



Agenda

NCL Board Meeting –8th June 2026

5pm – Motherwell Campus Boardroom and via Teams

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|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Chair's welcome | Ronnie Smith |
| 2. Apologies for Absence | |
| 3. Declarations of Interest | |
| 4. NCL Board Minutes (FA) | Papers Posted- RS |
| 4.1 Minute of the 16 th March 2026 | |
| 4.2 Special Meeting of the Board 30 th April 2026 | |
| 5. NCL Committee Minutes (FI) ~ | Minutes Posted |
| 5.1 Chairs Committee 27 th March 2026 * | RS/YF/CM |
| 5.2 ARC 11 th May 2026 ~ | Yvonne Finlayson |
| 5.3 RGP Committee 18 th May 2026 ~ | Keith Fulton |
| 5.4 Finance Committee 18 th May 2026 ~ | Paula Blackadder |
| 5.5 CSAO 19 th May 2026 ~ | Barbara Philliben |
| 6. NCL Student Association Report (FI) | Verbal Update - DP |
| 7. NCL Finances Update (FI) | |
| 7.1 NCL Cash Flow | Verbal Update - LM |
| 7.2 NCL Financial Update 25/26 | Verbal Update - LM |
| 7.3 Forward Plan | Papers posted – |
| | CM/LM |
| 7.4 FFR Update | Verbal Update - LM |
| 8. Strategy 2030 Update (FI) | Papers Posted - ES |
| 9. Chair's Report (FI) | Verbal Report – RS |
| 9.1 Nomination Vice Chairs of Committees | |
| 9.2 Chair's Overview | |
| 9.3 National Committees | |
| 9.4 Board Recruitment | |
| 10. Update from College Employers Scotland (FI) | Paper Posted – ET |
| 11. NCL Risk Register (FI) * | Paper Posted – RG |
| 12. SEAP (FI) ~ | Verbal Update– JL |



13. Principal's Update (FI)

Verbal Update - CM

14. Board Evaluation

14.1 SFC Reflections on the RSB (FI)

**Paper Posted –
RS/GP**

14.2 NCL Self Evaluation (FA)

**Paper Posted –
RS/GP/PN**

14.3 SIM Review of the Board Chair (FA)

Paper Posted- KF

15. Board Business

15.1 NCL Spring Newsletter (FI)

Paper Posted – JL

15.2 Register of Interest Updates

Verbal Update - GP

15.3 Approval of Publication of Papers from the Board (FA)

Verbal report- GP

16. AOB

17. Date of Next Meeting: The scheduled date of the next meeting of the New College Lanarkshire Board is **5pm Monday 5th October at the Coatbridge Campus and via Teams.**



Minute NCL Board Meeting – 16th March 2026

5pm - Cumbernauld Campus Boardroom and via Teams

Present: Ronnie Smith, David Alves, Keith Fulton, Yvonne Finlayson, Moira Jarvie, Elaine Loudon, Christopher Moore, Delphi Parker, Barbara Philliben, Catherine Pollock, Lisa Reid and Joanne Rosie.

On-line: Kellyann McGraith, Yvonne Finlayson and Alastair Rennie,

In attendance: Ronnie Gilmour, Jennifer Lowe, Lynn MacKenzie, Nicola Mulholland, Elliot Scott, Diane McGill, Penny Neish. Dave Winning also attended this meeting as he had chaired the Board self – evaluation workshop which was held before the Board meeting. His term had finished at the end of January and he was in attendance only.

1. Chair's welcome: Ronnie Smith welcomed everyone to this meeting of the Board.

2. Apologies for Absence: There were apologies from Paula Blackadder and Chelsea McCue.

3. Declarations of Interest: Ronnie Smith declared an interest as a Board Member of AMCOL and Jennifer Lowe and Moira Jarvie as members of the Cumbernauld Nursery Board.

4. NCL Board Minute 8th December 2025: The Board minute was approved.

5. NCL Committee Minutes

5.1 CSAO 16th February 2026: Barbara Philliben informed the Board that the CSAO Committee had not been quorate but there had been no decisions to be made that would have to be ratified by the Board. Christopher Moore informed the Board that discussions with Scottish Power were on going, enabled by Joanne Rosie. The draft minute was noted by the Board.

