**Item 14**

**For Approval**

**GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE**

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING OF 31 AUGUST 2020**

**HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY 2020-23**

**REPORT BY VICE PRINCIPAL CURRICULUM AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

## 1. Introduction

This report seeks Board approval to continue its Higher Education Strategy, previously agreed in 2016 and due for Board review. As the College is still in the process of progressing the strategic aims within the attached strategy, it is proposed that no significant changes are made to the strategy.

## 2. Higher Education Strategy

Glasgow Kelvin College is committed to ensuring that all learners can access coherent educational pathways that provide progression to further study and routes into employment.

The Higher Education Strategy is intended to support the College Learning and Framework. It was developed to confirm the commitment to provision of higher education while providing direction and support in the planning and development of HE provision within the College.

The Strategy recognises the role that higher education qualifications play in supporting learners to gain sustainable employment and economic independence. It seeks to ensure that the College develops higher education provision which supports the economy, has STEM and experience of work at its core, offers coherent articulation routes for existing College learners and provides progression to both employment or further study for successful learners.

Its aims are:

- to ensure higher education provision meets local and wider economic need; and
- to develop clear articulation/progression pathways into and from higher education programmes.

The Higher Education Strategy is attached as the appendix to this report.

## 3. Recommendations

Members are recommended to

i) note the contents of this report and its appendix; and
ii) approve the Higher Education Strategy for 2020-23.

## 4. Resource Implications

There are no new resource implications as an immediate consequence of this report.

## 5. Equalities

There are no specific equalities issues that arise as a consequence of this report.

## 6. Risk and Assurance

There are no new risk issues arising as a consequence of this report.

## 7. Declarations of Interest

There are no declarations of interest in relation to this report.

## 8. Further Information

Further information on any aspect of this report is available from Robin Ashton, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (rashton@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk ).

Glasgow Kelvin College
RA
23/08/2020

**Appendix**

**GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE**

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

# HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY, 2020-22

## 1. Introduction

Glasgow Kelvin College is committed to ensuring that all learners can access coherent educational pathways that provide both progression to further study and routes into employment.

The College particularly recognises that higher education qualifications (qualifications at SCQF levels 7 and above) are often key to learners being able to access the sustainable employment likely to provide economic independence.

This Higher Education Strategy has been developed to confirm the College commitment to the provision of higher education programmes and to provide a framework for the development of such programmes within the College.

## 2. Context

College provision can be seen in broad terms as a combination of:

- part time programmes at SCQF levels 1-4 which support adults with low or no qualifications to return to learning;
- full-time programmes, predominantly at SCQF levels 5/6, which provide progression from access provision as well as vocational preparation and progression for school leavers; and
- higher education programmes, predominantly HNC/D, SCQF level 7 and above, which prepare learners for sustainable employment or progression to further study (usually at degree level).

There is a strong correlation between higher education qualifications and employment that is both sustainable and well enough paid to support economic independence and the College therefore values the opportunities which higher education programmes offer for the learners that it supports. It also recognises that in North East Glasgow less than 30% of residents are qualified to SCQF 8/9 compared to 41.6% in Glasgow. Furthermore, over 20% of North East Glasgow residents have no or few qualifications and are consequently not able to access higher education therefore it is essential that the College has curricular pathways to support access and articulation to HNC/D qualifications.

The Commission on Widening Access (COWA) published its final report '*A Blueprint for Fairness'* in March 2016 in response to the Scottish Government's ambition:

*"that a child born today, in one of our most deprived communities will, by the time he or she leaves school, have the same chance of going to university as a child born in one of our least deprived communities"*

It also acknowledges that disadvantaged learners are more likely to begin their higher education journey in colleges and therefore the importance of reliable, well designed articulation pathways to degree provision are essential to support these learners. Both COWA recommendations and SFC policy reinforce a preferred model of articulation with advanced standing to degree programmes. In this context, the importance of transitional support for learners when moving institution to continue their educational pathway has been highlighted as a key to success.

In addition to supporting progression to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the College also has a responsibility to support the economy by equipping learners with the skills and knowledge required to meet current and future labour market demands. In particular, the Scottish Government has emphasised the importance of STEM education as a key lever for economic growth and the College has responded by gaining STEM Assured accreditation and by supporting the Glasgow region to attain similar recognition. This focus on the needs of the labour market and STEM education is central to shaping the higher education provision which the College offers.

