

## **Performance, Curriculum and Quality Update**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER**

#### **For discussion**

- 1.1 To provide members an update on our KPI and credit position for AY 2024/25.
- 1.2 To provide members an update on the quality enhancement and assurance activities undertaken throughout the college.

### **2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **2.1 Key items:**

- Review of KPI's
- Review of 2024/25 Credit Position
- Review of 2025/25 Recruitment
- Quality Assurance update
- Quality Enhancement update

- 2.2 In AY 23/24, except for part-time HE learners, there has been an improvement in learner success in all areas.
- 2.3 Withdrawal rates have improved in all modes and level from the same time last year, with the college retaining over 144 students more in comparison. Recorded reasons for leaving remain consistent, with Returning to School the most common reason recorded overall and an increase in Full-time students leaving for personal/domestic reasons.
- 2.4 The college has currently achieved 99% of allocated credits. The remaining credits planned to be delivered before the end of the session will take us slightly over our threshold.
- 2.5 Overall applications for AY 25/26 have increased by 16% compared to the same time last year.
- 2.6 Between 15 January 2025 and 15 May 2025, the number of upheld complaints has decreased compared to the same period last year.
- 2.7 All External Verification (EV) activity taken place to date has received no actions.
- 2.8 Good progress is being made in the observations process, and it is expected that all observations planned for 24/25 will be completed as planned.

- 2.9 Feedback from our Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) was largely positive, highlighting good practice in a number of areas, with some suggested data to include in future SEAPs.
- 2.10 In 22/23, more Borders College leavers went on to achieve positive destinations, continuing to study or finding work, than we see nationally. More continued their studies than we see nationally, and of these 6% went on to study at university. More than half of leavers stayed in the college sector.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION(S) REQUIRED**

- 3.1 I recommend that the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee agree that the college is making good progress against targets.
- 3.2 I recommend that the Curriculum Quality and Student Experience Committee agree that the Quality team are continuing to maintain and exceed standards by supporting continuous improvement.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

### **4.1 Credits**

- 4.1.1 SFC provides teaching funding to colleges that undertake to deliver a specified volume of activity measured in 'credits' (1 credit is equivalent to 40 hours of learning). Borders College have been allocated 23891 credits in AY 2024/25, which is the same as the previous year.

### **4.2 KPI's**

- 4.2.1 Teaching activity is measured through the following set of performance indicators, and published by SFC annually:

Total Withdrawal: Indicates the student withdrew from their studies before the programme ended.

Partial Success: Indicates that the student completed the programme but did not gain the qualification.

Learner Success: Indicates that the student has completed the course year successfully.

### **4.3 External Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

- 4.3.1 As part of the governance framework for further education colleges in Scotland, we are required to participate in external reviews by a range of external organisations. These include:

- QAA Scotland (new from AY 2024/25)
- Scottish Qualifications Authority
- Scottish Funding Council

### **4.4 Internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

- 4.4.1 Internally, as part of our robust quality assurance procedures we undertake internal audits, reviews, surveys, and focused meetings throughout the academic year to gain invaluable feedback to ensure our students learning and interests is at the heart of everything we do.

## 5.0 REVIEW OF KPI'S

### 5.1 AY 23/24 Learner Success

5.1.1 With the exception of part-time HE learners, there has been an improvement in all areas:

Measure	22/23	23/24	Variance
FTFE	68.3%	70.0%	1.7%
PTFE	75.2%	81.9%	6.8%
FTHE	65.6%	67.6%	2.0%
PTHE	87.3%	82.8%	-4.5%

### 5.2 AY 24/25 Withdrawals

5.2.1 Withdrawal rates across all modes and levels are currently lower than they were at this time last year. Earlier in the session, we observed an increase in part-time FE withdrawals due to lower total enrolment in these courses compared to last year. However, this has now stabilized and is trending below last year's levels.

