



west lothian
college

Outcome Agreement 2019-22



WHERE YOU CAN

INTRODUCTION

This Outcome Agreement is an agreement between West Lothian College and the Scottish Funding Council on what we plan to achieve over the three years from 2019 to 2022, in particular in the academic year 2019-20).

It reflects priorities that emerged from extensive consultation with staff, the Student Association, employers, West Lothian Council and the college's board of governors. This consultation asked three questions:

- What kind of college do we want to be in 2022?
- What should we deliver, who to, and how?
- What do we need to do to get there?

The main themes that emerged from this consultation were that the college should:

- Ensure that all courses are relevant to industry and keep pace with developments in industry sectors
- Provide more entry level courses as a bridge to SCQF level 5 and 6 qualifications
- Deliver more in our communities to reach people who do not yet engage with the college
- Enhance our work with schools so that all teachers, parents and pupils are aware of college as a first choice destination
- Modernise our courses, resources and workshop facilities, and make more use of digital technologies in learning and teaching
- Be flexible in what, how, where and when we deliver
- Raise the profile of the college in communities, schools and amongst employers across West Lothian.

With forecasted growth in the population and the regional economy, come opportunities for growth in the college. Over the past five years, the college has delivered an increased volume of activity year-on-year and we expect this to continue given positive demographic and economic forecasts. Therefore, although the Scottish Funding Council has advised colleges to plan on the basis of no growth, we will continue to respond to demands from the region to extend our offer.

Digital technologies will continue to impact on every industry sector we serve, and on how we deliver education and skills. The college will respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by this by modernising our curriculum, facilities and ways of working. As a data driven organisation, we will understand how we are performing and where we should target resources.

Central to everything we do are our students. Their voice is critical in setting out the kind of college we want to be and the Student Association will continue to be influence all decisions made in the college.

What we aim to achieve in the next three years

Developing people

- We will have greater student success rates, higher student satisfaction and improved student destinations
- We will cater for female and male students at all levels
- We will provide a wide range of qualifications from SCQF levels 3-9
- We will have clear vocational pathways from school to college, and college to university, apprenticeships or employment

Strengthening local communities

- We will be well known and respected in all our communities and our student numbers will reflect that
- We will be an ACE aware, trauma informed and mental health supporting college

Supporting the regional economy

- We will have established centres of excellence in computing, care, childhood practice, and business
- We will be recognised by employers in the region as contributing to their success through delivering our vision
- We will have a modern curriculum that is responsive to the skills needs of the regional economy, supported by up-to-date facilities and equipment
- We will be involved more intensively in STEM activity with schools and enhance the STEM qualifications we offer
- We will integrate digital technologies and innovation across our curriculum and services for students.

Vision and Values

The college's vision to **deliver a highly skilled and enterprising workforce** is underpinned by three core values that influence how we think and act – students at the heart of everything we do, welcoming everyone, and always striving for better.

Putting students at the heart of everything we do means exactly that. Every decision we make should ultimately enhance our students' experience. Through its elected full time sabbatical president and vice president, volunteer officers and centre ambassadors, our Student Association plays a pivotal role in the college and sits at the heart of our decision-making and self-evaluation processes.

Making everyone feel welcome means that we encourage and embrace diversity, and that we are a truly inclusive college. This will drive our ambitions for the next three years.

Always striving for better summarises our commitment to continuous improvement and a culture of quality enhancement. We know where we need to do better and we will focus our collective energy on these over the next three years.

Supporting other strategic outcomes

Plans set out in this Outcome Agreement support the priorities of the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership, Scottish Government priorities on inclusive growth, widening access and addressing the attainment gap, and the Scottish Funding Council's priority of high quality learning. Relevant college, regional and national strategies are listed in Annex A.

Looking further ahead

Technological, economic, political and societal changes require the college to look further into the future – beyond annual funding and three-year planning cycles – to understand how we need to change and plan ahead. In 2019-20 the college, led by the Board of Governors, will develop a ten-year strategic plan in consultation with staff, students, community planning partners and employers.

THE NEEDS OF WEST LoTHIAN

Over a number of decades West Lothian has experienced significant economic opportunities as well as major economic shocks. In the next three years, while a period of growth is forecast, there are a range of uncertainties and likely disruptors.

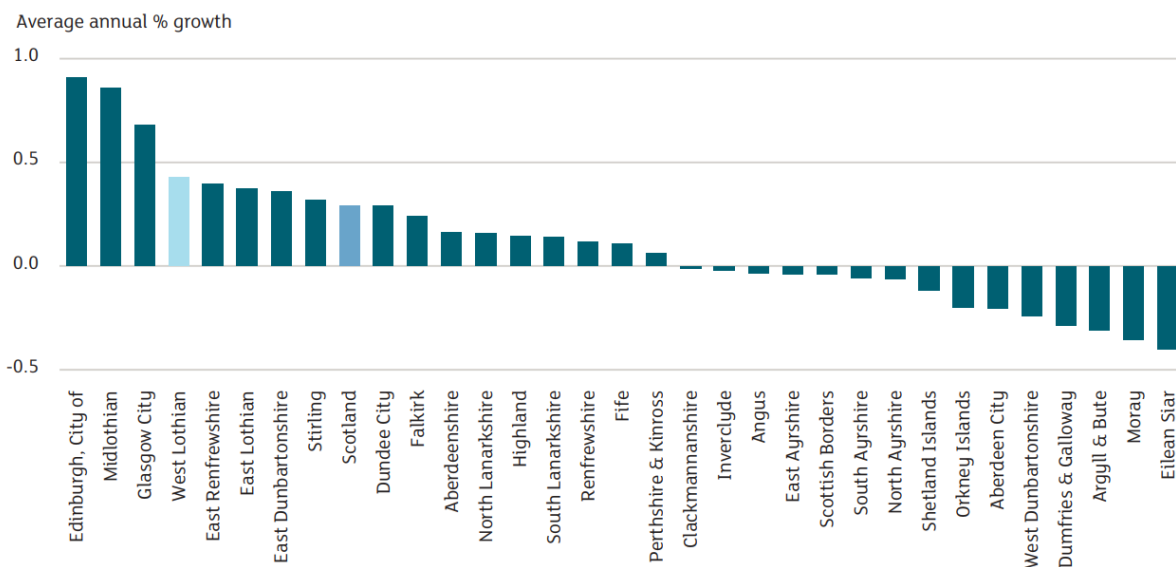
Demographic change

The population of West Lothian is over 180,000 and projected to increase by 11,000 by 2035. This college region has one of the youngest and fastest growing populations in Scotland, reflected in the growing number of students enrolling the college each year – from 6,151 in 2013-14 to 8,099 in 2017-18. The college has consistently delivered above the target credit activity agreed with the Scottish Funding Council.

Compared with other college regions in Scotland, West Lothian is forecast to experience the lowest decline in population over time. It is the only region projected to have growth in its young population over the next ten years. A very visible sign of this population growth are the major housebuilding and infrastructure developments underway across West Lothian.

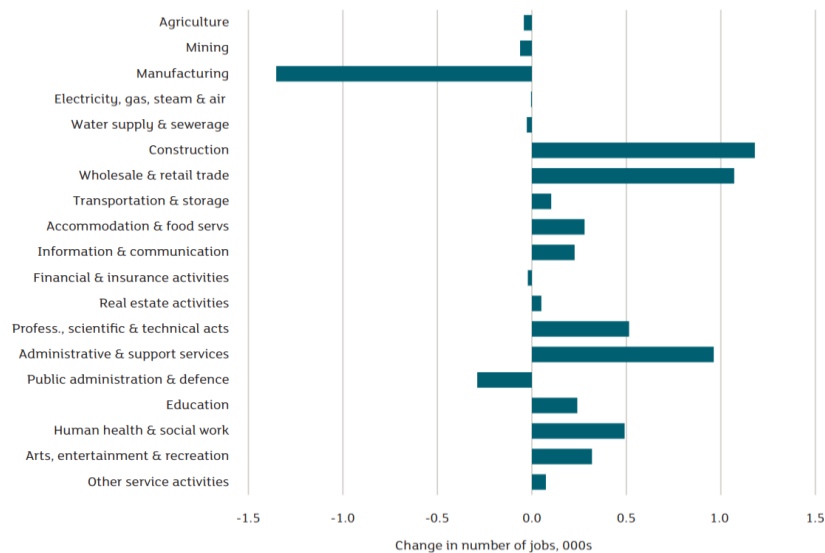
Economic forecast

The following graph (all charts in this section are from the *2018 West Lothian Regional Skills Assessment* and *Jobs and Skills Scotland 2017*) demonstrates that West Lothian’s economy is predicted to grow at a higher rate than most other local authority areas in Scotland. Between 2018 and 2028 there is predicted to be a need for 33,500 people to fill job vacancies, over ten per cent (3,600) of which will be new jobs. The employment structure over the same period is that 44% vacancies will be in higher, 22% in mid and 35% in lower level occupations.

