Student Association Update

Over the past few months, several important developments have taken place to strengthen student representation, support, and engagement across the college.

- **Recruitment of the Student Association Liaison Officer (SALO):**
  A new staff position, the Student Association Liaison Officer (SALO), was created to provide dedicated support to the Student Association, aiming to enhance student engagement and representation efforts. After a thorough recruitment process, Laura Muetzelfeldt was selected for the role. She will officially start on Monday 11th November. During her first few months, Laura's primary focus will be on supporting and training student representatives across the college, ensuring they are well-prepared and equipped to advocate for their peers effectively.

- **Student President for Education and Representation Election:**
  Voting has commenced to elect a new Student President for Education and Representation. This position is recruiting as a job-share, with the selected candidate(s) working two and a half days each week. Two candidates are running for this position, and the election process is ongoing, with students encouraged to participate in selecting their new representative.

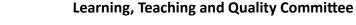- **Enhanced Focus on Student Representative Recruitment:**
  A significant effort to recruit student representatives, focusing on broadening the representation of students from various sectors. Departments across the college have nominated sector representatives, who will soon receive communications from the newly appointed SALO. Over the next few weeks, Laura and the team will work closely with these new sector representatives, providing them with essential training and clarifying their roles and responsibilities. Additionally, staff members are actively gathering details of students interested in becoming Communication Representatives, who will be integral to fostering transparent communication between students and college. To streamline communication, dedicated Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) sites have been established to facilitate real-time interaction between representatives and sabbatical officers.

- **Continued Recruitment for Liberation Officers:**
  In alignment with the college's commitment to inclusivity, a focused recruitment effort is being led by Jamie to attract more Liberation Officers. Liberation Officers play a key role in advocating for marginalised groups within the student body, and this targeted recruitment drive aims to strengthen this vital area of student representation. This effort will continue over the coming months to ensure that these positions are filled by motivated individuals committed to promoting diversity and inclusion across the college.

- **Planning for January Freshers' Week:**
  Preparations will be starting for the upcoming January Freshers' Week, which will welcome new students to the college community. The SA planning team will be working to ensure a vibrant and engaging experience for all newcomers, and current students promoting a sense of belonging and community.

	Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee
WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND	**Wednesday 13 November 2024 at 4.00pm, Online**
	Agenda Item No: 5

Title of Paper	Regional Outcome Agreement self-evaluation
Presented by:	**Stephanie Gunn**
Decision:	**For noting**
Status	**Public**

Purpose / Executive Summary:

SFC changes to the annual Regional Outcome Agreement process were outlined to the Board on 7 October.

The Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model together comprise the revised approach to assurance and accountability for colleges and universities (Tertiary Sector). It will replace the current assurance and accountability arrangements (including Outcome Agreements) from academic year 2024-25.

2024-25 will be a transition year for the Outcomes Framework and pilot year for the new Tertiary Quality arrangements.

The Outcome Agreements (OA) for AY 2023-24 were published on 1 February 2024. In order to complete this process, SFC is asking for submission of a short factual report of up to six pages of self-evaluation against the commitments made in the 2023-24 OA.

These reports will not be published and institutions are encouraged to reflect on how well the commitments in the OA have been delivered, identify highlights and challenges from AY 2023-24 and identify any areas for improvement and consider outcomes for all learners. The report should also include early mitigations in place to address challenges moving forward into AY 2024-25.

The report does not need to include evaluation of the learning and quality outcomes in the OAs for AY 2023-24, since this will be covered in the TQEF's Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP).The self-evaluation report should be submitted by 2 December and signed off by the Principal on behalf of the governing body.

In addition, SFC require the submission of two case studies on the themes of outcomes for students and outcomes for economic transformation and social renewal. Case studies will be used to illustrate how colleges and universities use the funding that they receive.

There is no requirement to complete the KPIs in the Measurement Table.

The following draft self-evaluation and case studies are for Committee approval to be submitted to SFC.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to:
- Seek clarification or comment on the submissions and approve for submission, with any suggested amendments, if required.

Implications:	
Financial	Not applicable for this report
Student Experience	Not applicable for this report
Human Resources	Not applicable for this report
Legal	Not applicable for this report
Reputational	Not applicable for this report
Community/ Partnership impact	Not applicable for this report
Equalities	Not applicable for this report
Environment	Not applicable for this report

Regional Outcome Agreement 2023-24 Self Evaluation

Priority area 1: Fair Access and Transitions.

The College has embedded the recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access (COWA) and those within the Blueprint for Fairness Report, particularly in supporting students and young people from deprived areas and those with a Care Experienced background, within the core work of the College. In 2023-24 we replaced a senior manager vacancy with a post with an additional specific remit for 'Improving Life Chances' to lead further improvements, including improving outcomes for our Care Experienced and more disadvantaged students.

Deprivation

The West Region has some of the most deprived areas in Scotland and we have always recognised and worked to address the many challenges that our students face in accessing, attending college and achieving full success.

Our College significantly contributes to the Scottish widening access agenda with 20% of our students from the 10% most deprived backgrounds in 2023-24. For our main local authority areas, the percentage from SIMD10 last session was 27% and the percentage attending college far exceeded the deprivation percentage in the overall population. There was an increase in the number of students from SIMD10 in 2023-24 for both FE and HE and an increase in the proportion of credit activity for full-time students from the most deprived areas.

