **EMPOWERED** to move on from CCC trauma and experience positive mental, emotional, and physical health through excellent education and career opportunities.

We want to ensure that all our employees and students have the tools, knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to live fulfilled, worthwhile and happy lives. This Strategy is intended to supplement existing efforts on all aspects of wellness within the College, as well as to complete our existing Student and Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies.

The College won the 'Health and Wellbeing' award in the Inverclyde Chamber 2022 [ICON Awards](#) recognising our work in supporting Health and Wellbeing through our commitment to health and wellbeing of staff and students and supporting people in the Inverclyde area. This year we have activities to:

- Grow our connection with external agents and work collaboratively in ensuring our students receive support out of hours.
- Improve the physical health of both staff and students through a developed programme of activity.
- Feed mental health preservation by providing free access to healthy breakfast and lunches for students.
- Create Wellbeing Spaces both externally and internally across our College campuses to provide dedicated spaces to take a break, recharge, and refresh

The College continues to experience a sustained increase in students declaring a mental health condition this session. The College is acutely aware of the impact COVID has had, and continues to have, on our student mental health as well as the increasing concerns around the cost of living crisis. The College has in place a team of Counsellors working across the campuses and welcomed the additional funding in 2020-21 to increase this team and better meet demand, with new

members recruited post-lockdown and immediately equipped to engage with students remotely. The SFC funding of £122,000 for 2022-23 allows us to continue to provide this critical support for our students during this very difficult period.

The College continues to offer training of Mental Health First Aiders across our teaching and support teams and will also offer trauma informed training for staff. This enables staff to better understand the mental health or trauma related issues faced by both students and staff and complements the work of our Counsellor team.

The College is investing in a new online tool to support student and staff - Spectrum Life. This tool provides 24/7 access to unlimited mental health and wellbeing support, including a personal Mental Health Coach and open-ended therapy, at the touch of a button.

We have continued to invest in face-to-face support through our Student Wellbeing Advisor activities and the newly created Student Wellbeing Space. Through this team we provide safe space for students and offer a variety of resources to help keep our students on track with their studies and daily life:

- Press Pause - lunch time drop-in with time spent on activities and chat
- Wellbeing library - an array of wellbeing books available in our wellbeing library on each campus which students can borrow
- Delivering workshops to classes around topics such as stress management, anxiety management and building resilience

We are planning to run a mental health awareness event in January with attendance from various local agencies, as well as running a women's health event with Hey Girls period products in the New Year and a male health event in partnership with Brothers in Arms and Men Matter.

The College has an active WCS Wellbeing page on Instagram and Facebook, updated daily with different local initiatives and highlights local mental health and wellbeing services

We have also seen an increasing number of staff reaching out and working with the Wellbeing team with a 100% increase in uptake. Through 2022-23 we will be offering a range of activities and services for staff:

- Staff Wellbeing Days
- Men's Health November (Prostate Scotland online presentation/Cahonas Scotland, testicular cancer, online presentation).
- Menopause Awareness Day
- Baby Loss Awareness week (alongside ED&I)
- Breast Cancer Awareness (alongside ED&I)
- Participation in the [BRIT Challenge](#), taking place between 23 January and 23 March 2023.
- Various walking and other sporting event, including Tough Mudder in June 2023

There is strong evidence of the positive impact of the range of mental health support we provide for students, but we have concerns about continuing to provide the same critical level of support with the growing student demand and potential reductions in funding in the future.

Articulation and Transitions

The College is committed to enabling students to progress their learning and to shortening the student journey by improving articulation to university.

The University of the West of Scotland remains the College's largest articulation partner by volume, but relations with Glasgow Caledonian University and other universities continue to strengthen. We are in discussions with UWS about enhancing our collaborative work, particularly in Inverclyde. We have recently been engaging in discussions with Strathclyde University to expand our formal articulation agreements.