Total Withdrawal					
Mode	Level	23/24 at 15/05/24	24/25 at 15/05/25	% Variance	Variance (No. of students)
FT	FE	21.7%	13.6%	-8.1%	-59
PT	FE	9.3%	6.1%	-3.2%	-64
FT	HE	18.8%	15.6%	-3.2%	-13
PT	HE	10.9%	4.3%	-6.6%	-8

5.2.2 Returning to School continues to be the most common reason for leaving, with Personal/Domestic, Poor Attendance and Mental Health Issues as the next most common reasons recorded for leaving overall:

Withdrawal Reason	%	No. of Learners
Returning to School	21%	68
Personal/Domestic	20%	65
Withdrawn by College for poor attendance	12%	38
Mental Health Issues	12%	38
Entering Employment	8%	26
Work Related Issues	7%	22
Poor Physical Health	6%	19
Unknown	4%	14
Leaving Current Employer	3%	9
Finance Related	2%	6
Withdrawn by College for poor achievement	2%	5
Dissatisfied with College Course	1%	4
Other Carer Support Issues	1%	4
Transport Related Issues	1%	3
Childcare Issues	1%	2
Pregnancy	1%	2

5.2.3 The following table provides a breakdown of the most common reasons for withdrawal by mode and level:

<b>FTFE</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of Learners</b>
Personal/Domestic	24%	33
Withdrawn by College for poor attendance	20%	28
Mental Health Issues	18%	25
Entering Employment	13%	18

<b>FTHE</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of Learners</b>
Personal/Domestic	30%	9
Mental Health Issues	13%	4
Work Related Issues	13%	4
Entering Employment	10%	3

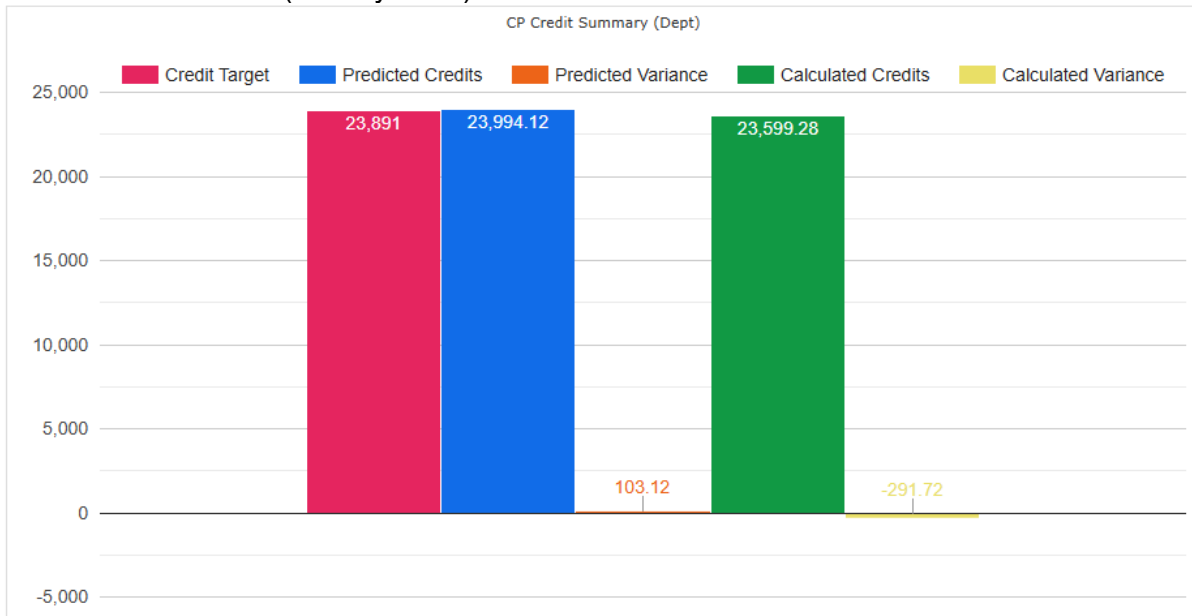
<b>PTFE</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of Learners</b>
Returning to School	43%	65
Personal/Domestic	14%	21
Work Related Issues	11%	16
Poor Physical Health	7%	11
Mental Health Issues	6%	9

<b>PTHE</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of Learners</b>
Personal/Domestic	40%	2
Leaving Current Employer	20%	1
Work Related Issues	20%	1
Unknown	20%	1

## 6.0 REVIEW OF AY 2024/25 CREDIT POSITION

- 6.1 To date, we have generated 23,560 credits, representing 99% of our credit threshold. Considering the planned delivery for the remainder of the session, we expect to achieve 100% of our credit threshold.