Council Area	Population of area	Population from 10% Most Deprived Areas	% population from 10% most deprived areas	No. of Students from 10% Most Deprived Areas	% college students from 10% most deprived areas		Under 16	16-17	18-19	20-24	25 & over	Total
Argyll and Bute	86,220	3,086	4%	37	6%		36	115	116	100	262	593
East Renfrewshire	96,580	1,332	1%	25	4%		22	133	78	103	280	594
Glasgow City	635,130	185,683	29%	918	37%		33	259	333	419	1,486	2497
Inverclyde	76,700	22,692	30%	1,037	44%		633	595	456	400	922	2373
Renfrewshire	179,940	23,905	13%	1,227	30%		1,177	959	733	666	1,712	4070
West Dunbartonshire	87,790	14,806	17%	621	28%		279	492	385	349	986	2212
				3865			2,180	2,553	2,101	2,037	5,648	14,519
												27%

With one of the highest proportions of students from deprived areas, we are confident in our approaches in promoting access, although we will continue to address any enhancements. Our main challenge remains however, to support these students to attain and progress in line with students from less deprived areas. Our success rates for courses lasting 160 hours or more, improved by 2.4% for students from SIMD10 and by 3% for those from SIMD20. The current cost of living crisis is impacting even further on these students, and we provided free breakfasts, digital devices, 'Green Rooms' (donated food and clothing), along with our mental health support and counselling. The work of our Active Campus Coordinator also contributed to the wellbeing of both our students and staff.

In line with the Adult Learning Strategy for Scotland (2022-2027) we continued to endeavour to improve life chances for adult learners by providing accessible, flexible local opportunities for learning. We worked 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 were active contributors to strategic and operational groups across all partners.

A new internal partnership approach was created whereby Learner Development specialist staff worked with vocational staff for SCQF4 courses to ensure students at most risk of becoming

disengaged were supported. We rebranded all of our SCQF4 vocational provision 'Transitions to….' And worked to ensure consistency across our SCQF4 courses through the introduction of Course Design Principles.

Care Experienced, Carers and Estranged Students

We are committed to the priorities within the SFC's National Ambition for Care-Experienced students and work towards equal outcomes for all. Each Care Experienced, Estranged, Young Adult Carer and any unpaid Carer student had a named person who supported them starting College, and carried out regular wellbeing checks, working closely with Local Authorities and external services.

There were over 1,000 care experienced students in 2023-24. The Corporate Parenting Action Plan outlines both our existing support practices and our enhancement ambitions. While the support may have impacted on early withdrawal figures which improved for Care experienced students in 2023-24, our further withdrawal and success rates did not improve. There are still significant differences in the attainment levels for Care Experience students and their peers and for 2024-25 we will be providing further staff development and awareness raising, including the identification of care experienced students and their support needs through our new CIVICA register system.

Equalities

The College published our Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2023 which reports on our Equality Outcomes 2021-23. As set out in the report, our Equality Outcomes in the next four years will focus on BAME, Disability, Gender and Gender based Violence, LGBTQIA+ and in the wake of the cost-of-living crisis on individuals who are at a socio-economic disadvantage.

In 2023-24 we had an increased number of students from ethnic backgrounds, however the early withdrawal rates increased for those on courses of 160 hours or more and this impacted on success rates which reduced slightly. We will undertake more analysis of the reason for the increase in early withdrawal since this was out of line with improvements made for other students.

School College Partnership

The College places real value the School College partnership work with all our Local Authority partners to provide vocational opportunities, skills development, and appropriate pathways for young people. We continued to refresh our College School Partnership programme which involved delivery of courses across 5 local authorities involving 35 schools and 1,800 pupils. Some subjects traditionally taught by the college are now taught by the schools and in 2023-24 we had a reduction in numbers overall but higher numbers of Winter Leavers and we worked with our Local Authorities to increase January start courses to cater for this demand. Pupil numbers were impacted by not being able to run the induction programme for 2023-24 prior to the summer due to EIS industrial action. This has also impacted on our recruitment for 2024-25 school college provision and the industrial action appears to have resulted in Local Authorities, Schools and parents being less keen on participating overall.

Although our school pupil numbers reduced, our proportion of S4 activity increased and we are seeing increased demand for S3 and S4 and for pupils who have disengaged from school. We intentionally reduced our activity for school pupils below S3, but we remained very active in supporting DYW and STEM events for the younger pupils. Staff from our College played a leading role nationally in the development of the Cyber First initiative for schools, supported by Education Scotland.

Articulation and Transitions

The College is committed to enabling students to progress their learning and shorten their student journey and by improving articulation to university, where this is appropriate. In 2021-22 50% of our successful HE students who entered HEIs articulated to degree programmes with advanced standing.