In addition to working on articulation pathways, the College has maintained a very positive relationship with SWAP West, delivering programmes in Social Sciences, Science and Access to Primary Education, enabling mature students from deprived areas to access University.

The College has continued to support student transitions and progression between institutions and between courses. After a review of 2021-22 recruitment, a new approach has been implemented this session to centrally manage applications through a Recruitment and Admissions administrative team. The aim is to simplify the application process for the applicants, as well as improving conversion to enrolment.

The Learner Development Sector has supported transitions with all their students successfully completing and progressing onto other Learner Development courses or gaining places on mainstream courses. A new internal partnership approach has been adopted whereby Learner Development staff work with vocational staff for SCQF4 courses to ensure students are placed on the most appropriate course and provision can be more personalised to student needs.

School College Partnership

The College places real value the School College partnership work with all of our Local Authority partners to provide vocational opportunities, skills development, and pathways for young people. 2022-23 has seen a significant increase (16%) in Senior Phase students studying with the College, following on from the pandemic, in particular an increase in Renfrewshire with the inclusion of Senior Phase 4 pupils now having the opportunity to study a College course. The introduction of the Preparation for College programmes before the summer has had a positive impact with lecturers and pupils getting to know each other, pupils getting to experience the subject they have chosen and gaining confidence in coming to college. The College continues to refresh our College School Partnership offer and takes cognisance of:

- Schools widening the senior phase curriculum to deliver programmes themselves, currently offered by the College, including SfW, NPAs, and other SCQF L4-8 programmes
- additional funding streams for school programmes, including YPG, Kickstart, CRF and other Scottish Government Strategies
- changes to FA funding and widening of the number of competitors offering these qualifications at a more competitive price
- opportunities to engage pupils in real projects in the local area (e.g. FAs in conjunction with Morrison Construction)
- some college activity now being carried out by DYW Team / new Co-ordinators and other 3rd party trainers/providers more taster input requested for S3/S4 and Broad General Education (BGE) and considerations around how to best deliver this.

The College continues to work collaboratively to promote Foundation Apprenticeships to school pupils across the region, however engagement has been difficult, and 2021-22 recruitment was significantly lower than in previous years. There has however, been a significant decrease (54%) in Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) enrolments this session. The College is delivering a pilot school FA programme designed specifically for BAE Systems in Clydebank. Unfortunately, there was not sufficient demand in Greenock to recruit to any FAs however and a small number of pupils are travelling to Paisley campus to take part in their programme. Within Inverclyde region we are resetting the button on our delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships in the hope to increase the uptake of young people on these courses in the future. There will be a focus on certain frameworks and targeted recruitment from selected schools over the coming months to support this agenda moving forward

This partnership programme currently involves the delivery of 39 courses across 5 local authorities involving 35 schools and 1380 pupils.

The reinstatement of the ability to claim SFC credit funding for STEM activities for younger pupils is welcomed by both the College, the schools and Local Authorities and we are able to again provide valuable opportunities for young people to engage in STEM learning, promote career pathways and gender equality.

2.2 High quality learning, teaching and support

The College is committed to ensuring the highest quality of learning experience for students and to enable them to engage, achieve and progress and a safe, supportive environment.

Staff continue to build on the experiences of adapting classroom-based learning into interactive online learning providing a blended approach for delivery. This session, the removal of COVID restrictions have enabled a tailored approach to better suit student needs and curriculum delivery with a far more appropriate mix of on and off campus learning. Curriculum teams report a far better level of student engagement through more campus-based learning. To support a hybrid delivery model, investment has been made in digital resources including docking stations for classrooms/staff together with replacing projectors with screens and large TVs. The new MS Teams for 2022-23 is in place with remote access to college network and on-campus resources enabled and access to 'Azure Labs' for Cloud computing.

