Item 09
For Noting

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE - 10 MAY 2023

Update on 2023-24 Admissions and Pre-Course Engagement Activity

Report by Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum

1. Introduction

This report provides an update on recruitment for the 2023-24 academic year and associated pre-course engagement activity.

2. Recruitment Update

As of the 25th of April 2023, the College has received 7,255 applications resulting in 3,904 live offers.

	21/22	22/23	23/24
Applications	9668	9385	7255
Offers	3651	2851	3904

When compared to academic year 2023-24, analysis of the 2022-23 and 2021-22 metrics, at that same point in the admissions cycle, show:

- The number of applications received at this time of the year is down 23% on 2022/23 values and down 25% on 2021/22 values. The points below give more detail on potential contributory factors.

- To date the College has 3,904 live offers. When compared to previous years, this represents a 27% increase on April 2022 values and 7% increase in April 2021 values.

When comparing admissions performance to previous years, there are mitigating factors that should be taken into consideration which mean we are not comparing exactly like with like. These include:

- Changes to our arrangements for year two returners. In preceding years, year two returning students were included in application data. For 2023/24, they are no longer included which will reduce application levels.

- Reduction in course availability for 2023/24. Following consolidation of our course provision we are advertising fewer courses next academic year which again will reduce application levels.

- The FE sector has seen a reduction in the number of applications being made in recent years (estimates of approximately 10% to 20%) and this further drop could be part of a longer-term trend.

However, despite these mitigating factors, at this stage application volumes are lower than last year and previous years and this therefore may be a long-term trend.

Importantly, whilst the College has seen a significant reduction in the number of applications when compared to April 2022, this has not had the expected impact in offers numbers. Therefore, our potential to meet our recruitment targets is greater than last year.

Offers issued have not followed the decline in application numbers with ECS issuing 67% more offers, HCL 26% and BCI 31% more than April 2022. Additionally, conversion rates from Application to Offer are significantly better than previous years. This is highlighted in the two charts below.

3. 'Keep Warm' Activity Update

To support improved throughput of students from application to enrolment and improved on course retention, a range of actions have been initiated to regularly engage and 'keep warm' new students until their course start date in August 2023. This includes:

- Support Services contact – Across May to August, College support departments such as Student Funding, Learner Support and Library Services will contact all new students and offer a range of support services to learners.

- Faculty interventions – course teams will contact students in March, April and May to introduce themselves and provide some info on their course. Furthermore, students will be invited on campus to meet staff, their classmates and tour the college.

- Get Ready for College events – over June and July, support departments will work together to offer targeted in person support events for students who have applied but not yet fully completed enrolment, or those who wish more bespoke pre-course support.

- Social media messaging – the College is increasing the volume of communications promoting pre- course activity, both supporting students and building a sense of excitement around the start of the new academic year.

- Meet your Classmates and Freshers events – All full-time students will be invited to a pre-course event to encourage the building of social bonds within the class group and providing a fun and engaging start to the new year.

A new cross-College Pre-Course Activity Group is coordinating actions across departments and providing a forum to consider and review the impact of these actions on student retention.

4. Resource Implications

There is a risk to College funding levels if the College does not achieve its recruitment and admissions targets.

5. Impact on students

The pre-course engagement activities outlined in this report are intended to strengthen the levels of support offered to students and increase overall course retention levels.

6. Equalities

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

7. Risk and Assurance

Due to the current operating environment there is a risk that recruitment and admissions levels are negatively impacted and the College does not achieve its targeted level of activity.

8. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report.

9. Environmental and Sustainability

There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

10. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

i note the most recent admissions data; and

ii consider and endorse the 'keep warm' engagement activity intended to support improved retention.

11. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Peter Brown, Director of Planning, Performance and Curriculum.

Glasgow Kelvin College
PB
25/04/2023