In 2022-23 and 2023-24 progression to HEIs was impacted by EIS industrial action and action short of strike. The College worked with all Universities over summer 2023 and 2024 to ensure our student articulation was not impacted by the EIS-FELA National dispute. The universities accepted students before the summer onto degree programmes without requiring completion of the HN courses. Whilst this helped students be more reassured of their progression, it is likely to have impacted on our HE PIs. We request that SFC look at the data for students progressing to HEIs in 2024 and consider students who were accepted without full HN qualifications, as being successful for Colleges. Whilst we have good working relationships with individual universities and expect these to strengthen through the Tertiary Quality arrangements, our current ability to review overall trends and address any College areas for improvement is hampered by delays in receiving access to articulation and progression data from SFC.

In 2023-24 we developed a new part time Childhood Practice degree franchised through UWS to be delivered in Greenock August 2024 for those in the workforce to upskill and develop their qualifications.

Priority area 2: Quality learning and teaching
This area for 2023-24 is covered in the College Self Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP)

Priority area 3: Coherent Learning Provision
Our priority is to provide a curriculum which meets employer needs, supports the economic growth of our both our Region and Scotland, and provides our students with relevant qualifications and skills to build successful long-term careers. To support this the College has shaped, developed, and is responding to, the Glasgow City Region Skills Investment Plan, the Regional Economic Strategy Action Plan and the Regional Skills Assessment for the West Region. Our Curriculum Strategy has provided the framework to address the learning and skills provision focussing on key growth sectors including:

- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Renewable Energy
- Health and Social Care
- Digital and Creative

Underpinned by the priority to increase the scale and scope of work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities, a pioneering Level 6 Manufacturing in Engineering Foundation Apprenticeship commenced at our Paisley campus where it incorporated pupils from across 3 of our Local Authorities and had an equal gender split between male and female pupils. With the world class NMIS facility on the College doorstep, the 2-year Foundation Apprenticeship has been co-developed to meet the ongoing need for highly trained and capable engineers and technicians. The course is designed to replicate the first year of an engineering apprenticeship and offers multiple progression routes available to the pupils should they be successful in completion including progression at college to study HNC, securing a modern apprenticeship or progression to university.

We are continuing to increase our Construction and Engineering offering and meet the increased demand for engineering Apprentices for companies including BAE, Babcock, Fergusons and Diodes. The College also extended our breadth of Apprenticeships in Care to include: Health and Social Care, Early Years, Life Sciences and Pharmacy. Recognised as a key growth sector for the West Region, the College continued its partnership with the Golden Jubilee and NHS Scotland Academy to provide skills, training and work relevant experience via the Youth Academy which is looking to increase the capacity to provide Scotland's young people with opportunities to develop the skills needed to join the health and social care workforce. This includes enabling young people to understand the breadth of opportunity so that they can align their strengths and career aspirations with the right role.

The College continued to engage with local Community Planning partners and regional stakeholders in curriculum planning. We are an active and key contributor to economic growth 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; ensuring skills alignment with the future economic development growth plans across the Glasgow City Region. 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.

As identified in the Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit July 2024, "Lecturing staff are provided with appropriate opportunities to share and learn from good practice, and to access appropriate professional learning activities around learning, teaching, assessment, and support. Managers and staff feel empowered to make changes to programmes and delivery to improve the learner experience. Curriculum teams engage directly with employers and use this autonomy well"

In line with our growth aspirations, the College is diligently expanding its capacity and capability to deliver training and skills through diverse modes, including online, in-person, and blended formats, while also focusing on the expansion of Micro-Credentials and the development of smaller qualifications. This approach ensures that we can effectively address the unique demands of every business we serve, offering tailored and flexible learning solutions to meet their specific needs and in alignment with the SFC Sustainability Review recommendations.

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. To date the College has accessed funds to support jobseekers develop skills in literacy and numeracy to access roles in the local care, hospitality and tourism economies.

Priority area 4: Work-based Learning and Skills

West College Scotland has a three-year Modern Apprenticeship growth plan in place, which builds upon our strong employers and stakeholder partnerships, as well as developing new work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities that respond to regional demand, national and international trends. We are committed to growing our apprenticeship portfolio through the management of our contract with Skills Development Scotland, as well as through our arrangements with managing agents CITB, SNIPEF and SECTT, and other sub-contracting arrangements with

employers in the public and private sector. From assessment of the regional skills and labour market, we know that caring roles remain the most popular occupation in the region and will remain so in the medium to long term, with both short and long-term forecasts in the region show the greatest net increase will be in job roles in Health and Social Work. Manufacturing is, and will remain, the largest sector by GVA in the region, with engineering, process manufacturing, and leather production and technology remaining key pillars of our regional economy; where the concentration of the latter is a unique feature of our region and West College Scotland is the sector's provider of choice.

In 2023-24, the College supported and delivered Modern Apprenticeships to a greater number of apprentices across 9 different occupational groups, 16 frameworks, and a range of ages and qualification levels, placing us in the Top 5 of Scotland's colleges by breadth of provision.

For 2023-24, we started 313 MA places via our SDS contract, representing an increase of 77 new starts, or approximately 32%, compared to last year. We have also renewed our managing agent and employer partnership arrangements, with increased volumes.