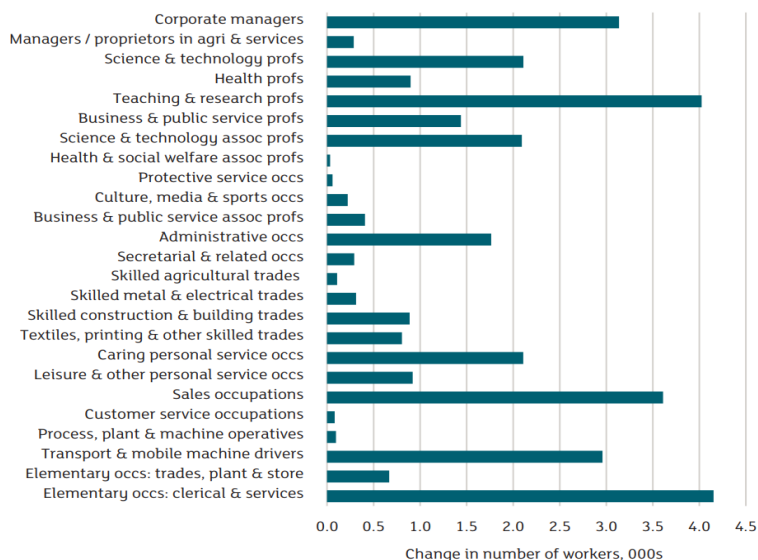


While jobs in manufacturing and in the public sector are forecast to decline over the next ten years, strong growth is predicted in most other sectors. In particular, the

construction industry will experience significant growth, reflecting the housebuilding developments underway to support increases in the population. Essentially, as demonstrated in the following chart, there will be positive changes in employment for almost all sectors – apart from manufacturing and public administration. However, despite the predicted decline in manufacturing over the long term, the sector will continue to be a major employer in the region.



In planning a curriculum that meets the needs of the region, as well as understanding how industry sectors are expected to grow or decline over the next three years, the college needs to be aware of changes and skills requirements at an occupational level. Professional skills such as management and accounting will increasingly be required in occupations in all sectors.



Retail is the highest employing sector in the region, largely comprising low-skilled and low-paid jobs. Across Scotland and the UK this sector is experiencing major challenges which undoubtedly will affect West Lothian.

School leaver destinations

In 2017-18, for the first time in three years, the proportion of West Lothian school leavers who moved onto FE and HE study was above the Scotland average. There was a particularly significant increase of 3 percentage points over the previous year in school leavers moving onto HE (at college and university). There was a similar decrease in the proportion moving directly into employment with a drop of over 3 percentage points over the year, and below the Scotland average for the first time in three years.

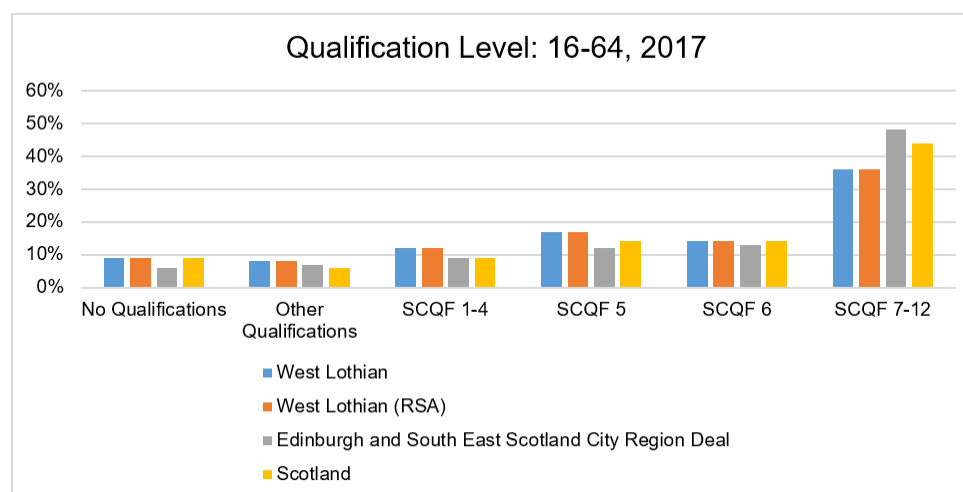
	FE West Lothian	FE Scotland	HE West Lothian	HE Scotland	Employed West Lothian	Employed Scotland	Unemployed West Lothian	Unemployed Scotland
2017-18	26.9%	26.5%	41.8%	41.1%	21.9%	22.7%	3.7%	3.8%
2016-17	26.6%	26.8%	38.8%	40.7%	25.1%	22.0%	4.8%	4.5%
2015-16	23.9%	26.6%	39.8%	40.3%	24.8%	22.3%	5.4%	5.1%

Social context

While West Lothian has lower rates of adult and youth unemployment than the Scotland average, pockets of long-term unemployment persist, particularly in communities in former mining towns. The proportion of students enrolled at the college who are resident in SIMD10 postcodes increased significantly in 2017-18, demonstrating that we are reaching more people in communities affected by multiple deprivation. This will be a priority in the next three years.

Skills levels and requirements

The Regional Skills Assessment for West Lothian forecasts that the highest proportion of job openings in the next ten years require skills at SCQF level 7 and above. Given that only 36% of the adult population has qualifications at these levels, it is essential that people are able to achieve qualifications like HNCs and HNDs to be able to take advantage of higher value, more secure jobs.



The college will therefore support a range of pathways to higher education including:

- Part time HNC study for senior phase school pupils
- Moving into HNC study straight from school
- Progressing from FE qualifications to HNC, and
- Part time learning in work through work-based SVQs or evening HNC/Ds.

ACCESS TO ALL

The college will contribute to Scottish Funding Council's ambition for a more equal society by ensuring that learning is accessible and diverse, attracting and providing opportunities for people of all ages and from all communities and backgrounds.

Access and Inclusion

The college is committed to maintaining a culture of equal rights and equality of opportunity where all staff, students and partners are treated fairly and equally, and with respect. We value diversity and aim to foster good relations, and eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment of any form, including gender-based violence. The college will continue to make progress on mainstreaming equalities in our work.

Equality and diversity

The college progresses this work through our *Access and Inclusion Plan*, *Equalities Policy and Procedure*, and *Equalities Action Plan*. These set out our direction on ensuring services and courses are open and inclusive for all, and that we attract and meet the needs of people from all backgrounds.

Support for learning

A dedicated team of well qualified, proactive and experienced staff meet the needs of individual students. Students are encouraged to disclose specific needs when they join the college, and increasingly before they enrol. Support is personalised to facilitate learning and attainment, and is available during the day and out of hours to support part time students. Our *Support for Learning* team provides a high quality service, evidenced by our above average sector success for students living in areas of multiple deprivation, care experienced students, and students with a declared disability. Individual plans are developed in consultation with students, and these plans are shared with teaching staff to inform strategies for retention and attainment. Student progress is monitored throughout the year by named *Support for Learning* staff. Investment in 2019 in assisted technologies for learning support will enhance this support service further.

Poverty/SIMD10

An increasing number of our students come from areas of multiple deprivation (SIMD10). Many find committing to full time study a serious challenge because of precarious financial circumstances. Levels of poverty and homelessness amongst our students are rising and exacerbated by the roll-out of Universal Credit. We make use of established partnerships with a range of external organisations to support student mental health, and provide financial and housing support.