The College Digital Strategy Group are utilising the results of the digital questions from the 'My Voice' staff survey, reviewing teaching staff and support staff responses. Just less than half of the College staff responded to the survey and they reported 80% satisfaction rates in relation to the questions about how they are currently working. Comparisons with the Student Satisfaction Survey findings are allowing an analysis to take place as regards the impact, and potential, of digital interaction in learning and teaching. Of note, 48% of teaching staff and 44% of support staff have indicated they have developed new positive ways of working in relation to embracing digital. There is still a key focus on driving a digital mindset and ensuring the appropriateness of adopting this. For teaching staff, the Collective Ambition Forum: Teaching in the 21st Century will go some way to address this further.

Digital CPD sessions have taken place over the first 2 weeks of the new teaching session 2022-23, attended by 80 staff members covering beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. In addition, our Digital Mentor Scheme has been successfully set up on our new Evolve Platform. We have seven formal Digital Mentors across support and teaching areas to aid our cross-college staff on their digital journey. These mentors can be approached by any member of staff for one-to-one upskilling and support on the specific nature of their digital need. The Digital Strategy Group are working on some further ventures including: a WCS Blended Learning Procedure; Digital Accessibility; Jisc Digital Capability and Elevation Tools; Curriculum Digital Needs Mapping and a Digital First/Go Paperless initiative.

As well as supporting the development of staff skills in online learning, we have also significantly increased the number of lecturers provided with the opportunity to complete their TQFE qualifications. In addition, Evolve, the College's new sector-leading learning experience platform launched on 16 August 2022. Staff can view and add to their personal learning records and have access to over 300 learning opportunities, with a mixture of facilitator led and self-directed learning. Evolve has made it easier to identify skills gaps and to close those gaps by taking ownership of individual learning and development. This is working along side a new approach to reflection on development needs and objective planning 'My Conversations'.

Student Advisory Services, our libraries and Enabling Services have all adapted their practice to provide online access and continued support to students. A new student communication tool 'MyWestApp' has been developed for students. Through digital means, Enabling Services are now able to support a student on any campus and flex their staffing to ensure equity in student access to support, no matter where staff are based. This has helped our efficiencies and response times to students. Demand for this service continues to grow however and staffing levels are under review to ensure our students receive the support they need.

2.3 Student Participation and Engagement in their educational experience

The College works in partnership with the Students' Association to support and develop the student voice across all areas of curriculum and Support Services. Working with NUS, the WCS SA Constitution has been refreshed and a new version approved for Session 2022-23 and beyond. An updated College and Student Partnership Agreement is also planned for Session 2022-23 to better reflect the post Covid environment in which our college students are learning.

We moved to online SA elections in May 2022 and were able to start Session 2022-23 with a returning President. The SA VP campus positions were filled early in Session 2022-23 providing a presence (virtually and physically) on each of our main campuses and they were able to run on-campus Freshers events for the first time in two years to better engage students and raise the profile of the Student Association. Our model for student representation has changed and we work proactively to support strengthening the student voice and including students in all aspects of decision making across our College. We have relocated one of our Student Experience Assistants (staff member) to the Waterfront campus to provide a better link between the SA and the students on that campus (The Greenock SA VP covers both Finnart Street and Waterfront, but is also studying and has limited capacity to represent two sets of students).

2.4 Learning with impact

Our major priority is to provide a curriculum which meets employer needs, supports the economic growth of our Region, and provides our students with appropriate qualifications and skills to build successful long-term careers.

We are recognising the requirement to refocus part time provision into courses where there is increased demand, to rapidly upskill the population in sectors such as Technology, Construction and Care as well as basic entry level employability programmes and this will be key to the College's and the regional economy's success. We are experiencing significant demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses in the Region, including supporting Ukrainian refugees. To this end the College is collaborating with several partners in the West Region to advance joint opportunities. These partners include community planning partners in the Local Authorities, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Universities, and Third Sector agencies. We are recruiting more staff to meet the ESOL demands for additional education and supporting some of our other staff to retrain to gain qualifications to contribute to the expanded ESOL provision.