One of our primary objectives is to increase the number of employer partners, in turn increasing the number of new apprenticeships starts, in Care, Engineering, Leather Production and Technology. Further opportunities exist for us to increase our employer profile within both Life Sciences and Pharmacy Services. In addition, within an expanded Care portfolio, we are uniquely placed, as a college and training provider, to build upon our excellent track record working with the NHS, and increase the number of new start apprentices, increasing our reach, as well as diversifying into the pharmacy retail sector.

We worked closely with employers and adapt provision where required to provide the very 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, digital and Meta Skills. Significant work is being done 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. This is being undertaken through our Centre for Meta Performance and the development of a new Meta Skills tracker for students. The successful delivery of our extensive Modern Apprenticeship activities has been recognised at the Scottish Apprenticeship Awards for both candidate and staff members.

The College continues to work collaboratively to promote Foundation Apprenticeships to school pupils across the region, however recruitment continues to be difficult and is declining despite some individual positive outcomes. Several students from the Engineering FA in 2023-24 secured MAs with large employers. We had an increase in interest in Level 5 FAs rather than Level 6.

Knowledge Exchange, Innovation and Enterprise
West College Scotland has made significant strides in fostering innovation, knowledge exchange, and enterprise activities positioning itself as a key player in driving economic growth and societal impact through strategic partnerships, innovative projects and embracing entrepreneurship opportunities.

Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards 2024 Highly Commended: West College Scotland won the 'Highly Commended' Award in the 'Innovation of the Year' category at the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards 2024, the first college to do so. Supported by Interface, this recognition was for our collaborative project with The Bettii Pod Ltd., which developed an innovative menstrual cup washer

and sanitiser which can be installed in away-from-home cubicles. This offers users an eco-friendly menstrual choice, address period poverty by improving access to sanitation facilities, and mitigate health concerns related to inadequate washing facilities. This project highlights the College's commitment to addressing societal challenges through industry and academic partnerships to drive innovative solutions.

The College Innovation Network (CIN): was established in 2023 to support and promote the role of further education colleges in Scotland with the adoption and diffusion of innovation. Funded by The Gatsby Foundation, this involved a small partnership of colleges from across Scotland who had prioritised the development and support of innovation and productivity opportunities for businesses, this included: West College Scotland, Edinburgh College, North East Scotland College, and Perth UHI. CIN established the need to research the depth and nature of college engagement with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) focusing on how colleges could support innovation within those businesses. The research included a range of stakeholder engagement activities and information gathering which captured the perspectives of both businesses and colleges. To support this a scoping visit by the partnership was undertaken to North West Regional College in Northern Ireland to understand the significant work that had been undertaken by colleges in Northern Ireland in establishing college led innovation centres providing support to businesses in scaling their enterprise, upskilling and in the development of new products or practices to support productivity and sustainability. This project not only supported the College Innovation Network but became the framework for our College Local Innovation Centres project.

College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC): West College Scotland along with City of Glasgow, Glasgow Clyde, Glasgow Kelvin and South Lanarkshire Colleges secured £1.2 million of Innovate UK funding aimed at piloting and establishing innovation centres across the Glasgow City Region as part of the UK Government Innovation investment. Our vision is to create an ecosystem of innovation assets and resources that drive productivity in the Glasgow City Region though deployment of digital transformation and skills. The CLICs are designed to support the adoption of innovative business practices and engage with over 200 businesses across various growth sectors including: Advanced Manufacturing, Sustainable Development, Digital Health, Digital Enablement, and Digital Creativity.

Entrepreneurial Campus: Recognising that our students need to be capable of enterprising and entrepreneurial behaviour to cope with increased uncertainty and complexity, as well as supporting their entrepreneurial aspirations, West College Scotland's Corporate Strategy matches the ambitions and priorities of The Entrepreneurial Campus in supporting the development of an entrepreneurial, innovative and agile mindset in both our staff and students. To support this, the College continues to be a partner with Bridge 2 Business and jointly deliver opportunities to develop relevant skills, knowledge and experience, and offer wrap around support and resources to support students to start their own business.

Supporting Place, Industry and Skills
The size and diversity of our upskilling, reskilling and work-based portfolio, coupled with the scale of our employer relationships, continues to provide a strong foundation for supporting our Region's industry and workforce ambitions. West College Scotland has been instrumental in bridging the gap between employers, industry and skills alignment in a number of our key growth sectors particularly in Healthcare and Engineering Technologies.

Recognising the need for a flexible workforce that meets the requirements of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and employers in Scotland, we continued to take a leadership role in designing developing and delivering the Diploma in Pharmacy Services. To ensure accessibility to a wider range of employers, we engaged in extensive collaboration with various key industry stakeholders, including NHS Education for Scotland (NES), the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA), the General Pharmaceutical Council, CDN and the Scottish Government. This collaborative effort enabled the College to extend and share our expertise with other colleges across Scotland, developing resources and a unique approach to learning beyond traditional college boundaries. This sharing of knowledge and best practice has been a pioneering approach to cross sector collaboration helping to ensure an award winning pan-Scotland skilled workforce for the future in pharmacy.

