Curriculum Quality and Student Experience Committee Name.

Updated Paper 19th October 2023

Future Skills Strategy (2020 -2025) Progress Paper

Introduction

Borders Colleges Future Skills Strategy (2020 - 2025) was launched in May 21. The strategy sets out how we will respond to regional and national priorities. Engagement with our stakeholders (internal and external) is key for the success for the implementation of this strategy.

Background

Board members were provided with information (September 22 & October 22 & June 23) pertaining to our Global Citizenship campaign for staff and students. Our Global Citizenship campaign has realised success and there have been a number of Global Citizenship Award Ceremony's. This paper provides board members with a progress update on our five main priority objectives & how we measure these. This strategy aligns to our Business Growth & Engagement Strategy.

Progress update October 23

There are five main priority actions within the strategy

Progress Update on priority actions

Priority Action	Progress (June 23)	Progress Oct 23
We will create industry leading learning programmes that are relevant, flexible and accessible for our customers	➢ Introduced a number of short courses that meet industry need such as local food production, ground source heating, PDA health care ➢ Enhanced our curriculum offer to address regional and national demand (E.G. - Introduction of IMI Level 3 Auto Engineering, E-sports, Find your Vibe) ➢ Represented at key regional and national committees to ensure our position is central to funding opportunities and timely responses to national reviews.	➢ Realised success for ___ funding in the feasibility study to create a construction space for retro fit in construction ➢ Enhanced representation on subject specific network groups to ensure curriculum is relevant to the region
We will ensure every student develops their digital skills to enable them to succeed within the workplace.	➢ All FT students receive a digital device at the start of academic term ➢ Borders College is part of City Regional Deal (Data Driven Innovation) and most students undertake a data unit as part of their course ➢ Our Digital pathfinder has enabled a completion of 'mapping and gapping' for the Borders region. This has seen the development of bespoke courses to 'upskill and reskill' our workforce. ➢ All Full-time students receive support on online learning platforms to enhance skills required for the workplace	➢ All Full-time students have received their digital devices and induction ➢ Increased numbers of students undertaking data science as part of their full-time course ➢ Introduced a number of flexible courses to 'upskill' within the work place ➢ Involved local employers in research-based initiative to establish the digital skills required within the health & social care workforce to enable

		curriculum development
We will ensure every student understands and is able to contribute to good sustainable practice	➢ All students have undertaken 'Sustainability and me' unit ➢ Our respect campaign focuses on individual responsibility on sustainability ➢ Sustainability is embedded throughout many full-time courses and discussed at course team meetings and self-evaluation meetings.	➢ Student Association participates actively engages in sustainability committee to enhance a shared responsibility in the drive to net Zero ➢ All students engage in sustainable practices in food courts
We will raise awareness of global practice through a programme of joint events with international partners who are recognised for excellent practice	➢ Planned joint CPD activity with Centennial college & Borders College staff planned for August 23 ➢ 12 Students visiting Canada as part of Touring project	➢ Winners on international Green Gown Award ➢ Finalist for Apple Gown Award
We will develop meta-cognitive skills of our students through a range of applied and contextualised learning opportunities	➢ Introduced a 'Find your Vibe' course ➢ Contextualisation of core-skills in courses to enhance the learning experience and student outcomes ➢ Investment in course equipment to enhance learning (EV farming vehicles, immersive classroom) ➢ College was represented at word skills event ➢ Provided students with resilience training at beginning of academic term which impacted with a reduction of early withdrawals	➢ Student induction focused on 'Responsibility' 'Thrive & Survive' 'Resilience' & 'Respect' (All part of our Global Citizenship Campaign)

We will actively promote a curriculum that is relevant for all	➢ Piloting a new curriculum calendar that has 'Progress & Achievement Weeks' ➢ Introduced new Curriculum Planning as part of Pro-solution whereupon curriculum planning aligns to needs of the region and provides pathways and opportunities to residents within Borders region and beyond. ➢ Recently launched our new joint prospectus with SRUC	➢ Enhanced Curriculum Planning' that aligns to regional need

Performance measures

Performance Measure	Progress June 23	Progress Oct 23
Borders College will have success rates within the top quartile compared to the sector *(Please note this data is released by SFC on an annual basis)*	**Full-time Further Education (SCQF Levels 1 – 6)** For two of the past three academic sessions Borders College were in top quartile and above sector average for all three years. **Full-time Higher Education (SCQF Level 7 and above)** For two out of the last three academic sessions Borders College were within top quartile apart from session 19/20. which was a result of Global Pandemic and remain above sector average in performance. *(Please note - Data has yet to be released from SFC for academic session 21/22)*	While Action Short of Strike (ASOS) inhibits us from identifying final Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for session 2022/23. Estimates indicate we continue to achieve within top national quartile

