

Glasgow Kelvin College Economic and Wellbeing Impacts

A report to



October 2025



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Executive Summary: Benefits of Glasgow Kelvin College

In 2023/24, Glasgow Kelvin College generated significant benefits in Scotland = £194m

- The impact of Glasgow Kelvin College includes:
- £85.4 million GVA in operational impacts
- £63.7 million in wellbeing impacts
- £27.0 million in social value of qualifications
- £17.8 million in wage premiums
- For every £1 in funding received, the College generated a total of £7 in benefits
- Glasgow Kelvin College has a key role in addressing the challenges of the NE of Glasgow, including high levels of deprivation, a high proportion of working age people out of work, and poor wellbeing
- Through its engagement with the local community, as well as its delivery and support for non-accredited courses, the College creates various pathways into formal further education and economic activity for people who may not have previously considered it and may have otherwise been out of work long-term, in turn tackling deprivation and poor wellbeing

Study Background

Glasgow Kelvin College commissioned BiGGAR Economics to assess its economic and wellbeing impacts

- Glasgow Kelvin College was established in 2013 through the merger of three colleges
- It now operates across three campuses in Glasgow City, delivering further education to over 14,000 students (including around 11,300 SFC funded)

This report aims to:

- Outline the local economic context in which Glasgow Kelvin College operates;
- Describe Glasgow Kelvin College's economic and wellbeing impacts;
- Quantitatively estimate the college's impacts, with respect to GVA, jobs, wellbeing (WELLBYs); and
- Provide sources of data and assumptions

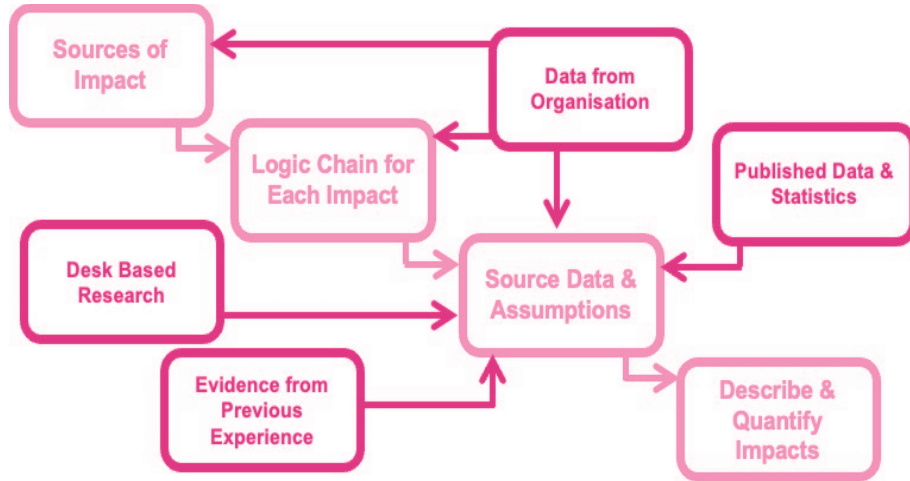
Methodology

The approach to identifying
and measuring impacts



Approach and Methodology

This study aimed to identify and, where possible, quantify the economic benefits of Glasgow Kelvin College



Measuring Impact

- Traditional economic impact analysis relies on metrics like jobs and gross value added (GVA). These measures are important for capturing the economic value of the proposal, but they don't capture all the benefits
- Recent advances mean it is now possible to quantify improvements to wellbeing in a robust way using Wellbeing Adjusted Life Years (WELLBYs). WELLBYs are recommended in the HM Treasury Green Book as a robust metric for quantifying wellbeing benefits
- Not everything that matters can be quantified. When it is not possible to quantify a benefit, the benefit has been evaluated qualitatively

“If we measure the wrong thing, we will do the wrong thing. If our measures tell us everything is fine when it really isn't, we will be complacent.”