Our Advanced Manufacturing Centre (AMC) established at our Paisley campus was launched at the start of our 2023-24 academic year to create a regional skills hub, embedding capacity, capability and infrastructure which will enable us to widen access manufacturing companies to expertise, equipment and skills through a combination of online, college and work-based learning, continuing access to expertise, equipment, innovation support and collaboration opportunities, including with the National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland (NMIS). The centre continues to go from strength to strength in association with our College Local Innovation Centre (CLIC) initiative where West College Scotland is the identified 'Centre for Advanced Manufacturing' within the Glasgow City Region. To support and promote this, we established a dedicated team to engage and liaise with businesses across the Region to benchmark organisations' digital maturity and innovation preparedness to meet the needs of Industry 4.0

Priority area 5: Net Zero and Environmental sustainability response

We continued to embed the objectives set out in the College Sustainability Strategy and develop and implement the sustainability action plan. We made progress on implementing the Strategy but in line with the overall public sector, any some elements will require more investment by the Scottish Government to progress.

The College complied with its annual reporting requirements under the 'Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies; Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015' to submit an annual report. A copy of the latest report can be found on the Sustainable Scotland website.

In 2023-24 the College was involved in or delivered the following:

- Curriculum teams engaged in two annual exercises to audit the curriculum against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). An action plan was created to drive areas for development and these are evaluated as part of College self-evaluation and improvement activities. Engaging students in the sustainability agenda is important and green skills now feature as a mandatory part of the College's Course Design Principles. In addition, two new programmes have been added to our portfolio – Retrofit and Sustainable Heating – to support industry to upskill their employees.
- Collaborated with several key strategic partners such as EAAUC, Cycle Scotland and Home Energy Scotland to inform and support the wider College in the development of specific carbon saving/ energy reduction projects.
- Implemented the Carbon Management Plan.

- Undertaken work at the Paisley campus to replace single glazed windows and insulation of exterior. This was following the receipt of a specific SFC grant and contribution to the project by the College from our own maintenance funds.
- Green rooms have been established at each campus allowing staff and students to donate unwanted goods and to assist address food poverty.
- Sustainability messaging is now built into overall key messages being communicated by the College.

ROA CASE STUDY: **Outcomes for Social Recovery and Economic Renewal**

MEETING STUDENT AND NHS NEEDS IN PHARMACY

The West College Scotland Pharmacy Programme is designed to meet the regulatory requirements of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).

In the 2020/2021 academic year, the GPhC updated qualification requirements, requiring students to complete a PDA/SVQ over two years. This new format integrates theoretical knowledge with practical workplace assessments. Previously, students attended college for in-person teaching and assessments, which posed challenges for those living in remote or rural areas of Scotland.

To address these challenges, West College Scotland developed a hybrid learning and assessment model. Students can enter the programme at 3 points during the year rather than a single August start. Students access interactive learning materials via Moodle, which supports both the PDA and SVQ. Regular individual and group tutorials are available, offering flexibility to both students and employers. For instance, study days can be tailored to individual circumstances, and students in remote areas no longer need to travel to campus. The PDA, which was formerly delivered face-to-face over 12 weeks, has been reduced to 6 weeks under the hybrid model. SVQ assessments are conducted in the workplace by NHS staff trained by the West College Scotland team.

This new assessment approach helped mitigate obstacles NHS employers faced, such as difficulties releasing staff for college attendance, cost concerns, and conflicts with shift patterns. Previously, learners from remote areas had to enrol with training providers based in England, who were less familiar with the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework, leading to misalignment with regulatory standards.
The hybrid model offers learners flexibility to complete coursework at their convenience, with continued access to individual and group tutorial support.

The SVQ qualification has been a success, supported by an increase in the number of qualified work-based assessors and internal verifiers within local NHS Trusts, who evaluate learner competence in the workplace. West College Scotland also provides ongoing professional development and e-portfolio support, with the e-portfolio tailored to the qualification.

As of October 2024, over 200 students were enrolled on the Pharmacy programme with a success rate of 90-100%.

Overall, the Pharmacy Programme has strengthened partnerships with employers and empowered work-based assessors, ensuring the education provided remains relevant and embedded in the workplace. The quality of the Apprentices were also recognised through industry awards.

Title of Paper	Update on TQEF progress
Presented by:	Cathy MacNab Assistant Principal Performance and Skills
Recommendation:	**To Note**
Status:	**PUBLIC**

Purpose / Executive Summary:

The purpose of this paper is to provide a progress update on the implementation of Scotland's Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF).

Recommendations:

The Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee is asked to **note** the contents of the report.

Implications:	
Financial	There are no direct financial implications associated with this paper.
Student Experience	There are no student experience implications directly associated with this paper.
People	There are no human resource implications associated with this paper.
Legal	There are no legal implications associated with this paper.
Reputational	There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.
Community/ Partnership impact	There are no community implications associated with this paper.
Environment	There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.
Equalities	There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

The last meeting of the [Tertiary Quality Steering Group](#) took place on 2nd September2024, and this paper provides an update on progress since then.

The Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework consists of four main strands of work for institutions.

1 Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER)

QAA confirmed that preparatory work for the first two TQER reviews (Forth Valley College and UHI) scheduled for AY2024- 25 was currently underway.

TQER adopts a peer-led, enhancement-focused methodology, collaboratively designed with input from staff and students, and places student interests at its core. It aims to ensure the effective management of academic standards and the quality of student learning experiences, fostering both support and challenge for educational institutions.