As a College, we have recognised the critical digital skills needed for both learning and future employment and developed a 'Developing the Confidence to Learn Online' unit which was offered to students prior to them starting their courses to develop skills for collaborating, learning, and working online. For 2022-23 we have developed a suite of new Digital Skills units. These include Digital Skills for College and your Future Career: Beginner level; Intermediate level and Advanced level. These units have already been successfully introduced to the curriculum as a key build-upon support for students on their digital skills journey.

The College has significantly increased the work experience elements in courses over the last few years and works closely with employers to provide students either with placements or live project working. In addition, students benefit from simulated work-experience within the College, particularly in Hospitality, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy.

During the initial lockdown period in 2020, we scaled up our online learning curriculum and the associated staff team to respond to and support the significantly increased demand, particularly from those in the Care sector. Our learning materials to support upskilling for those working in Care, with children or to support mental health proved to be very relevant to meet the needs of online learners at that time and we continue to have high demand this session. The Team are also providing support for mainstream students undertaking additional online options to improve their employability skills and chances of gaining employment.

Our training for employers has been adapted to online and blended provision and we have developed packages of learning to meet key upskilling requirements. Our work with Renfrewshire Council in providing 'Your Employability Skills' provision was recognised in the CDN 2020 Awards by winning the Essential Skills category and shortlisted in the Herald Diversity Awards.

2.6 Fair Work

The College is committed to ensuring Fair Work First Principles are embedded across our College. Senior managers engage regularly in planned meetings with our staff trade unions and work collaboratively together. In order to increase staff input into our College strategic direction, we

held the first interactive 'all staff' event on one campus in February 2023. This followed on from staff surveys and focus groups and strengthened our overall staff engagement and voice in the College. We have developed a new 'My Conversations' process for career review and broadened access to staff training to better support staff in their current role and for future progression. In 2023, we increased the opportunities for employment on young people, including offering internships and MA qualifications.

There is a comprehensive annual HR report to the Board providing updates on our work around Fair Work and equalities. We pay at least the living wage rate to all staff and regularly monitor gender pay and take positive action to address any gender pay gaps.

2.7 Equalities and inclusion

The College has published our Equality Outcomes 2021-23 which aim to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on staff and students who share protected characteristics. We anticipate that our Equality Outcomes will be iterative, and emerging data will drive how we proceed. While we are committed to doing everything possible to achieve our Outcomes, we are also conscious of the impact of the current challenging economic environment, with volatility in funding. We will aim to make the maximum possible use of our resources to drive our ambitions in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

The College has continued to support students with disabilities, including remote support for our deaf students. Caption.ed (<https://talk-type.com/captioned/>) was implemented in 2020-21. This provides a means of supporting those with Specific Learning Difficulties, not only BSL and will provide invaluable support for those who struggle with the written word as a form of communication.

In 2022 the College has undertaken an Equality and Inclusion Assurance Audit. This audit reviewed key documents and strategies and ran focus groups across the Board, SMT, Head of Service/Sectors, Curriculum Leads and non-teaching staff. Helpfully the report has made recommendations that were RAG rated, to which we now have an EDI Action Plan to take forward the outcomes of this audit.

Through our work with external partners, the College is working toward the following two charters:

- Emily Test Charter - The Charter is an Award in minimum standards and excellence in GBV prevention, intervention, and support in Universities and Colleges. The Charter is embodied by the question: 'Would your institution pass the Emily test?'
- White Ribbon Accreditation – with the aims of making a difference in our communities to end violence against women, improve our organisational culture, safety and morale and increase the knowledge and skills of our staff to address violence against women.

The College is committed to ensuring that all current and future staff are treated fairly and equitably in all aspects of employment. This is supported by activities such as recruitment and selection training for managers. The College strives to have a diverse workforce and is a signatory to the nationally recognized Disability Confident Scheme.