Joseph Stiglitz, November 2019

Local Economic Context

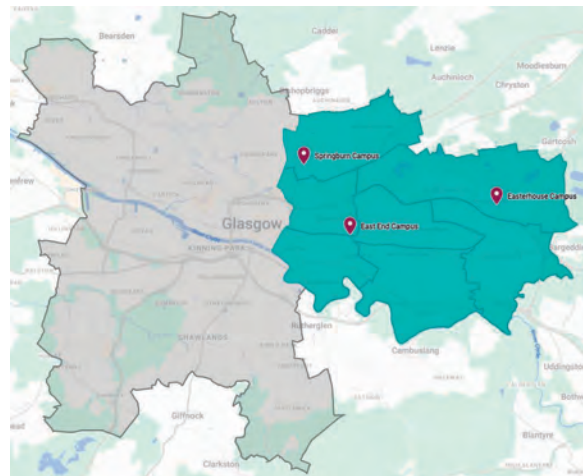
The socio-economic conditions of NE of Glasgow and Glasgow Kelvin College's role in addressing challenges in the area



Local Economic Context

Glasgow Kelvin College operates primarily within NE of Glasgow

- North East of Glasgow, the local area around the college's campuses, is comprised of seven electoral wards¹
- NE of Glasgow had a total population of 172,921 in 2022, equivalent to 28% of Glasgow City's total population
- 119,973 people in the area were of working age (16-64)
 - Equivalent to 69% of the population, average compared to Glasgow City (70%) and above average compared to Scotland as a whole (63%)



Springburn/Robroyston

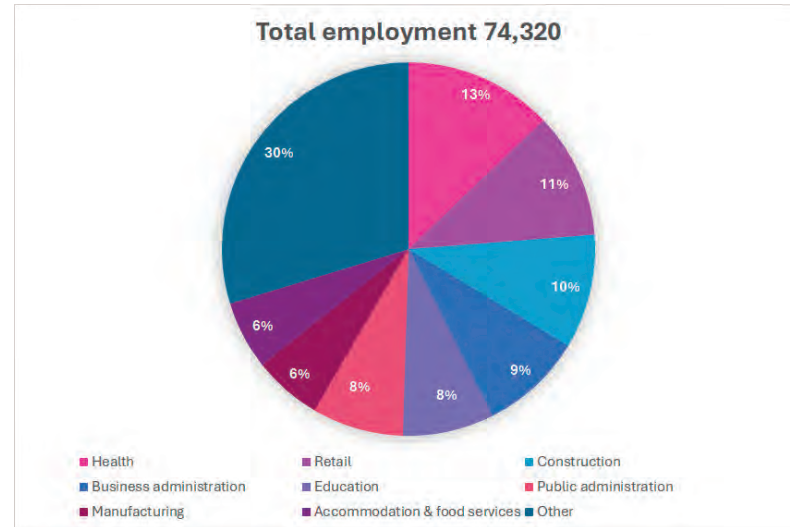
Benefits Claimants

The share of benefits claimants in NE of Glasgow and Glasgow City is above average

- The share of people claiming jobseeker's allowance and universal credit in both NE of
 - Glasgow and Glasgow City has been consistently above average
- As of June 2025, 6,250 people in NE of Glasgow were unemployed and claiming these benefits
 - This represents 5% of the working age population, compared to 5% across Glasgow City and 3% in Scotland
- However, this does not accurately represent the scale of people out of work in the region
 - The proportion of people claiming out-of-work sickness benefits relative to job seekers allowance has increased significantly, with a number of Middle-layer Super Output Areas (MSOA) in NE of Glasgow in the top 50 MSOAs in Scotland with the highest proportion of out-of-work sickness benefits claimants
 - For example, as of Q1 2025, 33% of working age people in Central Easterhouse were claiming out-of-work sickness benefits