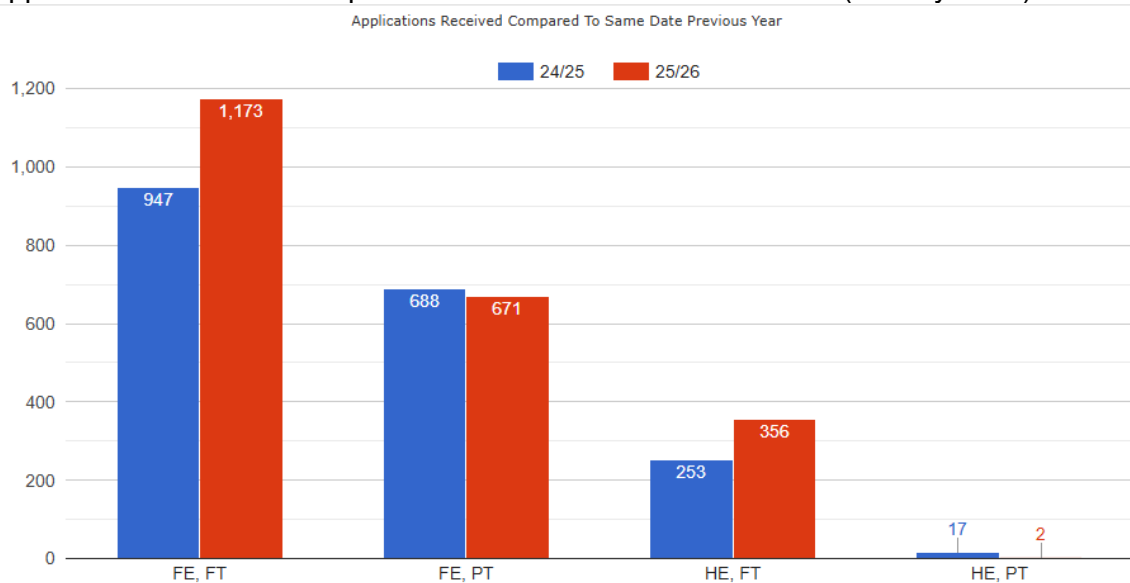
### 24/25 Credit Position (15 May 2025)



## 7.0 RECRUITMENT 2025/26

- 7.1 As of 15 May 2025, overall applications have increased by 16% compared to the same time last year. Full-time FE applications have risen by 24%, and full-time HE applications have increased significantly by 41%. However, part-time applications have slightly decreased overall.

### Applications Received Compared to Same Date in Previous Year (15 May 2025)



## **8.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE UPDATE**

### **8.1 Compliments and Complaints Report**

- 8.1.1 In the period 16 January 2025 to 15 May 2025 we received four level one complaints. Two were upheld, one was partially upheld, and one is still under investigation. This is an improvement compared to the same period last year, where three level one complaints were all upheld.
- 8.1.2 During the same period, one level two complaint was received and not upheld. This marks an improvement compared to the same period last year, where three level two complaints were upheld
- 8.1.3 Nine compliments were received during this period, which is an increase of eight compared to the same period last year.
- 8.1.4 See Appendix A the full 24/25 Complaints Handling Report.

### **8.2 Awarding Body Summary of Activity**

- 8.2.1 Twelve External Verification (EV) visits have taken place to date, all of which received no actions. See Appendix B for a detailed breakdown.

## **9.0 QUALITY ENHANCEMENT UPDATE**

### **9.1 Observation Cycle 2024/25**

- 9.1.1 Good progress is being made in the observations process, and it is expected that all observations planned for 24/25 will be completed as planned. Feedback from the observation processes is currently being collated, which will inform ongoing quality enhancement activities. A full report will be presented to the committee in September.

### **9.2 Outcomes Framework and Assurance Measures (OF&AM)**

- 9.2.1 Our quarter one OF&AM meeting with SFC has taken place where we received feedback on our SEAP. The feedback received highlighted we demonstrated strong curriculum planning, staff CPD support, and enhancements to learning environments. They noted positive apprenticeship activities and support for students' well-being. The inclusion of more data, as well as more information on widening access, in future SEAPs was also noted.

### **9.3 Learner Destinations AY 2022/23**

- 9.3.1 In the 22/23 academic year, the SFC had confirmed destinations for 89.0% of full-time qualifiers. Of those with known destinations, 39.2% left the college sector and 60.8% continued their studies. Among the sector leavers, 86.7% went to positive destinations, a slight increase from the previous year.

- 9.3.2 In the 22/23 academic year, Borders College had 518 confirmed destinations for 557 full-time qualifiers (93%). This is significantly higher than the national figure. Of those with known destinations, 321 (62%) continued their studies, with 30 (6%) progressing onto university and 291 (56%) staying in the college sector. In all 487 (94%) went to positive destinations, which is 5% higher than the national figure.