The college is working collaboratively with the Student Association to support students in need to enable them to remain on course and achieve qualifications that will help them achieve improved life circumstances. In collaboration with the Student Association the college is supporting free or reduced price food options for students, and has rolled out access to government-funded free sanitary products. The Student

Association has introduced *Welfare Packs* for students unable to afford basic hygiene products.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

The proportion of students declaring mental health problems is increasing each year and, despite significant collaborative effort from staff and the Student Association, the college is struggling to provide the support required with limited resources. We look forward to access resources for the mental health counsellors committed by the government which will enable us to significantly enhance our support for students.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Agreement

The Student Association has engaged with the government's *Think Positive* project and developed a *Student Mental Health Agreement* which has been endorsed by the National Union of Students Scotland and recognised by SPARQS (student partnership in quality Scotland).

As well as a range of campaigns throughout the year to promote strategies for good mental health and wellbeing, the Student Association has introduced a range of excellent initiatives to support students struggling with mental health. For example, following a successful pilot in 2018-19, in partnership with the college, they will roll out their RECHARGE initiative to support students with mental health problems. Students can self-refer and will be supported to look after themselves, for example through advice on diet, exercise and how to be mentally healthy.

Promoting Wellbeing Strategy

The college's *Enhancement Plan 2018-21* includes a high level action to develop a *Health and Wellbeing Strategy* which will complement the *Student Mental Health Agreement* and cover students and staff. A staff experience group has been established to work on improving working practices and staff mental health, and the health and wellbeing strand of this group consists of relevant staff across the college who contribute to supporting good mental health and wellbeing for students and staff. This group will contribute to the development of our *Health and Wellbeing Strategy*. We will build on the bronze accreditation for *Healthy Working Lives* we achieved in 2019.

The college will engage with the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) *Connect* project through which we will support students to transition from school to college. The SAMH mental health coordinator will be located with the *Support for Learning* team and will engage with college staff to provide an additional layer of support for all students to promote positive mental health.

Mental Health First Aid

The Student Association offers *Mental Health First Aid* training to fifty students each year. In 2018-19 the college rolled this out to staff who were asked to volunteer to become Mental Health First Aiders. Following a very good response, staff who volunteered will be undertaking training during 2019-20. Mental health awareness training is offered to all employees through staff development events through the year. This includes a range of mental health training events and online training packages on suicide awareness and prevention.

Diet and healthy weight

In support of the goals in the government's diet and healthy weight delivery plan, the college has put in place a number of initiatives to support staff and students. The Student Association promotes a range of health initiatives to students throughout the year and, having already achieved 4 Stars for the *Healthy Body, Healthy Mind* award, is working towards 5 star accreditation. The refectory and training restaurant offer staff and students gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan and low-fat options on a daily basis. And the gym and fitness studio is open over lunch and evenings for staff and student use.

Becoming an ACE-aware, trauma informed college

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are now recognised as having a potentially negative impact on an individual's future development. It is evident that an increasing number of our students have experienced ACEs in childhood and young adult life, and the college will work with them to build resilience to enable them to achieve their goals.

We will become an ACE-aware, trauma-informed college in 2019-20. All staff will undertake training to understand what ACEs are and what this means for their professional role. The West Lothian ACEs Hub presented to all college staff in February 2019, following which the college joined the Hub and is now the host venue for Hub meetings. All Childhood Practice lecturers and managers, and some work based assessors took part in the inaugural *Making Scotland the World's First Ace-Aware Nation* conference. Following that, they led dissemination sessions for curriculum and support teams across the college, helping to build an increased level of awareness of ACEs to respond to students with a more informed perspective. Understanding of ACEs is being built into some full time and work based courses in care and early years.

We are in a unique position in the college sector to contribute to Scotland's ambition to be an ACE-aware nation. Through the Children's Hearings Scotland Learning Academy (CHSLA), our trainers develop the skills of thousands of panellists across Scotland. Our CHSLA trainers have considerable understanding of ACEs. They developed and deliver online ACEs courses to children's panel members across Scotland, and support workshops for college staff developed around a screening of the widely respected *Resilience* film.

Gender

Tackling gender imbalance

The college's *Gender Action Plan* aims to address gender imbalances on identified courses and in our staffing complement. We use data analysis proactively to monitor gender balance on all courses and review performance on retention and attainment. Human resources recruitment and selection data is analysed to assess gender balances in job applications and to recruit higher numbers of female staff into male dominated roles and male staff into traditionally female dominated roles.

A particular challenge for the college in the next three years is to achieve a more even balance of full time female and male students, in particular at FE level. Our strategic review of the curriculum and *Gender Action Plan* will take this into account.

The *Gender Action Plan* links to work being carried out by the West Lothian Regional STEM Hub to attract women into traditionally male dominated courses. It also relates to work to attract male students onto childcare courses, for example through implementing the *Men in Early Years* project funded by the Scottish Funding Council.

The college will continue to ensure that staff undertake unconscious bias training, and the Board of Governors is working with *Changing the Chemistry* to make progress on achieving the government's 50/50 ambition for gender balance on boards.

Gender-based violence

The *Equally Safe in Higher Education* toolkit has informed the college's gender action planning, and our *Enhancement Plan for 2018-21* includes an action to develop and implement a gender-based violence action plan as part of our equalities work. The Equalities Committee will approve, monitor, review and report on progress on the action plan to senior management and the Board of Governors.

The White Ribbon Scotland campaign aims to end violence against women by men, through getting more men to speak out against domestic abuse and sexual violence. The Student Association worked with White Ribbon in 2018 to promote awareness amongst students through participation in its *16 Days of Action* campaign. Similar activity will be included in the annual calendar.

Care experience

The college's *Corporate Parenting Plan* guarantees an interview to all applicants who declare as care experienced. Where students disclose as care experienced on enrolment, the college puts support in place to enable them to progress successfully and achieve positive outcomes. This has proved very effective with above sector average success for care experienced students.

We engage with *Who Cares Scotland* and *CELCIS* in our work with care experienced students, the college is represented on the Scottish Funding Council's *Care Experienced Governance Group*, and we are involved in the *Care Experienced, Estranged and Carers East Forum*. The college will continue to review its *Corporate Parenting Plan* to ensure that enhanced support is put in place for care experienced students. We will continue to provide training to staff on what it means to be a good corporate parent.

The college will continue to work with West Lothian Council's *Inclusion and Wellbeing Service* to support young people who are care experienced, or on the edge of care experience, and not in full time education at school. Bespoke courses will develop their confidence in planning next steps when moving onto college or employment. This annual provision will be modelled around the three key areas of employment, resilience and academic qualifications.

Estranged students

Estranged students are identified and supported through referrals to the *Support for Learning* team and receive the same level of support as other students who identify additional and/or specific learning or guidance needs. The college will adopt the

Stand Alone pledge, which helps educational institutions develop support to enable estranged students to stay resilient.

Carers

The college recognises that some students will have caring responsibilities and seeks to identify those students through the admissions process. Where students disclose, the *Support for Learning* team assists them through personalised support to ensure the best chance of a successful outcome. The college will review the *Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award* to guide our work. We will support staff who are carers through family-friendly and flexible employment practices.

Other Protected Characteristics

Disability and additional support

The college supports disabled students and staff well, as evidenced by above sector average successful outcomes for students who declare a disability. Job applicants who disclose a disability are offered a guaranteed interview and are well supported through reasonable adjustments if appointed to a post. Students who disclose a disability are referred to the *Support for Learning* team who will develop a support plan with them relevant to the nature of their disability. The Equalities Committee ensures that disabilities are fully considered and reasonable action taken to ensure every student has an equal chance to succeed.

For the second year in a row 100% of participants on our Project Search programme for young people with additional support needs achieved a positive destination. Students leaving school who have been in a supported learning environment benefit from a transition period which can be well supported by progressive full time college courses that enable students move onto opportunities including employment or volunteering.

British Sign Language (BSL)

The college has embraced the government's British Sign Language (BSL) strategy and engaged with BSL users, community partners, Deaf Action and Advance HE to develop our BSL Plan which is available in written and signed form on our website. As the government strategy rolls out there is likely to be a greater demand for BSL, and the college will report on outcomes for BSL users and on progress of our plan through the Equalities Committee.

Ethnicity

The college celebrates diversity and monitors performance indicators for ethnicity through statistical reporting to the Scottish Funding Council. Our Equalities Committee includes ethnicity in equalities action planning and the college has engaged with Advance HE's *Scottish Race Equality Network* to inform and guide activity.