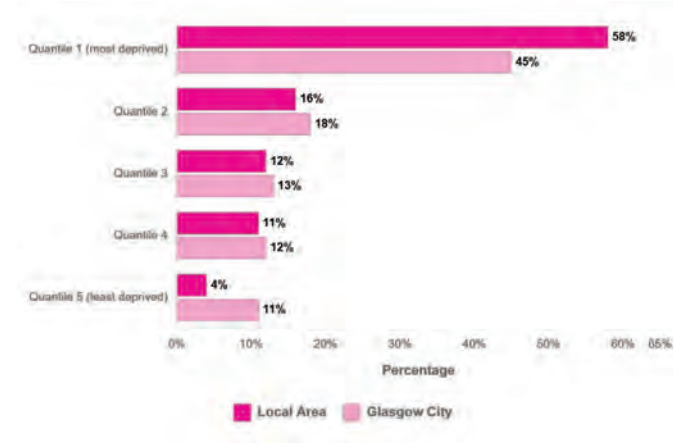
Employment

- In 2023, there were 74,320 jobs in NE of Glasgow, equivalent to 17% of jobs in Glasgow City
- Major sectors of employment include health (13% of employment), retail (11%) and Construction (10%)
- Employment in construction was above average compared to Glasgow City (4%) and Scotland (5%)
- Given the working age population, benefits claimants, and Glasgow's economic activity rate, this suggests up to 45,000 people (38%) commuted outside of the area for work in 2023



Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

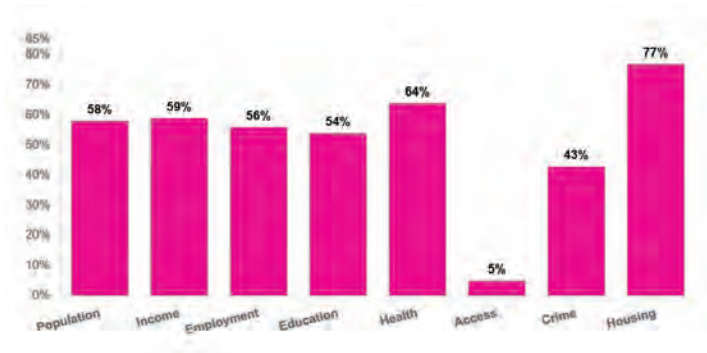
- The SIMD reports deprivation levels for Scottish data zones (small areas with populations of between 500-1,000)
- Over half (58%) of data zones in NE of Glasgow are in Quintile 1, the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland
- NE of Glasgow accounts for 29% of all data zones in Glasgow City, but 38% of Glasgow's small areas in quintile 1
- As of 2022, 35% of people in NE of Glasgow lived in highly deprived areas
- In 2023/24, 40.5% of students who qualified at Glasgow Kelvin College were from areas in Quintile 1 compared to 23.5% of students from all Scottish further education institutes



SIMD Indices

NE of Glasgow is overrepresented across indices of deprivation

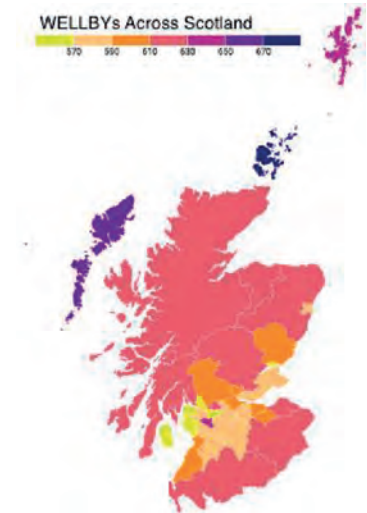
- NE of Glasgow is overrepresented across all but one indices of deprivation
 - Particularly housing, which accounts for people living in overcrowded conditions and in homes without central heating
- The number of areas in quintile 1 for access, which accounts for access to transport, broadband, and services such as GP surgeries, is below average, suggesting high ability to travel for work



Wellbeing-Adjusted Life Years (WELLBYs)

Glasgow City has low levels of wellbeing, recording the lowest WELLBY score across Scotland.