## **10.0 IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

### **10.1 Financial Implications**

- 10.1.1 Delivery teams need to ensure planned delivery takes place to enable the college to deliver 100% of credits allocated. The risk of underdelivering is currently low.

### **10.2 Learner Implications**

- 10.2.1 The reduction in overall withdrawals based on the same time last year is a positive indication that learner success rates will improve on last year.
- 10.2.2 Quality plays a critical role in ensuring effective and positive learning experiences and outcomes for our learners.
- 10.2.3 Student engagement and partnership is a key component of the new quality enhancement approach in Scotland and the effectiveness of student engagement is a significant focus of the review method.

### **10.3 Staff Implications**

- 10.3.1 Delivery teams will continue to utilise the available data and the services of support teams to support retention and achievement.
- 10.3.2 Teaching staff are required to engage in the new observation cycle from August 2024.

### **10.4 Equality and Diversity Implications/Equality Impact Assessment**

- 10.4.1 Equalities, diversity and inclusion is a cross-cutting outcome within the new SFC Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model.
- 10.4.2 Within TQER, QAA places particular emphasis on how institutions respond to and support the diversity of their student body and enable all their students to fulfil their potential.

### **10.5 Sustainability/Environmental Implications**

- 10.5.1 There are no direct Sustainability/Environmental Implications from the contents of this report.

## **11.0 RISK COMMENTARY**

- 11.1 Failure to continually track and monitor our key performance measures could have a detrimental impact on the success of our learners.
- 11.2 Failure to meet our allocated credit threshold could result in a reduction in core funding.
- 11.3 Continuous tracking and monitoring of our measures and credits are key risk mitigations.



- 11.4 Our Quality processes provide SFC with assurance that Borders College effectively uses public investment to deliver high-quality learning provision.
- 11.5 The risks associated with not undertaking quality assurance is wide ranging from the loss of funding to detrimental reputational damage.

## 12.0 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The data presented in the report provides reassurance to the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee that the college is making good progress against targets.
- 12.2 The purpose of the Quality report is to provide the Curriculum Quality and Student Experience Committee confidence in our quality assurance and enhancement processes and procedures.

Joanne George  
Director of MIS and Quality  
15 May 2025

**Previous Board or College Committee Approvals:**

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# **Complaints Handling Report 2024/2025**

**April 2025**

# Learning from Complaints

## Frontline (Level 1) Complaints

The number of Level 1 complaints dealt with in the period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 to the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 was lower than for the same period the previous year, down from eleven in 2023-2024 to eight. This excludes a complaint about a GDPR breach that was dealt with under the data breach process.

Where a complaint was partially or wholly upheld, an apology was issued, and the cause of the complaint provided opportunities for the following lessons to be learnt:

- All financial records that pertain to a historical debt should be retained in full until that debt has been wholly re-paid
- Full review of process of MA's fees, including SAAS applications and student/employers' responsibilities for fees is required
- College to review their Managing Agent processes ensuring appropriate resources are in place in order to meet with employers on a more regular basis.

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an 'on the spot' apology and explanation if something has gone wrong and immediate action taken to resolve the problem.

## Investigation (Level 2) Complaints

Investigation (Level 2) complaints are those which we have not been able to resolve at the frontline, or complaints which are complex and require more detailed investigation.

We aim to acknowledge receipt of Level 2 complaints within three working days and give a full response to the complainant within twenty working days.

In the period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 there have been two Level 2 complaints. This is a decrease compared to AY 2023-24, where we received six Level 2 complaints.

One complaint was partially upheld, an apology was issued, and the cause of the complaint provided opportunities for the following lessons to be learnt:

- Process needed for formal notification of candidate and employer that a student has reached their course end date without meeting the course requirements and that tuition will now cease unless both the candidate and employer agree to continued additional tuition fees.

## Complaints Handling Report

- Ensure approval to continue tuition beyond course end date be provided both by candidate and their employer with full awareness of the financial costs and the employer is ultimately liable for these costs
- Issue invoices monthly for additional tuition fees beyond course end date.
- Clarify an explanation of who (employer/candidate) is liable for fees at each part of the course or in the event of a student continuing tuition beyond their course end date.

### Review by the SPSO

If a complainant has exhausted the College's complaints handling process but remains dissatisfied with our decision or the way in which we dealt with a complaint, they can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to review the way in which the complaint was handled. No complaints were referred to the SPSO during the period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

### Indicator One: The total number of complaints received

Table 1 Number of complaints per year at Levels 1 & 2 with 2024/25 figures being up to and including those received to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Year	No. of complaints Level 1	No. of complaints Level 2
2022/23	32	3
2023/24	13	6
2024/25	8	2

Overall, the % number of complaints (10) against the total number of student enrolments (3,157) to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 is 0.003%.