3. Outcomes for Economic Recovery and Social Renewal

3.1 Responsive Institutions.

The College is focused on responding to employer needs and to prioritising the current and future skills requirements of our Region. A new College Curriculum Strategy 2021-26 was published at the start of 2021-22 to make the direction of curriculum change explicit in response to student, employer, and regional needs, capitalising on the changes through COVID and to ensure that the College curriculum is best placed to provide the required learning and skills development opportunities. The Strategy aims to ensure consistency in course design, with explicit pathways, work integrated learning and the development of core and Meta Skills. It directs the work to make our courses more flexible, respond to growth opportunities and discontinue or revise provision. We are working to grow apprenticeship delivery and standardise the learning approaches and management of SCQF4 provision across the College. Whilst we continue to develop a cross-campus approach to curriculum development and delivery, the Strategy also recognises the requirement to differentiate our curriculum to meet specific local needs. In meeting the aims of the Strategy, we will require to adapt resources including accommodation and staffing.

Senior staff participate in Local Authority economic development forums and economic recovery planning in order to inform and shape the College offer. In a response to COVID and labour market information, we have adjusted our curriculum far more rapidly to respond to demand from students and employers and to take advantage of any additional funding opportunities available. We are increasing our Construction and Engineering offering, including adapting accommodation in Clydebank to facilitate the increased numbers. We will continue to meet the increased demand for Engineering Apprentices for companies including BAE, Babcock, Fergusons and Dyodes. We are also extending our Health and Social Care apprenticeship delivery and associated sector partnerships, recognising the immediate workforce demands post pandemic and aiming to meet the additional ESOL demand.

The College continues to engage with local Community Planning partners and regional stakeholders in curriculum planning. We are an active and key contributor to economic recovery discussions with West Dunbartonshire Delivery and Improvement Group, Inverclyde Alliance Board, East Renfrewshire Local Employability Group and Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel as well as the Glasgow City Deal Skills group; supporting integrated economic recovery planning and ensuring skills alignment with a Covid-19 focus and economic recovery response. From this, a range of interventions and partnerships have been developed, including measures to address digital equity, tackle poverty and respond to the needs of our local and regional economy.

Upskilling and Reskilling

Our upskilling and reskilling portfolio continues to grow reflecting the growing need for organisations within our region to have an agile workforce in order to respond to the changing economic context and continued focus on economic recovery and productivity growth. There has been and will continue to be significant expansion of our short course offer, online learning offering and continuous professional development training packages. The College will aim to fully deliver its remaining 21-22 FWDF allocation of training resources and be responsive to any

subsequent FWDF resources for 22-23. We will continue to extend our industry and partner relationships working closely with our local Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, SDS and CPP partners to maximise the impact and range of organisations being supported. Responding to individual and organisational changing needs, our professional development, upskilling and reskilling training will be offered on a face to face, blended, and fully online basis.

3.2 Confident and Highly Capable Work-ready students

We are working closely with employers and adapt provision where required to provide the best opportunities for our students to be prepared to enter employment and contribute to the economic development of our region and Scotland. All our courses are designed to develop employability skills and we have a clear focus on core and Meta Skills. Significant work is being done this session to help staff and students identify, embed and evaluate Meta Skill development in student learning and within courses to flourish in current or future employment. A new student Skills Policy is currently being developed with associated procedures.

The College works in partnership with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to provide students with access to careers advice and other services. SDS Careers provide support in relation to career management skills. This service has remained active throughout the pandemic and continues to grow from strength to strength. We also advertise courses directly with SDS when we are recruiting and through the relationship developed, they contact us with enquires re guidance for individuals.

The lifting of COVID restrictions, has enabled an increase in work-integrated learning in courses. In the 2021-22 student survey, despite serious some continued limitations on work-experience, 92% of our students reported that their courses had allowed them to develop the knowledge and skills for the workplace which was a 7% increase on the previous session.