- Wellbeing can be quantified in a robust way using Wellbeing Adjusted Life Years (WELLBYs) – derived from both life satisfaction and life expectancy. The figure shows the WELLBY variation across Scotland
- Life satisfaction in Glasgow City averaged 7.24 on a 0 to 10 scale from 2021 to 2023, 0.2 below the Scottish average
- Average life expectancy across Glasgow City was 75.9 years from 2021 to 2023, 2.9 years below the Scottish average
- Glasgow City has an overall WELLBY score of 549, which is the lowest across Scotland. However, is likely to be even lower in NE of Glasgow on account of lower life expectancy in the area



Drivers of Wellbeing

Economic challenges in Glasgow have a direct effect on wellbeing

- Literature on wellbeing shows:
 - The beneficial effect of high income is smaller than often believed, but poverty is a major cause of misery
 - Unemployment can have a particularly harmful effect on wellbeing
 - Positive relationships, a strong community, and the quality of the physical environment enhance wellbeing
 - The single biggest predictor of adult wellbeing is emotional health at age 16
- This suggests that the high deprivation and unemployment in NE of Glasgow, and Glasgow City as a whole, likely contributes to the low levels of wellbeing in the region

Summary of Local Economic Context

In real terms, the data demonstrates significant challenges for the area

- NE of Glasgow has a relatively high working age population
- As of 2022, over 98,800 people in the NE of Glasgow lived in highly deprived areas
- In June 2025, 6,250 people in the NE of Glasgow were claiming job seekers allowance or universal credit
 - The actual number of people out of work is likely higher due to areas with relatively high proportions of people claiming out-of-work sickness benefits
 - Parts of NE of Glasgow are in the top 50 areas in Scotland with the highest proportion of out-of-work sickness benefits claimants
- Of those in work, a significant share of people living in NE of Glasgow are likely to commute out of the area for employment
- Glasgow City has low levels of wellbeing, with the lowest WELLBY score across Scotland
 - Deprivation and unemployment are significant drivers of poor wellbeing

The Role of Glasgow Kelvin College

The college is well placed to address socio-economic challenges in Glasgow

- Glasgow City faces significant challenges in terms of deprivation, high levels of people out of work, and poor wellbeing. These challenges are intertwined:
 - Deprivation and unemployment contribute to poor wellbeing
 - Low levels of wellbeing, often related to poor mental health and lack of confidence, prevent people from working
 - Lack of work reinforces deprivation across multiple indices
- Given its high proportion of students from the most deprived areas in Scotland, Glasgow Kelvin College can interrupt this cycle by encouraging local people into further education, delivering skills and a positive student experience which will improve lifetime wellbeing
- With good access to transport for commuting, the delivery of skills required by both employers in the NE of Glasgow and those in the wider City Region economy will lead to employment opportunities for Glasgow Kelvin College's students

Operational Impacts

The impacts of Glasgow Kelvin College's day-to-day operations, including its direct impact, its expenditure on supplies and capital investment, and the spending of staff in the economy



Operational Impacts

2023/24 Impacts*	Glasgow City	Scotland
GVA (£ millions)		
Direct Impact	22.8	22.8
Supply Chain Expenditure	4.0	14.6
Staff Spending	23.0	46.3
Capital Expenditure	0.4	1.6
Total GVA	50.3	85.4
Jobs		
Direct Impact	419	419
Supply Chain Expenditure	20	65
Staff Spending	40	80
Capital Expenditure	<5	5
Total Employment	480	565

Glasgow Kelvin College economic activity from its day-to-day operations in education, including direct employment and spending in local supply chains.

The core impacts associated with the college include its:

- Direct impact – the income the college receives and the staff it directly employs
- Supply chain impact – from expenditure on goods and services
- Staff spending impact – from staff spending salaries in the economy
- Capital expenditure impact – from investment in capital infrastructure such as buildings and equipment

Staff Wellbeing Impacts

The impacts generated by Glasgow Kelvin College through its creation of high-quality local jobs



Staff Wellbeing Impacts

Glasgow Kelvin College provides high-quality local jobs that generate wellbeing benefits for its staff

As an accredited Scottish Living Wage employer, Glasgow Kelvin College is an important local employer.

The College offers excellent employment conditions, characterized by a high proportion of permanent contracts and strong, above-average pay. Job security and high remuneration are contributors to job satisfaction and bring about wellbeing benefits for staff.

In total, employment at the College has a wellbeing impact of 222.5 WELLBYs, worth 3.6 million.