LGBT

In partnership with the Student Association, the college aims to achieve LGBT Charter status in 2019-20. The LGBT Charter has been developed to support organisations to undertake training and review policies, practice and resources to make sure that we are as inclusive as we can be. All managers and key staff participated in training delivered by LGBT Youth Scotland in 2018-19 and training will be available to all staff throughout 2019-20. The college will continue to be involved in West Lothian PRIDE, hosting the annual rally on campus and supporting a range of activities.

Strengthening communities

Veterans

The college is represented on the West Lothian Armed Forces Covenant and we will explore signing the covenant during the period of this Outcome Agreement as a way of acknowledging and understanding that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society. People leaving the Armed Forces are looked after by the *Careers Transition Partnership* and able to access learning credits for skills development. Length of service determines the value of learning credits awarded to the individual. To be able to accept those credits for training, the college will seek to sign up as a provider for the Ministry of Defence's *Enhanced Learning Credits Scheme* which promotes lifelong learning amongst members of the Armed Forces. We will engage with the Armed Forces employment charity which supports veterans into jobs, with a view to including them when we recruit future staff.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

The college has a strong partnership with West Lothian Council's ESOL team with an agreement that all students are levelled using a common assessment prior to commencing an ESOL course. The council delivers conversational, intermediate and basic courses. Those levelled at National 2 or above study ESOL at college. All college courses are certificated and we are working towards certificating community courses.

Full time ESOL courses have been very successful with 93% completion and over 92% moving into a positive destination. We aim to build on this success by introducing new units or awards to help students prepare for employment or progress on to higher education, for example through study skills sessions for those progressing to HE and work-based units for those seeking employment (eg manual handling training for those moving into the care sector).

Schools ESOL for S1-S6 pupils has been successful and we aim to do more here in the next three years. For example, we will support students to take on volunteering role to support peers on a lower level award, combining ESOL learning with curriculum activities including sport. We will introduce an annual ESOL summer school.

Employability

In 2019-22, the college will focus its employability efforts on three particular groups:

- Those who are long term unemployed with basic literacy and numeracy skills. Working with the council's *Adult Learning* team we will identify hotspots where people are supported with basic skills, with a view to enhancing and developing these skills to enable individuals to move onto the next stage.
- School non-attenders who need an alternative approach to education that prepares them for employment. Students will be supported in a workplace setting to reduce negative learned behaviours associated with school.
- Working with the Department for Work and Pensions to help people who are close to the labour market take advantage of current employment opportunities as they arise by providing training and confidence building so that they are ready for work.

The college will make use of our training restaurant to support the need for staff in the hospitality industry by offering short courses to meet industry needs. This will be of particular importance given the challenges that employers in this sector are likely to face as a result of BREXIT.

Helping communities benefit from inclusive growth

We will work with community planning partners, community development trusts and local employers to improve the opportunities of people in communities that face additional economic, health and social barriers to move into sustainable employment. Forward planning with the council's *Adult Learning and Regeneration* teams will focus on local economic needs, with training planned and delivered as required. The college will design, develop and deliver training as required by community planning partners.

15-24 Learner Journey

Progression to university

The college has a wide range of articulation agreements in place to allow students to progress to university with advanced standing from almost all Higher National qualifications delivered. We are represented on the Regional Learner Passport group which seeks to achieve seamless progression through two workstreams – one on articulation routes, the other focusing on application processes. Discussions will continue to extend the availability of advanced standing to ensure that this is accessible to all HN students so that they have a choice of degree and university at the end of their time at college. The college is working in partnership with schools to ensure that the senior phase subject choices are compatible with school to college to university progression. Over the next three years we will increase the number of universities with which we have articulation agreements.

Delivering degrees at college

The partnership between the college and Edinburgh Napier University to deliver year three of the BA Business Management is now in its tenth year, and over 300 students having studied the third year of the degree on our campus. Student numbers are increasing and many join the degree from commercial courses offered

at the college, such as ILM Certificate in Management at SCQF level 9. By 2021-22 we plan to build on this model to introduce a further two degree courses taught at college, with entry from successful students enrolled in our part time and evening courses, as well as through the traditional HND route.

SUPPORTING THE ECONOMY

The college will contribute to a more successful economy and society with well prepared and skilled students progressing into jobs with the ability, ideas and ambition to make a difference.

This Outcome Agreement aligns with and contributes to the high priority outcomes of the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23 – to improve the employment position in West Lothian, and improve attainment and positive destinations for school pupils. The college has an important role in supporting individuals and businesses in the region and beyond, and in doing so contributes to inclusive economic growth in our communities. We aim to be the training partner of choice for businesses in the region and will achieve this by:

- Establishing long-term strategic partnerships with employers through a range of engagement activities
- Ensuring the college is easy for industry to engage with and our processes facilitate collaborative working
- Developing a college-wide approach to working with external partners, supported by training to develop relevant key skills and abilities of our staff
- Playing a proactive role on important regional economic and community forums.

Partnership working

The college contributes to a number of regional groups to support inclusive economic growth – including the *Economic Partnership Forum*, the *Working Together Group*, *Jobs Task Force*, the *Chamber of Commerce*, *Job Centre Plus* and the *DYW regional employer group*. Leaders of our early years curriculum are engaging proactively with the *Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative*. The college currently works with over 800 employers and aims to engage with 2,020 by 2020. The college was involved in the early stages of development of the *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal*, and is a key partner in the two largest skills projects (construction and data driven innovation) through which we are working to maximise skills and employment opportunities for the people of West Lothian.

Strategic Curriculum Review

The college's curriculum has evolved in response to regional and national priorities, and our students achieve consistently high levels of positive destinations. However, although there have been improvements in student outcomes over the past three years, more needs to be done to enable more of our students to succeed. The region is changing and the college needs to provide the skills necessary to help deliver inclusive growth, raise productivity and competitiveness, and meet the challenges presented by demographic, environmental and technological change. It is critical that our curriculum portfolio comprises courses that meet regional and national priorities, and address current and forecasted skills gaps.

During 2019-22 the college will increase substantially the number of employers we work with. Employers will have a major influence in modernising our curriculum to ensure it is fully aligned with individual, economic and community need. We will ensure that each of our curriculum centres uses market research intelligence and

data effectively, and that employers play a pivotal role in course design. The college will work with employers, the council, schools and universities to build a coherent and collaborative curriculum that helps address current and forecast economic needs, and enables individuals to progress easily in education or employment. We will embed comprehensive career management skills across our curriculum with a focus on ensuring that students have both the vocational and generic essential skills that employers value.

This strategic review of our curriculum will result in:

- A curriculum that complements senior phase provision in schools
- More articulation agreements with universities to shorten the learner journey
- An increase in the proportion of male students
- More people who are furthest away from education or employment being supported by the college, and an increase in the number of students achieving a positive destination
- Further increases in work-based learning provision with more part time courses to support people in work, as well as those who have been out of education for a long time
- A reduction in the number of employers in the region reporting challenges in the filling vacancies due to lack of skilled candidates
- The establishment of employer advisory groups for each of our curriculum centres which will review and future-proof our qualifications.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

West Lothian's school/college partnership is led strategically by the council's *Education Services* and the college is a member of the council's *DYW Steering Board* and the *DYW Regional Employer Group Board*. In support of *Opportunities for All*, the college works with partners to ensure that all young people in West Lothian have the chance to realise their entitlements – whatever their individual needs and wherever their learning takes place – to progress into a guaranteed positive and sustained post-16 destination in further or higher education, training or employment.

Senior Phase Vocational Pathways

The college has a very strong partnership with the region's eleven secondary schools. Our *Schools and Community Planning Officer* liaises directly with council lead officers and depute heads in each school. Vocational pathways are available to all secondary schools, including courses specifically tailored for disengaged pupils that focus on essential life and employability skills. To ensure effective planning of our schools vocational portfolio, the college attends all timetabling meetings.

The college has a strong suite of vocational courses delivered part time to S4-S6 school pupils. Based on a well-established school/college partnership agreement, the college provides over 400 senior phase school pupils with access to vocational qualifications, national qualifications and Foundation Apprenticeships. We aim to increase that to over 600 pupils by 2022.