Central to TQER is external peer review, which leverages current expertise to offer feedback, promote professional development, and ensure continuous improvement. The first phase of training for peer reviewers takes place on 12th and 13th November 2024 and consists of a small pool of experienced staff from across colleges and universities.

The [TQER Guide](#) was published on 23rd October2024 and provides information on the guidance and support for implementation of review activity.

QAA anticipate publishing the TQER schedule for the full review cycle (2025-2030) in Autumn. 2024.

2 Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP)

QAA and CDN's preparations for the first 'discovery phase' year of Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) have resulted in commencement of the first enhancement topic **Supporting Diverse Learner Journeys**.

STEP places an emphasis on innovation and problem-solving through collaborative working. This will be achieved through the collaborative enhancement projects that run during STEP's implementation phase from year 2 onwards with funding attached to these projects. In the Discovery phase, there is some institutional funding to support the creation and development of collaborative partnerships and to embed the new quality culture at an institutional level.

In the Discovery phase of STEP (AY2024-25), each college and university in Scotland will receive £3000 of funding to support engagement with STEP, plus an additional £400 to be paid to their STEP Network student member. You can find further details regarding the use and payment of funds in the guidance document attached to this e-mail.

WCS STEP Network staff member is Wendy Sheridan- Price, Head of Sector Health, Wellbeing and Care. As yet, we have not nominated a student member.

Separately, a core team of four individuals – two staff and two student STEP Topic Leads, with both colleges and universities represented in these roles – will act as key sector-level leads for STEP.

They will champion the STEP topic across Scotland and support the operational delivery of STEP, working closely with QAA and CDN, and through the STEP governance groups.

WCS has not nominated any staff for the role of STEP Topic Lead role due to the time commitment required for attendance at meetings and national engagement.

3 **Internally Led Quality Review (ILQR)** SFC expects colleges and universities to operate systems of periodic review or Institution-Led Quality Review (ILQR) across all their provision and support services. We plan to plan to review our existing WCS internal planning and review activities between January and June 2024, consider any learning from the pilot TQER, and implement a refreshed approach to our internal quality evaluation processes to realign with the requirements of TQEF.

4 **Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP)** to be submitted to the SFC ON 30th November 2024. Annex-B-Guidance-of-the-Self-Evaluation-and-Action-Plan-1.pdf

Title of Paper	Quality Report
Presented by:	Cathy MacNab
Recommendation:	**To Note**
Status:	**Public**

Purpose / Executive Summary:

The quality report presents an overview of external qualifications compliance and outcomes for students. It highlights the work of the Quality team in managing, coordinating and administering a range of activities across the college.

Recommendations:

The Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee is asked to **note** the contents of the report.

Implications:	
Financial	There are no direct financial implications associated with this paper.
Student Experience	There are no student experience implications directly associated with this paper.
People	There are no human resource implications associated with this paper.
Legal	There are no legal implications associated with this paper.
Reputational	There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.
Community/ Partnership impact	There are no community implications associated with this paper.
Environment	There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.
Equalities	There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

Performance and Skills
Quality Report

August 2024

QUALITY

Professional Standards

Qualification Compliance

Performance Data

Student Experience

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

Section 1 - Qualifications Compliance

Awarding Body Approvals

The approvals process for 2023/24 involves the quality team checking curriculum applications and making an interim judgement on status – approved, approved with conditions or not approved at this stage. The Quality Standards Committee endorses the decisions and gives final approval at the quarterly meetings. The approvals for this session were spread quite evenly throughout the departments and there were no particular areas with high requests.

A total of 24 qualification approvals were submitted for session 2023/24, and of these 19 were approved. Three requests were approved with conditions initially and 4 SCQF credit rating approvals are awaiting review. The conditions set for approvals were generally relating to items missing from the paperwork, such as Site Selection Checklist, Equality audit tools or Staff Profiles.

External Verification Outcomes and Actions

During the 2023/24 session, a total of 70 external verification activities were conducted - 48 by SQA and 22 by other awarding bodies, consistent with the previous session. Ein addition, Several visits were cancelled due to college inactivity or insufficient notice from SQA.

Over time, there has been a notable decrease in the number of "Reasonable and Minimal Confidence" outcomes specifically for SQA qualifications. Of the 48 SQA verification activities, three resulted in actions, all of which were promptly addressed and closed before the summer break.

Most of the actions identified fell under QA Criteria 4: Internal Assessment and Verification and mainly focused on internal assessment and verification processes. The college has refreshed the Internal Verification Procedure considering some recommendations and to also reflect changes in curriculum delivery including more focus on cross campus activity. It is worth noting that the outcome of national bargaining preserved terms and conditions of staff post-merger, and in WCS alone, only promoted staff could lead verification activities. This situation is changing over time as more staff are employed on new lecturer contracts, which brings us into line with the rest of the college sector and expands our internal pool of verifiers. All staff participate in verification related activities such as standardisation of assessment approaches and cross marking of student work.

This session, the majority of our external verification visits were conducted remotely. The process was notably more challenging due to ongoing EIS industrial action. With support

from curriculum teams, all verification visits were successfully completed before the summer break.