3.3 Knowledge Exchange and Innovation

West College Scotland continues to be a leader in the college sector in its approach to knowledge exchange and innovation particularly in its offer to employers and in recognising the need for our staff and students to be resilient and agile meeting the ambitions outlined in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation and the Scottish Funding Council's Coherence and Sustainability Review. The College has had strategic input in supporting the development and delivery of the proposed SFC Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund, Scotland's Innovation Strategy, the Scottish Technology Ecosystem Review, and the UKRI Strategy.

Supporting Place, Industry and Skills

The size and diversity of our work-based portfolio, and the scale of our employer relationships, provides a strong foundation for supporting the region's industry. Over the period of the ROA, College departments plan to develop new apprenticeship offers, and cultivate new employer relationships in: Digital Skills, IT and Telecommunications and Pharmacy Services. For Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the College aims to complete our Advanced Manufacturing Challenge programme within the ROA 2022-2023 period. Developed as a collaboration between West College Scotland and Renfrewshire Council, we will continue to equip SMEs with

Manufacturing 4.0 and Meta Skills, enabling them to develop highly agile and collaborative workplaces to enhance their sustainability and growth. Further to the purchase of a range of new Manufacturing 4.0 equipment, including Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines, Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC) and Pneumatic Control Systems (PNC), Control Instrumentation teaching rigs and co-bots, we have a comprehensive schedule in place to deliver the associated upskilling required which should reach 30-40 regional SMEs in 22-23. From June 2023 onwards, project infrastructure will enable us to continue to deliver a regional skills hub legacy, through a combination of online, college and work-based learning, continuing SME access to expertise, equipment, innovation support and collaboration opportunities.

West College Scotland was successful in securing UK Government Community Renewal Fund (CRF) investment for community regeneration previously supported by ESF funds. The aim is to help local areas prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, align with long-term strategic plans for local growth, support community renewal and innovation and new ideas, including in the areas of work-based training, retraining, digital skills, and supporting entrepreneurs, innovation, and decarbonisation. By the end of 2022, we will have delivered our three projects covering: West Care Academy and the Neptune project. West Care Academy is an integrated skills innovation programme, with key aims including upskilling local care workers to develop their skills and build the collaboration, innovation and leadership capability of local care businesses to meet the challenges of a post- pandemic society. By the end of the programme evaluation in June 2023, we plan to support up to 40 local care businesses, large and small, from across the private, public and third sector. Neptune is a partnership between West College Scotland, Inverclyde Trust, Verdancy Group, Travel Tech for Scotland (part of Edinburgh University Futures Initiative) and Inverclyde Chamber of Commerce. Our aims include transforming Inverclyde's marine economy through building the digital capability of 20 local tourism businesses, support 10 marine businesses collaborate to net zero plans and help up to 20 local people create new enterprises.

3.3. Collaboration

West College Scotland plays an active role in local stakeholder partnerships and groups, including Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, and West Dunbartonshire Local Enterprise Partnerships. This enabled the college to contribute towards the investment plan submitted by the Glasgow City Region, on behalf of 8 local authority area partnerships, to the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund. Providing funds over a three-year period, this will lever significant investment to deliver projects and training that will make a scalable impact to our students, local businesses, and communities. From this, we plan to deliver approved projects to support jobseekers develop skills to access roles in the local care, hospitality & tourism economies, as well as business upskilling and entrepreneurial support for local people.

Working in partnership with Young Enterprise Scotland (YES), we plan to support a range of activities and challenges to build and develop the enterprise skills and entrepreneurial mindset of our students. In November, we will be hosting an Enterprise Roadshow, comprising enterprise workshops, guest speakers, an entrepreneur Q&A panel, and enterprise marketplace. Throughout 2022-2023, our joint co-ordination and promotion of the Bridge to Business Plus programme will support over 400 WCS students engage in enterprise initiatives, courses, and challenges. There are planned Social Innovators and Female Boss challenges, as

well as a series of online, interactive enterprise workshops available to our students, where they can learn more about how to develop their enterprise skills, including marketing, customers & market research, pitching and circular economy processes. Accenture Digital Skills Courses in social media application and digital marketing are also planned. Furthermore, we will be nominating West College Scotland students to participate in enterprise programmes in the Netherlands and Spain. These have proven particularly popular, and WCS students will be joined by students from across Scotland's colleges in collaboration with Young Enterprise Scotland.