With a focus on increasing the number and range of STEM qualifications to provide young people with the skills necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century, our schools portfolio is reflective of the regional economy. Most courses for school

pupils are taught at college, although some lower level courses for pupils who have disengaged from formal education are taught in the community. We offer a *School Link* programme where pupils with additional educational needs attend college over three taster days, and *Schools Transition*, a half day a week course over the academic year for school leavers from special education schools. We also offer a transition programme one morning a week for young people in their final year of school who are on the autistic spectrum and looking to apply for a full time mainstream college course the following year.

In support of the aims of *DYW* and the *15-24 Learner Journey* recommendations, we will continue to work with the council to review existing planning processes to ensure that we have a comprehensive and responsive regional vocational portfolio that meets the needs of pupils and the economy. Initial work towards this resulted in the recent joint submission to significantly expand the region's Foundation Apprenticeship provision.

Foundation Apprenticeships

The college was an early adopter of Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) which enable senior school pupils to gain industry-relevant college qualifications and related work experience, at the same time as working towards mainstream qualifications at school. The next three years will see the college, the council and the *DYW* regional group collaborate further to enhance Foundation Apprenticeship delivery and embed it in the wider senior phase offer.

The college is the focal point for the FA programme in West Lothian, although delivery will take place at the college, in schools and through third party training providers. This will introduce efficiencies, provide access to expert knowledge and provide a wider choice for students. In 2019-20, nearly 200 pupils will embark on Foundation Apprenticeships across seven distinct frameworks. Many of these FAs will be delivered in schools and most will be available for shorter one-year delivery which will open these qualifications up to S6 pupils. Over the next three years, the college will build up to FA starts to 260 in 2021-22.

Higher National Certificates

The college is supportive of shortening the learner journey for young people progressing to university and is now in the sixth year of delivering Higher National Certificates (HNCs) to S5/6 pupils. Successful attainment of two Highers plus HNC enables pupils to articulate into the second year of some Edinburgh Napier University degrees. In 2019-20 the college will review with the council changes in demand for these higher education qualifications to be delivered to school pupils. As we progress our strategic review of the curriculum, we expect to expand our HNC offering for senior phase pupils over the period of this Outcome Agreement.

Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP)

SHEP is a Scottish Funding Council programme to help schools with few pupils going on to higher education. Focused on S3 to S6 pupils it supports regional collaboration between schools, colleges and universities to raise aspiration to higher education. The college has performed well in relation to the percentage of students from our SHEP schools enrolled in full time HNC/D courses.

We work with all schools to raise aspirations and promote progression to higher education. There are three West Lothian schools in the *SFC Outcome Agreement Technical Guidance for 2019-20* identified as SHEP schools – Armadale Academy, Inveralmond Community High and Whitburn Academy. We will continue to work closely with these schools to raise awareness amongst staff, young people and their parent/carers of the benefits of the college route as a pathway to higher education through HNC/D courses. The college is a member of the *SHEP Management Group* and works closely with partners.

Ensuring ongoing improvement

There are challenges which impact on delivery and the outcomes of pupils engaged in college courses. These particularly relate to logistics and competing priorities for the young people and their schools. For example, each school has an individualised prelim timetable which leads to interrupted delivery from November to February each year. We are working with the council to further develop joint planning on a three-year cycle. An important aspect of this will be to ensure improved approaches to curriculum. In addition to DYW, the *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal*, and the *Forth Valley and West Lothian Improvement Collaborative* will influence decision-making. The college embraces the opportunities presented by the regional improvement collaborative and will support fully its collective focus to driving continuous and systematic improvement, particularly in relation to closing the poverty attainment gap.

In summary, the college's strategic priorities for school/college partnership working over the next three years are to:

- Develop bespoke provision to support pupils at risk of a negative destination
- Work in partnership with schools to improve transitions to college for pupils with additional support needs
- Ensure that SCQF level 4-5 schools provision aligns with progression to a Foundation Apprenticeship or full time college course
- Increase the range of Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks available to school pupils
- Extend delivery of SCQF level 7 provision through increasing the range of HNC qualifications offered to school pupils
- Work with the council to eliminate potential duplication of learning and ensure valuable progression routes for young people.

Collaborative working and engagement with schools

As part of the college's commitment to support senior phase pathways, enhance vocational skills and career prospects, a number of activities take place throughout the year to raise awareness and encourage applications for schools courses. Increased engagement between the college's curriculum centres and schools will continue, for example by assisting with the training of primary and secondary teachers in areas such as STEM, and schools being involved in influencing what college provision is offered to school pupils. Our shared aspiration with the council is to produce a well-aligned, seamless vocational curriculum between school and college that supports progression, avoids duplication and results in a senior phase curriculum designed with young people at the heart. Increased engagement between

teachers and lecturers to enhance delivery to students will be an important part of this.

Employer Engagement

The college has a wide range of relationships with external organisations, employers and West Lothian Council. Aligned with a single local authority has enabled the college to develop close relationships with all council departments at a senior level. Our involvement at strategic and operational levels in West Lothian's DYW regional group and Chamber of Commerce provides further routes through which we are able to work in partnership with employers. The *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal* and recommendations in the *Skills and Enterprise Review Board's* strategy provide added impetus for us to work in partnership with external stakeholders.

Our ambition is to engage with 2,020 businesses by 2020 to ensure that every full time student has a work based experience. Responsibility for employer engagement is distributed across all curriculum centres, supported by a central resource. Enhanced engagement and collaborative work with employers will:

- Inform and improve the design and delivery of our course portfolio
- Integrate vocational learning through collaboration that links education and work, and provides students with work-based opportunities to develop essential meta skills, knowledge and understanding
- Improve learning and teaching, and attainment
- Develop those who are already in work to progress their careers
- Provide businesses and their staff with the skills, knowledge and qualifications that they need to remain competitive
- Contribute to career long professional development of college staff through industry updates and experiences.

Early Learning and Childcare

The college delivers high quality learning and teaching in early years through innovative approaches and our commitment to professional development. Our curriculum is designed in conjunction with employers, making it modern and relevant for students to enter today's workplace. In collaboration with the council's *Early Learning and Childcare* team, the college supports the *Forth Valley and West Lothian Improvement Collaborative's* ambitions for early learning and childcare. We have significantly increased provision of HNC Childhood Practice courses to meet the Scottish Government's expansion targets set out in *Early Learning and Childcare for 2020*, reflecting our strategic commitment to continued growth in this area and ensuring that future workforce demands can be met.

An important college and government driver is to ensure that workforce planning recognises the vital contribution that men working in early years can make. The college was successful in securing one of only two *Men in Early Years Challenge Fund* projects (funded by Scottish Funding Council) to challenge the perceptions of young men and address potential barriers to career choices in early years to attract and increase the number of male students studying childhood practice courses.

The *National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare* set out the government's commitment for access to outdoor play opportunities for children in early years settings. Learning outdoors is fundamental for children to thrive and the college is incorporating this into our strategy for growth in 2019-20 with the development of a forest classroom on campus. The new learning opportunities supported by this will be of particular interest to young men in early years, and the forest classroom will be built with support from male students in construction and trades.

Modernising our STEM Curriculum

Over the period of this Outcome Agreement, the college will intensify its work on STEM. Our curriculum portfolio will offer a broader and deeper range of qualifications in engineering, computing, construction and science – including increasing the range of modern and foundation apprenticeships on offer.

Digital

It is well known that the number of jobs for digital workers in Scotland is predicted to increase each year, and that digital technologies will continue to impact on all sectors of the economy. The college offers an excellent range of computing courses, mainly at SCQF levels 7 and 8 (matching the predicted skills profile required of people working in this sector for the next ten years), all of which have articulation arrangements into years two and three of relevant degrees at Edinburgh Napier University. In 2019-20 we will launch a new Cyber Security Academy, a bespoke facility with the latest technology housed in a modern learning environment. Working in partnership with experts in the field of cyber security, we will host a launch conference aimed at computing students and local businesses. Courses offered through our Centre for Cyber Security include HNC Cyber Security in 2019-20 and HND Cyber Security in 2020-21. Courses covering software and web development will continue, using current programming languages such as Python, and the college aims to introduce data science qualifications by 2021-22.

As part of the *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal* (through the Data Driven Innovation Gateway project) we will increase the number of students gaining data literacy skills at SCQF levels 5/6 so that they understand data analytics, databases and data visualisation. The college will work with other colleges included in the City Deal to develop a suite of courses that enhance the digital skills of a range of groups including those furthest away from education and employment, women returners, and those currently employed and in need of re-skilling.