There has been an increase in on-campus visits, particularly for practical work-intensive areas. This approach has been well-received by teams and will be encouraged in future sessions. Requests for on-site visits for the next session can be requested, and early planning is encouraged for smooth coordination.

EV outcomes over the past 5 years, for all awarding bodies, are highlighted below:

Session	Successful	Requiring action
2023/24	94.3%	5.7%
2022/23	84.6%	15.4%
2021/22	99.5%	0.5%
2020/21	100%	0.0%
2019/20	88.8%	11.1%

SCQF Credit Rating Annual Audit Outcome
College credit rating process and activity is audited annually by the SCQF Partnership. The audit outcome in February 2024 resulted in actions around procedural approaches, notably a request to strengthen the independence and externality of credit rated decisions. This has been addressed through setting up a credit rating panel which is formed of curriculum staff with expertise and experience in qualification design, delivery and with knowledge of credit rating processes.

During session 2023/24 we received applications for credit rating five further programmes, one approved and four of which now at the independent vetting stage, after which, if successful, they will be placed onto the SCQF database.

SQA Exams (National Exams)
WCS presented 455 students for National Qualifications in session 2023-24, which is a decrease of 64 students from the previous year's sitting. Some curriculum areas have removed national exams from their curriculum plans as they do not add value to the student learning experience and, in most cases, are not required for further progression to work and study.

Our exam subjects this session were:
Applications of Maths N5 (All Campuses); Care N5 & H (GC & PC); Childcare and Development H (GC & PC); Economics N5 (CC); English N5 (PC); English Higher (All Campuses); ESOL N5 (CC & PC); ESOL Higher (PC); Maths N5 (PC); Maths H (PC); Psychology (GC & PC).

Year	Total sitting	Total passing	WCS Pass rate A-C%	National pass rate A-C %
2024	455	305	67.0%	69.4%
2023	519	345	66.5%	
2022	565	390	69.0%	
2021	609	518	85.1%	

Assessment Arrangements – the number of individual support interventions for national examinations in the form of scribes, special room set up, or other personalised assistance doubled in 2024 from 2023.	
2024	216
2023	108
2022	154

Supporting evidence for SQA national awards

Administration for written exams & online assessments is supported by the quality team with the exception of prelims which are managed by curriculum staff.

Session	Online	Written	Prelims
2023/24	261	64	10
2022/23	245	90	36
2021/22	224	101	29

Section 2 - Student Experience

2.1 Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

The SFC mandatory national Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) is issued in Spring annually. The SSES Data Return 2023/24 with all response rates for each category of student group is available as a separate report.

College response rates:

College overall Survey Response rates		
2023/24	**2022/23**	**2021/22**
32%	29%	28%

SSES Summary responses to individual questions show a general decrease in satisfaction, other than in satisfaction with online materials and staff encouraging independence in learning. The results are similar to the findings of Education Scotland external review in May 2024, which highlighted the development of digital resources and noted student independence in learning. Response rates which have decreased are unsurprising given the level of disruption to learning and lack of resulting through a period of prolonged industrial actions by EIS lecturers.

SSES Question Set	% Satisfaction		
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience	94.0%	95%	91%
Staff regularly discuss my progress with me	89.6%	92%	86%
Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning	97.9%	97%	97%
I am able to influence learning on my course	89.2%	93%	88%
I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning	91.7%	94%	90%
The way I'm taught helps me learn	89.6%	92%	87%
My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace	92.9%	94%	92%
I believe student suggestions are taken seriously	84.9%	87%	84%
I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff	90.3%	91%	91%
Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well	86.8%	89%	85%
The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn	86.7%	83%	81%
I feel that I am part of the college community	82.9%	85%	79%
The College Students' Association influences change for the better	56.5%	58%	50%

2.2 Complaints

Our Annual Complaints Report 2024 is published in line with the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) requirements can be accessed via the college website. Overall complaints have increased year on year for the last three sessions. In 2023-24 there were 129 complaints, a 28% increase on the previous year. Separately there were an additional 72 complaints relating directly to the resulting boycott and strike action undertaken by some EIS lecturers. We did not deal with these under our complaints handling procedure as any remedy to the national dispute was out with our control. Most complaints came from current students, similar to previous years, and we have seen an increase in complaints categorised as being related to 'staff conduct'. The nature of these complaints can vary from students perceiving to be treated differently to other class members to staff behaviours that students regard as being unacceptable. Any staff member named in a complaint is notified and we work to address any issues quickly and effectively. Our response and resolution rates continue to improve year on year.

Section 3 - Student Outcomes

Students are counted as an SFC successful performance indicator (PI) if they complete and attain an accredited qualification. The same measures are applied consistently across all colleges and the SFC publish college performance indicators annually, along with benchmarking data which can be used for comparisons.

Our post audit student 2023-24 outcomes are noted below. Increases in positive outcomes are indicated in all modes of learning other than those for part-time FE level students.