3.4 Climate Emergency

In October 2022, the Board of Management approved the [College Sustainability Strategy](#). The Board noted that the Strategy set out the intended direction of travel which the College planned to take in addressing the global climate challenge. The Board also noted that without significant investment by the Scottish Government several of the objectives within the Strategy would prove difficult if not impossible to achieve.

The [Scottish Colleges' Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency](#) highlights how college staff and students are working together to achieve a more sustainable future for Scotland. It includes 10 key actions, which have been developed to support Scotland's efforts to achieve net-zero climate emissions by 2045, and Scotland's colleges are aiming to achieve net-zero by 2040, or earlier. The College Sustainability Strategy embeds the 10 key aims along with adopting the main actions from the Roadmap.

The Strategy contains five objectives with a high-level delivery plan for each objective being noted within the Strategy. The five objectives are:

- Leadership and Governance
- Teaching and Learning
- Estates and Operations
- Partnerships and Engagement
- Carbon reduction and data collection

The College has created a Sustainability Oversight Group chaired by the Principal and which has drawn its membership from both staff, student, and union representatives. The Group met for the first time on the 3 November 2022, with further quarterly meetings planned throughout 2022-23. The actions contained within the Strategy have been transferred onto the Pentana management system and a report on progress will be brought to future meetings of the Committee.

The College has continued to comply with its annual reporting requirements under the 'Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies; Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015' to submit an annual report on compliance with climate change duties. A copy of the latest report can be found on the [Sustainable Scotland website](#). The 2021-22 report records the continued progress of the College to reduce the overall level of emissions. The 2021-22 report records that the College has reduced the level of carbon dioxide emissions by 2,415 tonnes or 46% during the year to 31 July 2022 compared to the 2014-15 base year. The 2021-22 report also highlights the projects and initiatives undertaken during the past year.

Going forward the College, through the Sustainability Oversight Group, will look to:

- Promote the Colleges commitment to ensure a sustainable future for the organisation in both the content of its teaching and support operations.
- Distribute widely the impacts that the College has on the environment through communicating the level of emissions and what staff and students can do to reduce these emissions.
- Carry out a feasibility study on connecting to the Clydebank district heating system along with investigating the availability of infrastructure support funding.
- Implement the “Go Digital” initiative which aims to reduce further the level of paper and printing undertaken in the College.
- Increase the level of recycling of waste within the College through an initial waste audit and then tendering for a new waste contract.
- Implement several projects to reduce electricity use including a continuation of the ‘Switch Off’ campaign and powering down IT equipment.
- Work with the Student Association on the promotion of active travel.

The College continues to be a Sector Leader in delivering training in green energy, including training for solar energy, electric vehicle charging, heat pumps and smart controls. We have just begun an audit of the curriculum against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will produce an action plan for embedding these within the curriculum. Some teaching staff have engaged designing a sustainable curriculum professional learning delivered by the College Development Network. We will participate in the Global Teach In week in March 2023 and are actively encouraging ways to embed sustainability in the curriculum. We have recently launched a green prospectus highlighting green skills programmes in one convenient location and continue to work with sectors to design new green skills and transition to Net Zero programmes.