Construction

The construction sector in West Lothian is forecast to grow over the next ten years, most imminently in Winchburgh which will see the building of thousands of new houses, two new schools and major transport infrastructure. With further investment likely through the *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal*, high levels of retiring employees in the sector over the next few years, and the impact of BREXIT, it is essential that the college is able to develop the sector's workforce to meet increasing demands.

The current supply of labour and skills in the region, while increased in recent years, is not sufficient to meet future needs in term of volume or current and future skills. Additionally, the nature of skills demand is changing with new construction techniques, offsite construction, and digital technologies driving a change in the skills demand for new entrants and the existing workforce. The college needs to innovate our curriculum offer to meet these skills needs. As a partner in the *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal*, we have helped develop the Housing Construction and Infrastructure Skills Gateway, through which we aim to introduce specific site skills, shorter courses, quicker entry to work and upskilling courses to meet the oncoming demand in the construction sector. These jobs and shorter training periods are likely to be particularly helpful to disadvantaged groups.

There is greater demand for specific trades than there are people with the necessary skills. While the expansion of offsite manufacturing will change skills requirements of the sector, demand for skills in the traditional trades will remain. Course design will change to include emerging technology and support those in the industry requiring upskilling to train in the technical elements of offsite manufacturing. Over the next three years the college has an ambitious plan to meet the current and developing needs of the industry. We will improve workshop facilities for the trades to enable us to deliver courses in the context of more realistic working environments. All trades apprenticeships will be developed in synergy, making use of the same workshop spaces and following a construction industry timeline where each skill is introduced into the working environment at the right point. This will provide a pipeline of on-demand plumbers, joiners, brick workers, painters and decorators, electricians, kitchen fitters, dry wall liners, tilers and roofers. With this flexible approach to delivery we will be able to increase student numbers to suit the demands of the industry.

Engineering

A priority over the next three years is to balance employers' requirements for hands-on engineering courses with the need to support articulation routes to university engineering degrees. Engaging more with employers in West Lothian will ensure a demand-led engineering course portfolio which supports a range of progression routes. Our current full time engineering courses include the skills most in demand from local employers – in particular, mechanical and electrical engineering. To support growth in these areas, in the next three years we aim to install a welding workshop and a testing laboratory. These will enable the college to offer HNC Fabrication and Welding, and a higher quality learning experience for students on other engineering courses. Over the next three years the college plans to grow full and part time engineering provision, with a growing focus on apprenticeships and short course provision for engineering companies.

Automotive Engineering

Technology in the automotive industry has advanced significantly in recent years and college courses need to reflect these developments. Work has already begun to shape the future of the college's automotive engineering curriculum. Courses that are no longer fit for purpose have been removed and development is underway to deliver qualifications that will service a wider range of the industry. The college has developed strong relationships with a range of employers to provide a pipeline for apprenticeship and placement opportunities in the automotive sector. Although in the

early stage of development, the college and industry partners are working on a three year plan to develop training opportunities. As this work develops the college will look for opportunities to meet demands in the market for the new technologies in the automotive industry.

Supporting the National STEM Strategy

The college was revalidated as a STEM Assured college in March 2018. On securing this accreditation in 2015, we established and led a STEM Advisory Group comprising employers, schools, universities and the DYW regional group. Members of this group contributed to curriculum design, staff development of school teachers, and work experience and articulation opportunities for students. In September 2018 this group was reconstituted as the Regional STEM Hub for West Lothian, with the college identified as the lead by the Scottish Funding Council.

Regional STEM Hub

The aims of the Regional STEM Hub are to:

- Raise the profile of STEM with young people, families, communities and adult learners by working with partners to provide a coherent range of activities and programmes to build engagement with STEM and STEM skills at local and regional level
- Facilitate and enable more professional learning, networking and discussion between school, college and university STEM practitioners and employers at local and regional level, complementing and linking with practitioner career long professional learning being offered through other actions in the STEM strategy
- Facilitate and enable more joint curriculum planning for STEM across schools and colleges locally and regionally including helping schools develop a STEM curriculum, connected to labour market need, working closely with the new regional STEM Advisers for schools.

Through the West Lothian STEM Hub, the college is working with stakeholders to establish a regional approach to the development and promotion of the national STEM strategy through a regional development plan. Priorities in this plan will reflect the six high level changes that the government expects to see as a result of the national strategy:

1. Increases in the proportion of people taking part in STEM related learning, engagement, study and training across all sectors – including school-level qualifications participation in apprenticeships
2. Increased practitioner confidence in STEM learning in early years, primary years and in community settings, and increased engagement in STEM professional learning opportunities
3. Significant reductions in equity gaps in participation and achievement in STEM learning, engagement, study, courses and training across all sectors in relation to gender, deprivation, rurality, race, disability and for care leavers
4. Increased numbers of people who understand the benefits and value of STEM for themselves, their families and their communities
5. Increased collaboration between schools, colleges, universities and employers

6. Increased employment in STEM-related occupations and employers are more satisfied with the STEM skills and capability of the people they employ from schools, colleges, universities and as apprentices.

Working with schools

Over the next three years, we will continue to work in partnership with schools to support a range of STEM activities and increase demand for our courses. Activities will include:

- Organising the STEM Skills Olympics, supported by funding from the Dalyell Trust, in which all West Lothian primary schools compete in heats at their cluster secondary schools with the winners competing in the final at the college
- Supporting the *Construction and Built Environment Challenge Competition* for S1/S2 pupils, in partnership with the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust
- Organising the *Bloodhound Rocket Challenge* for primary and secondary pupils
- Hosting *Big Bang Near Me*, a national initiative where pupils take part in activities such as bridge building, battery building, forensics and fitness testing
- Hosting the regional heat of the FIRST LEGO League competition
- Working in partnership with the DYW regional group and the council on the Step into STEM event aimed at 300
- Organising large scale *Girls in STEM* events for P7/S1 pupils in partnership with SmartSTEMs.

Tackling gender imbalance in STEM

The college will continue to tackle gender imbalance in STEM by raising awareness, influencing influencers, encouraging applications to STEM courses from girls and women, and celebrating positive female role models. Much of this activity will focus on late primary and early secondary school pupils in partnership with Regional STEM Hub members and organisations such as SmartSTEMs.

Work Experience, Placements and Volunteering

The college aims to engage with 2,020 businesses by 2020 to ensure that every full time student has a high quality workplace experience that enhances their learning experience and develops their employability skills. Significant progress has been made on this. We will continue to add value to courses through contextualised learning and practical skills development such as enterprise and entrepreneurial activities, simulated work environments within the college such as the salon and restaurant with paying clients, employer-led master classes and work placements. The college will continue to work collaboratively with the council's *Education Services* and the DYW regional group to develop a coherent approach to work placement opportunities for our students.

Work experience and placements

Most full time students benefit from high quality work experience, placements and industry engagement opportunities. The college will continue to increase the number of students benefiting from this. All Foundation Apprenticeships delivered by the college contain significant elements of work experience. As well as a work placement carried out at an employer's premises, foundation apprentices undertake an industry

challenge, take part in visits to companies and attend sector events. The college collaborates with the council and DYW regional group on sourcing high quality work placements for foundation apprentices. We use the same software system, *Workit*, as the council which facilitates a collaborative approach, cuts down on paperwork and enhances communication and understanding between the college and the schools.

Volunteering

Over the last two years the college has developed the range of volunteering opportunities available to students. Our partnership with the West Lothian Volunteer Network allows us to tap into over 250 local organisations to provide a range of relevant work placements for students while providing additional resources to these organisations. The college will continue to host the Volunteer Network Awards celebration at which many of our students are recognised for their volunteering. Students with additional learning needs also have opportunities across college to volunteer and this will increase over the next three years in college and with external partners. Care and early years students are offered the opportunity to volunteer with the assisted learning team to support students' learning.

International exchange visits

A range of well-established international partnerships offers students and staff exciting opportunities to enhance their learning through educational exchanges. Subject to the successful procurement of funding from programmes such as *ERASMUS Plus* we will enable up to 150 students each year to participate in a fully funded international visit involving work experience or collaborative learning. These experiences have a significant impact on retention and attainment and provide an additional dimension to the learning experience.