### Indicator Two: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed within the set timescale of 5 and 20 working days.

During the period 1 August 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 eight of eight level 1 and two of two Level 2 complaints received were resolved within our target timescale of five working days and twenty working days respectively.

Year	No. of complaints	% of total complaints
2022/23	29 complaints resolved within timescale	100%
2023/24	15 complaints resolved within the timescale	79%
2024/25	10 complaints resolved within the timescale	100%

### Indicator Three: The average time in working days for a full response to Level 1 complaints.

Year	No. of complaints	Annual Average
2022/23	27	4 Working days
2023/24	13	4 Working days
2024/25	8	3 Working days

### Indicator Four: The outcome of Complaints at each stage

#### 2024/25 Complaints

In the period to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025, there have been eight frontline complaints (Level 1) and two complaints requiring a full investigation (Level 2). In ten cases, the complainants were satisfied with the outcome and in ten cases, they did indicate the complaint had been resolved.

Year	Number of Level 1 complaints	Complaint Not Upheld		Complaint Partially Upheld		Complaint Upheld		Complaint Resolved	
2022/23	27	6	22%	6	22%	13	48%	25	93%
2023/24	13	4	31%	4	31%	5	38%	12	92%
2024/25	8	3	38%	3	38%	2	25%	8	100%

Year	Number of Level 2 complaints	Complaint Not Upheld		Complaint Partially Upheld		Complaint Upheld		Complaint Resolved	
2022/23	2	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%	2	100%
2023/24	6	1	17%	1	17%	4	67%	5	83%
2024/25	2	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%	2	100%

#### Lessons Learned from complaints

Here is a summary of Lessons learned from complaints for session 2024/25

## Complaints Handling Report

No	Level of Complaint & Description	Category	Lessons Learned /Action	By when or whom	Update and evaluation
25/L1/07	L1 Complaint regarding handling of debt.	4.1 Finance	All financial records that pertain to a historical debt should be retained in full until that debt has been wholly re-paid	Director of Finance & Procurement	
25/L1/08 25/L1/09	L1 Complaint SAAS requirements and process not clear.	4.1 Finance	Full review of process of MA's fees, including SAAS applications and student/employers' responsibilities for fees is required	AP Curriculum & Sustainability	
25/L1/09	L1 Complaint Employer did not get frequent updates on Apprentice progress	1.0 Customer Service	College to review their Managing Agent processes ensuring appropriate resources are in place in order to meet with employers on a more regular basis.	AP Curriculum & Sustainability	
24/L2/01	L2 Complaint from employer regarding a number of areas with regards to student course fees.	4.1 Finance	Processes needed for formal notification of candidate and employer that a student has reached their course end date without meeting the course requirements and that tuition will now cease unless both the candidate and employer agree to continued additional tuition fees.	AP Curriculum & Sustainability	
			Ensure approval to continue tuition beyond course end date be provided both by candidate and their employer with full awareness of the financial costs and the employer is ultimately liable for these costs	AP Curriculum & Sustainability	

Complaints Handling Report

			Issue invoices monthly for additional tuition fees beyond course end date.	AP Curriculum & Sustainability and Director of Finance & Procurement	
			Clarify an explanation of who (employer/candidate) is liable for fees at each part of the course or in the event of a student continuing tuition beyond their course end date.	AP Curriculum & Sustainability	

## Appendix B

### EV Visits

Verification Group Name	Date	2.1 Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification.	2.4 There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.	3.2 Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.	3.3 Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.	4.2 Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.	4.3 Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.	4.4 Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.	4.6 Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.	4.7 Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.	4.9 Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.	Actions
Carpentry & Joinery (SVQ)	24/04/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
Construction - Brickwork (SVQ)	11/03/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
GR9H 46 PDA Bricklaying	01/04/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
Core Skills: Numeracy (NQ)	02/04/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
Core Skills: Numeracy (VQ)	02/04/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
Agriculture (SVQ)	03/04/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
GG00 46 NC Agriculture	25/04/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
SfW Hospitality	28/03/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	
SfW Automotive Skills	28/02/2025	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	

### Central Verification

Verification Group Name	Accepted	Actions
National Courses - Mathematics	Accepted	
National Courses - National 1 and 2	Accepted	
SfW Textile Industry	Accepted	