FE SCQF levels 2-6	Success Rates 23-24		22-23
	No.	%	%
Full time	2449	67.7%	67.3
Part time	6671	65.1%	69.0

HE SCQF levels 7-10	Success Rates 23-24		22-23
	No.	%	%
Full time	1747	63.8%	59.5
Part time	819	78.0%	77.0

Further analysis indicated that not all part time students had lower rates of successful outcomes, with those on, for example, short full-time courses increasing successful outcome rates to 75.9% from 69.7% the previous year.

Mainly part time FE students on shorter programmes of study have reduced success rates. Some of these programmes and students were significantly impacted by industrial action with strikes taking place on same weekdays as part time students were timetabled. Our schools and some practical courses were more seriously affected.

Not all data was available during portfolio review in September 2024, nor CPR in early October 2024. A full analysis at departmental level of all student outcomes will take place in January 2025 as part of the cycle of review and evaluation process.

Outcomes for key groups of students	2023-24		2022-23
	number	Success %	Success %
Students with a disability	2443	63.5	60.6
Students from a minority ethnic group	529	62.8	63.1
Programmes where fees are paid by the employer	1925	91.4	90.5
Lone parents receiving childcare support	68	74.7	72.4
Full Time FE students aged 20 & over receiving maintenance grants	887	73.6	71.1
Care-experienced	544	55.2	56.8
10% most deprived datazone areas	1715	63.4	61.0
20% most deprived datazone areas	2993	64.7	61.8
Carer	537	60.5	59.4

Despite disruption to learning, students with protected characteristics and those in key interest groups, experienced higher levels of success. Our Education Scotland Annual Engagement review praised our support services, and it is highly likely that our wellbeing,

advisory and academic support areas contributed to the increases. The main exception continues the trend of poorer outcomes for care experienced students, despite interventions put in place previously to dedicate additional support for these students. A new Assistant Principal Improving Life Chances has now commenced post and will help teams across the college to evaluate provision and agree further necessary interventions.

Current SFC position in relation to 2023-24 Performance Indicators
There is a possibility that the stated success rates may change. In September 2024, the SFC provided an interim positive outcome for colleges who had been affected by industrial action.

We were able to apply a positive outcome to students who had been engaging but were not able to fully complete their qualification due to industrial action and lost learning from lecturer strike days.

Most of these students successfully progressed either internally into the next level WCS course, where many will continue to catch up and complete their 2023-34 qualification. Others progressed onto HE institutions, which lifted conditional offers where results had not been available due to the EIS resulting boycott.

There is an expectation that students in this category will undertake catch up activities to compete their previous years course and qualification. It is, however, highly unlikely that students who have progressed to a higher-level course, out with our college, will return to complete their 2023-24 qualification. Similarly, some students accepted internally on to a higher-level course will not want to do further assessments to complete the lower-level qualification.

We are working with the SFC to finalise the number of students affected and the impact of any changes that may be made to the interim success outcomes.

[END]

	Learning, Teaching & Quality	
	Spring Meeting (Feb /March)	
	Standing Items	**Additional Items**
Governance:	Minutes of Previous Meeting	Main Theme:
	Schedule of Business	Curriculum Planning
	Quality Standards Committee Minute	Curriculum Strategy Progress Report
	QA Update	
	IA Reports	CIVICA / Succession Planning
Students	Student Association Report	
Learning & Teaching	ELT update	Regional Outcome Agreement
Finance / Estate/Risk		Risk
Annual Updates	Annual Updates	
Policies:	Policies:	
Strategies:	Strategies:	Curriculum Strategy Progress Report
	Summer Meeting (June)	
Governance:	Minutes of Previous Meeting	Proposed dates for following year
	Schedule of Business	Main Theme:
	Quality Standards Committee Minute	**Student Experience**
	QA Update	Student Survey Feedback
	IA Reports	IA Reports - Recruitment & Retention / Enhancement Planning/Corp Strat/Risk
		Academic Skills Development & Support
Student	Student Association Report	SA Budget Report
Learning & Teaching		ROA & SE (following year)
Finance / Estate/Risk		Risk Review
		Evaluation of Committee
Annual Updates	**Annual Updates**	
Policies:	**Policies:**	
Strategies:	**Strategies:**	Safeguarding & Student Wellbeing

	Autumn Meeting (September)	
Governance:	Minutes of Previous Meeting	Review of Remit Membership / Dates of Mtings
	Schedule of Business	Presentation:
	Quality Standards Committee Minute	**Main Theme: Digital Strategy Update and learning & teaching practice**
	QA Update	Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework
		Professional Learning
		Sustainability Goals Audit
Student	Student Association Report	
Learning & Teaching	ELT Update	
Finance / Estate/Risk		Risk
Annual Updates		ES Annual Engagement Report
Policies:		
Strategies:		
	Winter Meeting (Nov)	
Governance:	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
	Schedule of Business	**Main Theme: Performance (prev year)**
	Quality Standards Committee Minute	Draft SE Report and action plan (prev yr)
	QA Update	Student Activity & Enrolment (prev yr)
		Draft ROA (current yr) & Measurement Table
Student	Student Association Report	
Learning & Teaching	ELT Update	
Finance / Estate/Risk		Risk Review
		Alternative Income Performance & Plans
People:	People:	Professional Learning
Annual Updates		Digital (theme above)
Policies:	Policies	
Strategies:	Strategies:	Digital