Work-based Learning

Delivering Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) in the workplace

A key priority of *Working Collaboratively for a Better Scotland* is that colleges should have a stronger emphasis on work-based learning, and the quantity and quality of our work in this area will continue to grow over the next three years. The college has a dedicated *Centre for Workforce Development* which upskills 1,000 staff in over 600 businesses each year in West Lothian and across Scotland. Recognised by the SQA as a market leader in the delivery of SVQs in the care sector, we deliver work-based qualifications across a range of sectors to meet regulatory and industry requirements. The college's work-based learning portfolio is designed in response to employer requirements, and takes full account of local and national labour market intelligence to ensure qualifications meet their needs. Understanding the critical importance of staff development to support inclusive economic growth and create sustainable careers, we will continue to offer SVQs in workplaces from SCQF level 4 to 10.

Apprenticeship Family

The college has been a strong supporter of Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) since it piloted them in 2015. In 2019-20, we will work with all West Lothian schools to achieve an ambitious target of around 200 starts, increasing to 260 starts per year from 2021-22. The college works collaboratively with the council and the DYW regional group to ensure its FA programme is fit for purpose. Pupil demand is linked to future employer need and the availability of suitable work experience opportunities. The college recognises the importance of pathways from foundation to modern apprenticeships and will ensure that there are clear progression routes for foundation apprentices.

The college is currently contracted directly by Skills Development Scotland to deliver Modern Apprenticeships across eight frameworks to achieve 70 new starts in 2018-19. We aim to increase apprenticeship starts by 20% each year in the three years from 2019 to 2022, and anticipate growth in the childcare, engineering, health and social care sectors. The college has supported Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) apprenticeships for three years and is now firmly established as part of the SECTT family. Our ambition over the next three years is to double the number of electrical apprentices supported from 50 in 2018-19 to 100 in 2021-22. We will extend our support for construction apprenticeships through the CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) and seek to develop a relationship with SNIPEF (Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation) to introduce plumbing apprenticeships.

Flexible Workforce Development Fund

The Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) continues to provide the college with opportunities to develop relationships with larger employers in the region and to provide excellent opportunities for the upskilling of staff to support growth at both a personal and corporate level. The college has developed its FWDF suite of courses to meet employer needs and the focus in 2019-20 will be on short courses which will also be available for delivery on companies' premises. Our FWDF courses have received excellent feedback and there are strong pathways in place for individuals to articulate to further development through other part time courses at the college. The FWDF has helped to enhance the way the college works with large companies in the development of their workforce. Positive feedback has led to companies engaging with the college more to provide work placements, industry challenges and apprenticeships, and engage in the development of our curriculum. The priority over the next three years will be to focus on bespoke training for companies.

ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

The college will contribute to a national culture of enterprise and innovation leading to a more productive and sustainable economy.

The college has a track record of responding to opportunities and pioneering innovative practices in the sector. We piloted Foundation Apprenticeships in 2015 and have been delivering HNCs to school pupils for six years. Most recently, we were awarded two projects funded by the *College Innovation Accelerator Fund*.

During 2019-22 we will maximise opportunities afforded by innovation funding streams to enhance employer engagement and facilitate knowledge exchange to help deliver inclusive growth. We aim to continue to be an early adopter of new approaches to curriculum design and delivery. Working with partners, we will leverage opportunities brought about by the *Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Regional Deal*, in particular those related to digital and construction skills.

FUTUREquipped

The college was successful in two submissions to the *FUTUREquipped Colleges and Innovation Centres Pilot* fund. This collaborative project supported the government's vision that by 2020 everyone will be able to live longer and healthier lives at home or in a homely setting through supporting the skills development of the future workforce in the health and care, and construction sectors. We will build on the outcomes achieved through these projects of enhanced staff capability and knowledge, and insights gained into current leading edge research and industry practice.

Bridge2Business

We will build on our excellent collaboration with Young Enterprise Scotland's *Bridge2Business*, an interactive and engaging programme to inspire, connect and support college students into business. *Bridge2Business* offers students opportunities to engage with entrepreneurial role models who have successfully set up their own businesses, and connects students with networks that exist in Scotland to support start-up businesses. Students can bid for a small grant to help test out their business ideas, and match successful applications with a mentor from a local business to help them progress with their business ideas.

Learning and teaching

Many courses include enterprise units, involving students in work placements or simulated activities that develop enterprise and innovation skills for employment. For example, Business and Creative students engage in enterprise projects to develop business planning, project management and events management skills.

In 2018-19, the college invested in resources to help develop new ways to support learning and the delivery of qualifications. Informed by visits to schools, other colleges and universities, we converted an existing classroom into a new collaborative learning suite. This has received very positive feedback from both students and staff. We invested in a new digital production platform to support our creative industries courses.

In collaboration with the NHS and health care suppliers we created a combined learning and skills healthcare suite that incorporates a simulated hospital ward. This will be enhanced further in 2019-20. In 2019, to integrate outdoor learning into our childhood practice curriculum, the college will create a forest classroom on campus.

To support innovation in other subjects the college needs to modernise learning and teaching facilities, IT and resources, particularly in economically critical areas such as engineering, construction and digital. In 2019-20, staff development activity will focus on digital technologies for learning and teaching, and to support effective application and enrolment processes.

Improved structures for engaging with employers and industry sectors will ensure that we design and deliver our curriculum portfolio in new and innovative ways, supported by industry-standard resources.

Supporting Business Productivity

We will further develop the courses available through the Flexible Workforce Development Fund to enhance the availability of training which will promote productivity, efficiency and innovation in the workplace. For example, we currently offer SVQs in Business Improvement Techniques through the fund.

HIGH QUALITY LEARNING

The college will contribute to an outstanding system of learning where all students are progressing successfully and benefiting from a world-class learning experience, in the hands of expert lecturers delivered in modern facilities.

Students at the Centre

The Student Association plays a vital role in evaluating the quality of learning and teaching in the college through its SPARKLE evaluation toolkit (for which it was shortlisted for SPARQS and NUS Scotland awards in 2019). This has resulted in changes to college processes, delivery of learning and support for students.

As well as evaluating the student experience, the Student Association has self-evaluated its own performance and governance in 2018-19 to ensure sustainability of capturing and acting on the student voice. The Student Association will publish a strategic plan in 2019-20 which will align with objectives and targets set out in this Outcome Agreement.

How Good is our College?

The college graded itself as *Good* for each of the three themes (outcomes, leadership and delivery) set out by Education Scotland in *How good is our college?* These grades were endorsed by Education Scotland and SFC. Our ambition for the next reporting period in 2020-21 is that we will achieve *Very Good* grades. A Quality Enhancement Steering Group comprising Education Scotland, SFC, the Student Association and senior college managers will monitor progress towards this ambition. To achieve our aims the college will engage with best practice to improve the learning experience and overall student outcomes. In particular, we will take account of learning from the sector's attainment project, including the application of quality improvement techniques.

Enhancement Plan 2018-21

More needs to be done to enable as many students as possible to achieve the qualifications they aspired to when they started college and the college's *Enhancement Plan 2018-21* includes a number of actions to support continued improvement in student outcomes on all courses. Each curriculum area has set specific targets for improvement and progress will be monitored throughout the year. Actions in our *Enhancement Plan for 2018-21* are grouped around four themes – curriculum review, attainment, data quality and usage, and IT infrastructure and estates development. Progress on the college's 3-year Enhancement Plan will be reviewed by the Learning and Teaching Committee.

Student attainment

Overall success in 2017-18 for West Lothian students who studied over 160 hours was 74.7% compared to the sector average of 74.0%. Successful outcomes for students who lived in SIMD10 areas, who were care experienced, who declared a disability and who were BME were all above sector average. The college also had

above sector average success rates for students on courses offered as part of senior phase vocational pathways

However, there were marked differences in student success on full time courses. Over the year, while successful outcomes for students improved for all modes except for HEFT, the college was below sector average for all modes except for FEPT. The actions set out in the *Enhancement Plan* will help to improve student outcomes.

It is important to recognise that success is measured in other ways. For example, the *College Leaver Destinations 2016-17 Report* demonstrates that West Lothian College students had the highest rate of positive destinations (97.3%) of all other college regions outside of Glasgow and the lowest rate of negative destinations (1.8%) of all regions. And the *Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey* results for 2017-18 showed that, for almost all questions, our students demonstrated greater satisfaction than the sector average.

