Response to the Education Scotland External Review

1. Background:

The External Review of the City of Glasgow College took place between 8 and 15 May 2012 with the report being published on 24 August 2012. The report stated that Education Scotland is confident that:

- learners are progressing well and achieving relevant, high quality outcomes;
- the college has in place high quality learning and teaching processes;
- learners are actively engaged in enhancing their own learning and the work and life of the college; and
- the college is led well and is enhancing the quality of its services for learners and other stakeholders.

The report identified a number of strengths and highlighted three examples of sector leading and innovative practice: Languages Café; *Embracing Diversity* Competition and Real-life Learning - *Reading the Waves*

The report also identified three main points for action:

- The college should improve learner attainment rates where they are low.
- The college should maximise the impact of arrangements for learner engagement in enhancing the life and work of the college.
- The college should implement fully its strategies for the improvement of learning and teaching.

2. Actions Taken by the College to Address the Issues Raised by the Review:

The main points for action and the areas for improvement are clustered around three broad but inter-locking themes:
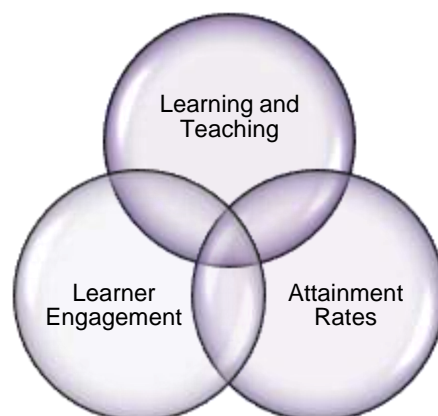
The main points for action were taken forward into a detailed action plan. The Board of Management and Senior Management Team monitored progress against the plan and it is regularly updated.

A summary of some of the key actions is set out below:

2.1   The college should improve learner attainment rates where they are low:

- Performance Reviews, were introduced in 2011/12, to give a focused approach to improving quality and performance, including attainment. Courses where outcomes were less than 75% were required to produce detailed action plans for improvement. At these reviews the curriculum is considered in the round including input from curriculum teams, quality and finance and information is considered from a range of sources including feedback from students. Progress on implementing these plans is monitored at subsequent reviews.
- The self evaluation process was reviewed and revised to improve its rigour and the highlights from the Schools' self evaluations form the basis for the first of the three Performance Review meetings each year, with a particular emphasis being put on the action plan arising from the evaluation. The plans are updated to take account of the reviews and kept under review.
- A new framework for Personal Development Reviews for all staff has been implemented to help identify training and development needs.
- Focused organisational development activities were made available to help develop teaching staff skills. Attendance at these was facilitated by the introduction of a common cross-college CPD hour.
- Course Action and Development Meeting (CADM)s have been undertaken a minimum of three times per year with input from teaching teams and students. Collectively the CADMs provide the evidence base for the end of year Course Quality Reviews and an outline agenda is provided by the Quality Team.
- The continuing emphasis on data and performance had been further supported by the development of reporting tools on the College's management information system, Enquirer.

2.2 The college should maximise the impact of arrangements for learner engagement in enhancing the life and work of the college:

- The Student Engagement Team is deployed across the College sites with each member of the team working with an identified caseload of departments.
- Comprehensive Class Rep' Training was delivered in partnership with SPARQS and catch up sessions were offered for students unable to attend their school's session.
- A pilot of a Student Engagement Lesson took place in September 2012 which will be fully rolled out to all classes September 2013.
- The Student Engagement Team supplied academic staff with Induction PowerPoint which highlighted the importance of Student Engagement and the structure of the Student Association and Class Rep' system.   Social media has been used to further publicise the student representation model.
- New feedback loop processes have been developed enabling issues raised by students to be resolved more rapidly.   Personnel from Quality, Estates, Schools, Library and Learning Technologies work along side the Student

Executive to resolve issues highlighted at class rep meetings, providing a strong team approach to problem solving.

- A new 'Student Engagement Team User Guide' and Referral system were produced and issued to all staff, highlighting the range of workshops and interventions that are available and providing information about the role of the Student Engagement Team
- The Student Engagement Team presented to the All Managers' meeting in March 2013 highlighting their remit and showcasing successes from 2012/13 and promoting new online referral system and the Student Engagement Strategy was circulated to all staff. .
- CADMs were improved to provide easier mechanisms for students to contribute their views on their experience on the courses through the introduction of Student Feedback forms which enabled Class Reps to easily collate feedback from their class mates.
- The Student Association has produced its first Annual Report

2.3 The college should implement fully its strategies for the improvement of Learning and Teaching:

- The interim Review of Learning & Teaching Strategy 2011-12 was approved by SMT on 24 April 2013 and indicated good progress, particularly on FE FT successful completion rates.
- Key Performance Indicators and Targets in the Learning & Teaching Strategy were reviewed in tandem with a review of other key strategies.
- All Schools were asked to ensure that their plans included targets for uploading learning materials onto the Virtual Learning Environment and progress against these was reviewed at the Performance Reviews. This was supported by staff training and development.
- Delivery of outputs of the CALM3 Project June 2013 CD, Learning Technologies
- A Skills Development & Curriculum for Excellence mapping tool was used to identify and action areas for development in terms of Curriculum for Excellence, Essential Skills, Diversity and Equalities and Sustainability in the curriculum.
- The Diversity and Equalities Working Group produced a Good Practice Guide following review of learning and teaching materials
- The Embracing Diversity Competition provided an opportunity for all Schools to showcase work completed by students in response to Diversity and Equalities.
- Sharing good practice in the teaching of theory was a theme in the Festival of Learning 2013, together with input on the changes in Learning in Teaching in the future and the benefits presented by the new campus in terms of new ways of delivering learning opportunities.
- All Schools agreed targets in relation to numbers of staff trained as peer reviewers and the number of peer reviews carried out was reviewed as part of the Performance Reviews.
- The Student Questionnaires are being revised, in particular the Learning and Teaching questionnaire in order to increase the focus on the Students' experience in the classroom.

3. Progress on the Action Plan

As outlined above, progress on the action plan is regularly monitored and 'Red/Amber/Green' ratings are given to indicate the progress made. At the most recent review almost all actions were rated Green or Amber. In some cases review of the effectiveness of the actions has not yet taken place as their impact cannot yet be measured.

4. Annual Engagement Visit: 29 May 2013:

The College had its first post-review Annual Engagement Visit on 29 May 2013. The report from the visit noted: 'the College has continued to make good progress since the last review' and confirmed that appropriate progress had been made in the three areas identified as main points for action.