This strategy seeks to set out how the College will deliver higher education opportunities for the learners and communities which it supports both through its own provision and through pathways that it establishes with other providers of higher education within the City and beyond.

## 3. Purpose of the Higher Education Strategy

The Higher Education Strategy relates directly to the College vision of transforming life through education and to its strategic aim:

*"To deliver accessible, inclusive and vibrant learning where learners develop skills, achieve accreditation valued by employers and the community and progress to positive destinations"*

The aims of the Higher Education Strategy seek to underpin this commitment and provide direction and support for staff in planning and development of the College higher education curriculum.

## 4. Higher Education Strategic Aims

Aim 1. To ensure higher education provision meets local and wider economic need

Glasgow Kelvin College is committed to providing programmes based on robust labour market intelligence, economic relevance and related to the needs of the College catchment area. It recognises that higher level skills are key to economic growth, access to sustainable employment and creating a Fairer Scotland.

Therefore, it is anticipated that higher education programmes will continue to form around a third of College curricular provision and that this will be reflected annually in the Regional Outcome Agreement. It is the view of the College that such a level of higher education, supported by broadly similar proportions of full-time further education and of part-time access provision best supports the communities that it serves. The College will continue to review this position – particularly in light of Glasgow's success in raising the attainment levels of school leavers.

In addition, when developing new or replacement higher education programmes, course teams will be required to provide a robust educational and economic argument for the development of such provision and to develop partnerships with industry to ensure that opportunities for experience of work are built into programme delivery. This may include development, in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, of technical and higher level apprenticeship programmes for delivery in partnership with employers and other providers of education.

In light of the current economic and policy environment it is anticipated that provision will focus in the main on the areas of:

- Engineering/Science/Technology;
- Care;
- Creative Industries; and
- Business and Service Sector Occupations.

In particular, all higher education provision is expected to have a clear STEM focus in order to support and enhance progression into employment. STEM activities should be identified and highlighted to learners throughout their programme of study.

Aim 2. To develop clear progression pathways into and from higher education programmes

Progression has been a key commitment of Glasgow Kelvin College since its formation. The College has worked to improve the internal progression of learners by developing clear curriculum pathways and by establishing new internal progression arrangements. It has also worked with its sister colleges in Glasgow to ensure that regional curriculum pathways have been developed for all economic sectors.

Any new or replacement higher education programmes will be required to build on this commitment. They will be part of a learner journey which provides progression for existing College learners and supporting successful learners in the transition to both work and/or further study.

When developing new or replacement higher education programmes, course teams are required to map the new programmes to current further education provision in the College, ensuring the option of a seamless transition for learners from further education to higher education programmes within the College portfolio where appropriate. Course teams are also required to develop partnerships and progression/articulation arrangements with other local providers of higher education to maximise opportunities for learners to progress to further qualifications, including degree level study, with appropriate credit for prior learning. These partnerships and arrangements should be in place prior to the commencement of delivery of the programme.

Articulation with advanced standing to degree level study (the 1+3 and 2+2 approach) is the preferred model for the College and for the sector as reinforced by COWA recommendations and SFC policy. All learners completing a higher national programme should be able to progress to HEIs with advanced standing in order to reduce the time and financial implication for learners to gain a degree if this is an appropriate articulation route. Curriculum teams should seek to strengthen links with HEIs and colleges to extend articulation agreements to increase the number of learners who progress from the College with advanced standing to degree level study. Articulation agreements should be in place prior to the commencement of the programme and future articulation agreements sought as opportunities arise. This should include consideration of the opportunities provided through the Open University. In addition, transition activities should be scheduled throughout the programme to support learners to move successfully between institutions as they continue their educational journey.

Where course teams have the opportunity to become involved in the development and delivery of the new higher level apprenticeship programmes, it is expected that they will work with HEIs to identify academic progression routes from such provision in addition to the work placement and employment opportunities developed with supporting employers or industry more generally.

## 5. Supporting the Strategy

The College Higher Education Strategy is supported by a range of policies, procedures and arrangements (including arrangements for learner support and arrangements for quality enhancement). These are updated routinely and are available to all staff through the College intranet.

For clarity, higher education programmes within Glasgow Kelvin College currently include Higher National Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Degree provision. The term articulation is used to refer to progression from an HNC programme to year 2 at university (1+3), or from an HND programme to year 3 at university (2+2).