Professional Standards for Lecturers

Following the publication of the refreshed *Professional Standards for Lecturers*, the college will integrate the standards into recruitment, induction, lesson observation and personal learning review processes in 2019-20.

HIGH PERFORMING, SUSTAINABLE INSTITUTION

Financial Stability

As a result of reclassification by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the college has to break even on a resource basis on a fiscal year, and on income and expenditure on a financial year basis. There is therefore little scope to carry forward surpluses to future years. The college's latest five-year Financial Forecast Return indicates increasing deficits over the next five years if grant-in-aid and credit allocation remain static until 2021-22 then decrease in 2022-23. Delivering a balanced budget will be challenging in the current fiscal climate given higher staff costs from the impact of national pay bargaining, increasing pension contributions, funding nationally agreed pay awards, and uncertainty over the financial impact of a return to a volume times price funding methodology.

Alternative Income

The college has a good track record of bidding successfully for contracts, and the contribution from these commercial and project activities has enabled some investment in the curriculum since ONS reclassification. We want to grow and diversify our non-SFC income streams so that we are resilient to market changes and able to invest further to support the college's future development. Underpinning and supporting this work will be the college's strategic approach to generating alternative income, including identifying opportunities through educational trusts and sponsorship.

To be able to capitalise on market demand and opportunities, from 2019 to 2022 we will further develop our commercial training portfolio with a strong focus on key economic sectors and associated workforce development opportunities. We will seek to make the most of the skills and capabilities we have gained in delivering the *Children's Hearings Scotland Learning Academy* contract to gain additional training contracts of scale.

Working with employers, we will develop and expand the number and range of apprentice frameworks and the number of apprentices we support. Through our work on the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) the college now has access to large workforces across the region.

Data Quality and Usage

Our *Student Systems* team made considerable progress in 2017-18 to improve the quality and reporting of data, and will continue on this improvement journey over the next three years. In 2019 the college will roll out the business intelligence tool, PowerBi, to all managers, which will enable them to access and interrogate real-time data in a visual format. This will support more informed, evidence based decision making. Following a pilot in 2018-19, we will introduce *Student Advantage* to all students so that they can easily access critical information at any time, from any device. Over the period of this Outcome Agreement, the college will explore the use

of predictive analytics to identify students at risk and target efforts and resources accordingly.

IT Infrastructure

In 2018 Edinburgh Napier University carried out a review of the college's IT infrastructure and recommended a range of actions. The immediate priority is to address security and network weaknesses to ensure that our digital infrastructure is safe and secure, and work will be completed in 2019 to achieve this, supported by strategic funding from SFC.

The college's IT infrastructure is dated with a significant number of computers and mobile devices that are more than five years old. This is restricting lecturers in the creative application of technology in learning and teaching, and is impacting negatively on student attainment. After initial investment in 2019, the college's strategy over the next three years is to seek funding for a significant programme of investment and modernise our digital infrastructure.

Estate

The college's estates maintenance grant is used to fund an annual programme of lifecycle maintenance. The fabric of the building has been well maintained and a build-up of backlog maintenance avoided. However, in 2018-19 the college received a 46% cut in actual funding and, if this is sustained over the next three years, it will be challenging to find sufficient resources for the required level of lifecycle maintenance investment now that the campus buildings are nearly twenty years old. Given the capital allocation for the college in 2019-20 announced by the Scottish Funding Council in May 2019, this will be particularly challenging.

While the fabric of the building has been well maintained, there has been no significant reconfiguration of learning spaces since 2001 and there is a now and urgent need to upgrade student-facing areas, update vocational workshops and modernise classrooms. The college is working on an infrastructure plan for the period 2019-22 which will require significant investment. The immediate priority is to reconfigure the building in which all student support services are located to improve the facilities for our *Support for Learning* team who deal with our most vulnerable students, create a modern learning resource centre, and bring together student-facing services (such as funding, admissions, learner support and the Student Association) to provide a one-stop shop for students.

Feedback from students through the Student Association's evaluation process confirms that reconfiguring and modernising curriculum facilities and work spaces is essential so that the college has fit for purpose, flexible and effective learning environments that are acknowledged by employers as relevant to their industry, and that meet the needs of our students. Our engineering and construction workshops and equipment are dated and in major need of updating, and our training kitchens, fitness suite, and hair and beauty salons all require upgrading.

We expect that this will cost over £1 million. However, the college does not have the financial resources to achieve this. ONS reclassification means that we are not able to enter into a loan agreement on commercial terms and unable to retain cash

surpluses. The college will seek advice from the Scottish Funding Council on how to access the funding required for the essential maintenance of our campus buildings, and improvement in our facilities to support student retention and success.

Cyber resilience

The college will achieve Cyber Essentials+ accreditation to ensure that our IT infrastructure is as safe and secure as possible.

Shared Services

Strong partnership working with West Lothian Council has resulted in a number of shared services. The college has access to the council's integrated payroll and HR system, and the council now processes our payroll. In addition, we have a shared data centre with the council and a dedicated IT resource who provides first line server support for the college.

Environmental and social sustainability

The college has a five-year *Carbon Management Plan* covering the period to 2019-20 that aims to reduce its carbon emissions baseline by 10% which equates to a reduction of 144 tonnes of CO²e and a saving of £33,000. The college has already delivered on the plan and will exceed this target. Over the next three years work is being done to embed sustainability into the curriculum and to develop a new plan covering the period 2020-21 to 2024-25.

People

The college's *People Strategy* sets out how we will ensure we have staff with the right skills to achieve our vision to deliver a highly skilled and enterprising workforce in West Lothian. The strategy is structured around the following key themes and goals:

- Recruitment and Retention – attracting and retaining a highly skilled workforce
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing – providing a safe and healthy working environment
- Learning and Development – developing a highly skilled workforce with agility and commitment to develop their skills further, particularly in areas of growth and demand such as STEM and digital
- Reward – attracting and motivating our staff with an attractive reward offer, including pay and non-pay elements
- Engagement – encouraging and motivating our people to be actively engaged with the aims of the college, with opportunities to contribute to future direction, decision making and the community of the college as a whole
- Employee Relations – being guided by the *Staff Governance Standard*, working in partnership with trade unions, ensuring that our people are well informed, involved in decisions which affect them, and are treated fairly and consistently
- Equality and Diversity – welcoming to all, supporting, encouraging and developing our people regardless of background, respecting and promoting diversity.

ANNEX A – KEY STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PLANS

West Lothian College

- Access and Inclusion Strategy
<https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/media/3181/access-and-inclusion-strategy.pdf>
- Corporate Parenting Strategy
<https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/media/1423/corporate-parenting-plan-june-2016.pdf>
- Gender Action Plan
<https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/media/1421/gender-action-plan-2017-18.pdf>
- STEM
<https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/media/2672/wlc-stem-manifesto-07-print.pdf>
- BSL Plan
<https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/media/2741/west-lothian-college-bsl-plan-2018-2020.pdf>

Community Planning Partnership and Regional Skills Assessment

- West Lothian Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
[https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/17003/West-Lothian-Local-Outcomes-Improvement-Plan-2013-2023/pdf/West Lothian Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2013-2023.pdf](https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/17003/West-Lothian-Local-Outcomes-Improvement-Plan-2013-2023/pdf/West%20Lothian%20Local%20Outcomes%20Improvement%20Plan%202013-2023.pdf)
- West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy
[https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/28356/West-Lothian-Anti-Poverty-Strategy-2018-2023/pdf/West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018-2023.pdf](https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/28356/West-Lothian-Anti-Poverty-Strategy-2018-2023/pdf/West%20Lothian%20Anti-Poverty%20Strategy%202018-2023.pdf)
- Regional Skills Assessment for West Lothian
<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44979/west-lothian-summary-report.pdf>

Scottish Government and National Agencies

- Developing the Young Workforce: Youth Employment Strategy
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-young-workforce-scotlands-youth-employment-strategy/>
- STEM Education and Training Strategy
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/science-technology-engineering-mathematics-education-training-strategy-scotland/>
- A Blueprint for Fairness: Final Report of the Commission on Widening Access
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/blueprint-fairness-final-report-commission-widening-access/>
- 15-24 Learner Journey Review
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/15-24-learner-journey-review-9781788518741/>
- Working Collaboratively for a Better Scotland
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/working-collaboratively-better-scotland/>



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