College Outcome Agreement Impact Framework: Supporting Data

Measure	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
A Credits Delivered (Core)	166,520	159,174	159,039	160,376	157,853	155,288	153,433	149,791	157,235
Credits Delivered (ESF)	0	7,086	7,094	7,103	6,673	9,308	7,442	7,872	
Credits Delivered (Core + ESF)	166,520	166,260	166,133	167,479	164,526	164,596	160,875	157,663	157,235
B Volume of Credits Delivered to 10% most deprived postcode areas	46,369	45,832	45,261	41,664	41,227	41,357	39,549	38,200	37,800
Proportion of Credits delivered to 10% most deprived postcode areas	27.8%	27.6%	27.2%	24.9%	25.1%	25.1%	24.6%	24.2%	24.0%
C Volume of credits delivered to care-experienced learners	870	3,788	3,119	2,463	8,277	13,822	11,998	13,777	13,700
Proportion of credits delivered to care-experienced learners	0.5%	2.3%	1.9%	1.5%	5.0%	8.4%	7.5%	8.7%	8.7%
D Number of senior phase age pupils studying vocational qualifications delivered by colleges	178	115	97	342	425	563	598	497	600
E1 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time FE)	59.7%	63.7%	68.7%	69.2%	67.9%	66.8%	66.7%	63.4%	65.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time FE)	2,531	2,699	3,174	3,045	2,953	2,867	2,426	2,389	2,275
Total number of FTFE students	4,237	4,240	4,622	4,402	4,348	4,293	3,635	3,768	3,500
E2 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time FE)	64.3%	52.5%	67.6%	72.3%	76.1%	76.6%	69.9%	69.4%	72.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time FE)	8,366	7,613	9,467	9,414	9,574	8,941	8,459	8,063	8,640
Total number of PTFE students	13,002	14,501	14,003	13,023	12,576	11,665	12,097	11,622	12,000
E3 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time HE)	67.1%	65.4%	68.7%	69.4%	64.9%	69.1%	67.2%	57.1%	65.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Full time HE)	1,858	1,817	1,849	1,912	1,713	1,642	1,480	1,189	1,098
Total number of FTHE students	2,771	2,780	2,693	2,757	2,640	2,377	2,204	2,083	1,690
E4 Proportion of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time HE)	76.5%	74.1%	76.9%	80.2%	80.3%	73.2%	85.4%	71.2%	80.0%
Number of enrolled students successfully obtaining a recognised qualification (Part time HE)	329	420	445	491	494	418	607	333	560
Total number of PTHE students	430	567	579	612	615	571	711	468	700
F Number of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses	0	545	526	609	608	493	468		
Number of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	0	297	243	311	317	273	284		
Proportion of students achieving an HNC/D qualification articulating to degree level courses with advanced standing	-	54.5%	46.2%	51.1%	52.1%	55.4%	60.7%		60%
G Total number of full-time FE college qualifiers (in confirmed destinations)	2,149	2,455	2,594	2,474	2,345	2,028			
Number of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	2,065	2,362	2,502	2,353	2,258	1,930			
Proportion of full-time FE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	96.1%	96.2%	96.5%	95.1%	96.3%	95.2%			96%
Total number of full-time HE college qualifiers (in confirmed destinations)	1,542	1,517	1,519	1,601	1,492	1,207			
Number of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	1,448	1,438	1,459	1,532	1,353	1,155			
Proportion of full-time HE college qualifiers in work, training or further study 3-6 months after qualifying	93.9%	94.8%	96.1%	95.7%	90.7%	95.7%			96%
H Percentage of students overall satisfied with their college experience (SSES survey)	-	90.1%	93.4%	note	95.1%	-	83.9%	91.5%	93.0%


Please note that 2019-20 figures for measures E, G and H and all 2020-21 figures were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and may not be directly comparable to other years

Outcome Agreement between West College Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2022-23

On behalf of West College Scotland

Signed:	
Print name:	LIZ CONNOLLY
Position:	Principal
Date:	25 April 2023
Signed:	
Print name:	WAIYIN HATTON
Position:	Chair
Date:	25 April 2023

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed: 

Print name: Karen Watt

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 26 July 2023