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland	
	WELLBYs	£m
Staff	222.5	3.6

Human Capital Impacts

The impacts generated by Glasgow Kelvin College's accredited courses, which build human capital (the skills and knowledge of individuals), include enhanced productivity, higher wages, increased social value, and improved lifetime wellbeing



Human Capital Impacts – Wage Premium

Glasgow Kelvin College represents an investment in people that enhances lifetime opportunities.

A key priority is enhancing skills that meet regional needs, delivering courses that enable people to do their jobs effectively and contribute meaningfully to society.

The increase in productivity that College brings about can be captured using the wage premium – the expected personal earnings increase from obtaining a qualification.

In total, based on the College awarding 2,003 SCQF Levels 1-6 and 1,152 SCQF Levels 7+ in 2023/24, the College had a total wage premium impact of £17.8 million.

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland
	£m
Wage Premium	17.8

Human Capital Impacts – Social Value

The College addresses societal needs by equipping people with the skills to pursue high-social-value careers

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland
	£m
Social Value	27.0

Glasgow Kelvin College actively supports the community through directly generating social value.

Whilst the wage premium captures the productivity gains from College qualifications, it fails to reflect the full value of the work undertaken. Many of these qualifications empower people to pursue careers of high social value – work not solely measured by wage uplift – including essential roles in care, teaching, engineering, and computing.

In total, based on the College awarding SCQFs in care (647), teaching (14), engineering (1,100), and computing (47) in 2023/24, the College that had a social value impact of £27.0 million.

Human Capital Impacts – Wellbeing

Beyond the benefits to wages and society, obtaining a nationally accredited qualification directly enhances wellbeing across a person's lifetime

Alongside the benefits of higher wages and social value, the qualifications gained at the College help to secure a lifetime of personal wellbeing benefits for individuals.

Gaining a new qualification provides indirect wellbeing benefits through, for example, increased wages and better mental health. However, once these indirect gains are factored out, direct wellbeing benefits remain, arising from a person having better life skills and increased confidence.

In total, based on the 3,155 SCQFs awarded in 2023/24, the College generated a lifetime of wellbeing benefits worth £50.5 million.

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland	
	WELLBYs	£m
Lifetime Wellbeing	3167.1	50.5

Education & Learning Impacts

The impacts generated by Glasgow Kelvin College from the core student experience and supporting pathways into formal education —all delivered through non-accredited courses and community learning centres



Education & Learning Impacts - Student Wellbeing

Glasgow Kelvin College creates opportunities for people in the NE of Glasgow that wouldn't otherwise exist, bringing wellbeing benefits

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland	
	WELLBYs	£ m
Engagement in Education	236.3	3.8
Student Support	112.7	1.8
Total	348.9	5.6

*Local rates are assumed to be the same as Glasgow City centre at 5.3%. However, evidence suggests that in many areas of NE of Glasgow, those on out of work benefits are much higher, suggesting the wellbeing benefits from engaging people in education are likely to be much higher.

Being a student is comparable (in wellbeing terms) to being employed offering meaning and purpose, opportunities for growth and learning, and social connection.

The College creates wellbeing benefits by engaging students, who might otherwise be out of work in line with local rates*.

In addition, the College strives to provide support for students' health and wellbeing, with a health and wellbeing dedicated staff member, an active campus coordinator, a student-valued counselling service, and care experienced support bursaries.

The College's partnerships with Glasgow and Strathclyde universities create opportunities for further study, providing access for students who might otherwise have limited options.

Education & Learning Impacts - College Courses

The College offers courses that are designed with the community in mind, offering a pathway into formal education and generating wellbeing benefits

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland	
	WELLBYs	£ m
College Courses	135.8	2.2
Learning Centres	67.9	1.1
Total	203.7	3.3

Alongside its role as a formal education provider that generates substantial human capital impacts, Glasgow Kelvin College also functions as a community college.

By offering non-accredited and college devised courses, the College supports people to enter education, who otherwise might be left out.

This helps people to develop skills and confidence that will bring wellbeing benefits to people's lives and offers a potential pathway into formal education.

In total, based on the 1,921 non-accredited awarded courses in 2023/24, the College generated wellbeing benefits worth £2.2 million.