Borders College will have high levels of employer satisfaction and will improve these annually by 2%	This has been achieved and both curriculum teams and Department of Enterprise and Business Innovation team engage with employers through a variety of employer forums & employer surveys. This session we realised an increase in employers engaging in both forums and surveys. Our recent Education Scotland review highlighted our approach to employer engagement as sector leading. Surveys completed with employers have demonstrated high & increased levels of satisfaction	No further employer satisfaction reports have been distributed since June 23
Borders College will have high levels of student's satisfaction and will improve these annually	Our student satisfaction surveys have reflected a drop in overall satisfaction rates. The main reason for this, is, at the start of this academic session, our college had limited appointed student representation within our Borders College Students Association (BCSA). We have addressed this, by, employing a full-time Student Association Support Officer and working with BCSA in the appointment of three paid Student Vice Presidents. The impact has been more engagement with our students and an increase in the election of class representatives. BSCA have worked tirelessly throughout this session in enhancing the student voice.	For academic session 2022/23. Borders College Student Association (BCSA) were instrumental in the promotion of students engaging with national surveys in order to bench mark student satisfaction rates nationally. Delighted to report satisfaction rates have returned to 94%
Borders College will maintain levels of positive student destination	Our MIS staff completed a significant amount of work in collecting data from our students from academic	While ASOS impacted on students achieving their award, students'

	session 2021/22. It is reassuring our college have maintained levels of positive student destinations.	destinations to university increased by 2%. Progressing students i.e. students wishing to progress at Borders College were not adversely impacted and offered a place of their preferred course. Articulation agreements and regular meetings with our University partners have enhanced articulation agreements and destinations for our students (e.g. we now have articulation with Abertay University for E-sports and Articulation to Podiatry with Queen Margaret University. Our Further Education Partnership Agreement (FEPA) with Skills Development Scotland has made a positive impact on referrals to our 'Find Your Vibe' programme

Implications and Considerations

The introduction of curriculum planning has enabled curriculum teams and senior leadership team to make informed decisions pertaining to what we offer to the region we serve. This has been reflected with strong employer feedback and engagement.

We were aware our student satisfaction rates were dropping. This academic session our college have invested in our Student Association. We have employed a full-time Student Association Support Officer. We have appointed three student elected student vice-presidents.

Financial Implications:

By offering a curriculum that is relevant to regional and national need, our college have exceeded our credit target. This ensures we met the requirements of our Regional Outcome Agreement with SFC and financial forecasts and cost value of credit allocations are met.

Learner Implications:

Our learner voice is critical to our success and planning. This academic session we have invested (both financially and through a variety of CPD sessions) in our student's association. We will continue to work with BCSA to ensure our student satisfaction levels improve. Work has already begun on next academic sessions induction weeks and BCSA have completed a brilliant piece of work to ensure the student voice is represented and hence shapes induction.

Equality and Diversity Implications/Equality Impact Assessment:

Our Equalities mainstreaming report was presented & approved by board in February 23 Equality-Mainstreaming-Update-Report-2021-23.pdf Student stories within this report reflect satisfaction on our approach to equality & diversity.

This academic session, our people services team along with our equality's officer have developed 'Inclusive Leadership Training' sessions. All leaders within the college have undergone this training, with themes such as, The Equalities Act and implications for FE, what is an Inclusive College? And more.

All policies, producers and strategies at Borders College undergo an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure inclusiveness.

A 'quiet induction' was established this academic session for our students who find induction an overwhelming experience. This is being proposed for 2023 College Development Network (CDN) Awards under 'Inclusive College' category. It was also highlighted as sector leading from Education Scotland,

- The following video documents the reflections of our student ambassadors who volunteered during the supported enrolment sessions. Both students have lived experience of a disability.
  https://youtu.be/fJKEjpkofTw

- The following video was shared with students and staff ahead of our supported enrolment event.
  https://youtu.be/nDFqfYZCPPQ

Staff Implications:

Our staff have demonstrated commitment to the implementation of the strategy. Staff engage in regular sessions to review and enhance our curriculum offer. This

commitment has been reflected in two positive Education Scotland reviews (December 22 and May 22) with no recommendations from both reviews noted.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates how we continue to meet most of our targets set within the Future Skills Strategy. It is acknowledged our student voice and satisfaction rates dropped and from the start of this academic session, all teams within the college set out to address this matter.

Recommendation

It is recommended board members receive an update on this strategy in May 24.