Education & Learning Impacts – Learning Centres

By embedding learning centres in the community, the College maximises reach and boosts resident wellbeing

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland	
	WELLBYs	£ m
College Courses	135.8	2.2
Learning Centres	67.9	1.1
Total	203.7	3.3

Glasgow Kelvin College plays an active role in supporting its local community, through providing learning opportunities, including digital skills, literacy, food skills, first aid, etc., across 32 locations throughout the local area.

In delivering 3,839 courses, the College supports people to develop skills and confidence that brings a wellbeing benefit, worth £1.1 million, to people's lives.

Community Impacts

The wider impacts in the local area generated by Glasgow Kelvin College through its work with community and youth hubs and community groups



Community Impacts – Community & Youth Hubs

The College engages directly with the most vulnerable individuals within its community, supporting them to meet needs and learn basic skills

Glasgow Kelvin College regularly hosts some of the most vulnerable members of the community to connect, develop skills, engage in sports and other activities, and access healthy meals, playing an active role in supporting its local community.

Through helping to ease financial pressures and offering opportunities for social engagement that might not otherwise exist but also brings them in touch with the College and enhances the potential for education provision, bringing a wellbeing benefit worth £0.5 million.

Additional hub benefits

- Local police anecdotally report reduced incidents on the street when the hubs are running
- Speakers from the local police engage with the hubs, fostering a sense that they are there to support and protect the community and reducing mistrust
- The college works with the criminal justice system, enabling minor offenders to take college courses rather than other sentences which are less likely to improve life outcomes and reduce reoffending rates

Community Impacts – Community Groups

The College opens its doors to community groups ensuring their ongoing impacts in the community

Glasgow Kelvin College rents out space at a minimal cost to various community learning groups – e.g., music, language and cultural.

Although this is not attributable to the College, the College has a vital role in *enabling* these wellbeing benefits and ensuring their ongoing sustainability.

These ongoing groups bring a wellbeing benefit to those who attend such groups that amount to £2.6 million, of which £0.3 million of the wellbeing benefits can be attributed to the College.

Community Impacts

The College has important qualitative community impacts

By hosting community and youth hubs and learning centres, the college interacts with people who may not have otherwise considered further education.

Through the learning hubs, the college works to improve users' confidence in their own abilities, encouraging them to pursue further and higher education.

The college offers significant provision of English as a Second Language, including for young asylum seekers who are more likely to leave education due to lack of language provision.

Through the hubs, the college provides access to sports equipment and classes, increasing physical activity and enabling people to try sports they would not normally have access to.

Summary and Conclusion



Summary of Quantifiable Impacts

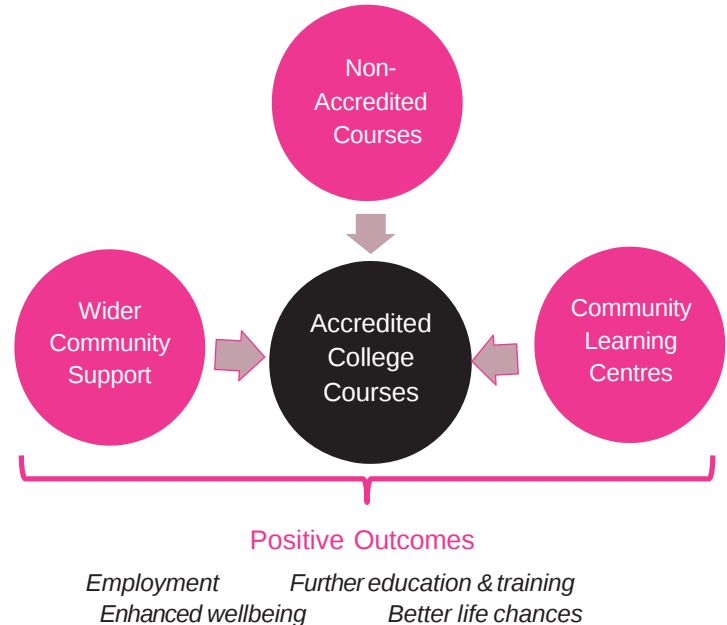
- Grouped by impact type, in 2023/24, Glasgow Kelvin College generated:
- £85.4 million GVA in operational impacts
- £63.7 million in wellbeing benefits
- £27.0 million in social value of qualifications
- £17.8 million in wage premiums
- Total benefits in Scotland = £194m

2023/24 Impacts	Scotland
	£ millions
Direct GVA	22.8
Capital Expenditure	1.6
Supply Expenditure	14.6
Staff Expenditure	46.3
Total GVA Impacts	85.4
Staff wellbeing	3.6
Student wellbeing	5.6
Lifetime graduate wellbeing	50.5
Non-accredited courses wellbeing	2.2
Learning centres wellbeing	1.1
Community hubs and groups wellbeing	0.8
Total Wellbeing Benefit	63.7
Social Value	27.0
Wage Premium	17.8

Conclusion

The College has created numerous pathways into further education and delivers the skills needed to bring people into the workforce and improve lifetime wellbeing.

By providing people in NE of Glasgow who may otherwise have been long-term out of work with a positive student experience and skills sought by employers, Glasgow Kelvin College interrupts the cycle of deprivation, lack of employment, and poor mental health, enabling people in NE of Glasgow to reach their full potential.



Key Assumptions and Sources



Operational Impacts

Assumption	Value
Total income	£29.9 million
Headcount staff	419
Glasgow City	73%
Scotland	100%
Supply expenditure	£7.0 million
Glasgow City	19%
Scotland	51%
Average annual capital expenditure	£0.5 million
Glasgow City	20%
Scotland	58%

Human Capital Impacts

Assumption	Value
The number of students currently leaving with SCQF Levels 1-6	2,003
The number of students currently leaving with SCQF Level 7+	1,152
Including qualifications in:	
Care	647
Teaching	14
Engineering	1,100
Computing	47
Proportion of leavers going onto employment	
Higher education	28.0%
Further education	30.7%

Human Capital Impacts

Assumption	Value
Wage premium by qualification	
SCQF Levels 1-6	£16,400
SCQF Levels 7+	£25,700
Social value by SCQF Levels 7+ Qualification	
Care	£32,100
Teaching	£393,400
Engineering	£76,800
Computing	£85,800
Wellbeing per qualification per year of student's life	0.025 WELLBYs
Total lifetime wellbeing per student	1.0 WELLBYs
Value of wellbeing per student	£15,958

Staff Satisfaction Impacts

Assumption	Value
Headcount staff	419
Wellbeing benefit of one Glasgow Kelvin College job (based on higher than the UK average pay and job security)	0.53 WELLBYs

Student Satisfaction Impacts

Assumption	Value
Number of SFC funded students who are satisfied with their course and may have otherwise been unemployed	11,267 (96%)
Glasgow City unemployment rate	5.1%
Number of students graduating from non-accredited courses	1,921
Wellbeing benefit of undertaking a learning course across one year	0.07 WELLBYs
Wellbeing benefit of additional health and wellbeing services that students wouldn't otherwise have access to, including water sports, counselling, bicycle access, etc	0.01 WELLBYs

Community and Youth Hubs

Assumption	Value
Annual participants	400+
Regular attendees	100
Volunteers per week	22
Wellbeing of hub attendance per regular attendee (based on regular attendance having significant impacts on reducing loneliness, easing financial pressures, learning, and physical health)	0.4 WELLBYs
Wellbeing benefit of regularly volunteering per volunteer	0.1 WELLBYs
Additionality assumption (based on there being very few other local opportunities)	75%

Learning Centres

Assumption	Value
Courses with credited activity	3,839
Wellbeing benefit of undertaking a short learning course	0.035 WELLBYs
Over six months	0.07 WELLBYs
Additionality assumption (based on the possibility of some alternative opportunities)	50%

Community Groups

Assumption	Value
Attendees to various community groups (including Scottish Fiddlers, Chinese School, Russian School etc)	1,630
Wellbeing benefit of regularly attending a group	0.1 WELLBYs
Additionality assumption (based on the enabling but not delivering these groups)	10%

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