5.2 ARC 16th February 2026: Yvonne Finlayson noted the self -evaluation of the Committee which was done at the meeting and the approval of the Terms of Reference. The Committee had also agreed to a pre- meeting with the external auditors before the December joint meeting with the Finance Committee.

5.3 RGP Committee 23rd February 2026: Keith Fulton said that there was nothing to highlight from the RGP minute and there were no questions from Board Members. He updated the Board saying that the settlement payment from Galliford Try for the defective cladding at the Motherwell Campus had been received. There was also a report from AtkinsRealis on options to address the cladding and render issues at Motherwell Campus and this will form the basis of the prioritisation of remedial works to the Teaching and Workshop buildings. The report discussed 3 options and recommended Option 3:

1. Repair
2. Partial replacement
3. Full replacement which would cause major disruption to the college

There would be ongoing discussion with the SFC about the way forward but in the meantime the reliance would be on the netting that was in place with a regime of appropriate safety checks.



5.4 Finance Committee 23rd February 2026: Paula Blackadder commended the minutes as read. She noted the request to the AMCOL Board for the transfer of £2million to ease NCL cash flow which would be returned in due course. This transfer from AMCOL and cash advances from the SFC were part of the cash flow management strategy for NCL. She also informed the Board about the request from the SFC for a plan for future financial stability. This had come into the Principal during the meeting with a deadline of the end of April 2026. The Finance Committee was agreed that, in the first instance, he would write to the SFC to raise the issue of the timing for this request and that NCL has its own governance process in the approval of any financial plan.

6. NCL Student Association Report:

6.1 Delphi Parker brought the issue of students being able to work on their own cars to the attention of the Board. Students felt that their cars were more up to date and in better repair than the cars used by the college.

6.2 Keith Fulton informed the Board that this had also been raised by staff at the Health and Safety Committee. There were insurance and health and safety issues about students and staff using the college resources to work on their own cars. These cars would not be insured by the college and **this** raised the issue of cover for any incidents arising when the cars were being worked on and it also raised the issue of the owner's insurance companies not covering work undertaken in the college training environment. The staff had been invited to submit a paper to the Health and Safety Committee but this had not yet come to the Committee.

6.3. Christopher Moore informed the Board that at no time had anyone raised an issue about the state of repair of equipment and there had been no reduction in or withdrawal of funds in this area. There was an equipment budget and this was available to fund equipment requests if they were made by staff and students should feed- back any equipment issues to staff. There a number of legal frameworks to this – Audit Scotland Guidance, the Code of Conduct for Public Authorities, the Scottish Public Finance Manual which set out that the college is there for educational purposes and its resource are funded to that purpose and not for the repair of private vehicles. In addition, the college's public liability insurance is for educational purposes only.

6.4 The Board noted the issue raised by the Student President but agreed that it was not possible to support working on private vehicles by staff or students for the reasons set out by the Health and Safety Committee and the Principal.

6.5 Delphi Parker set out other news as follows:

Support: The SA still offer foodbanks, baby and hygiene banks on every campus. There is the C card scheme which allows young people in Lanarkshire to access sexual health services, provides advice and help to those who need it.

Clubs and societies: There are a range of sports clubs that have regular attendance and so far, have been successful. These include Boccia, football, basketball and badminton. The Motherwell campus gym is advertised in the student's association newsletter which is sent out to students bi-weekly. The NCL Gaming Club started in October was successful and popular. With help from the computing and E-sports department, there is access to a computing classroom for one lunchtime every week. Record numbers of students have attended.



Other News: The student's association sends out a bi-weekly newsletter. This keeps students informed on what's happening and what they can get involved in and around the college. It's also a good way for the student president to reach as many students as possible. The newsletter contains information on where students can access services, what clubs are on, updates from NUS Scotland, campaigns they can get involved in and just general updates from the student's association.

SOSE Campaign (Save our Scottish Education) not affiliated with NUS: The student president is part on the apolitical SOSE campaign that has been lobbying MSPs on the Further and higher education bill going through parliament. The campaign draws a big focus to the funding cuts facing colleges all over Scotland. The campaign is led by the University of St Andrews and Dundee and Angus College.

Election Campaign: NCL SA's president is the lead on the Scottish Elections Campaign.

Updates from NUS Scotland: Any updates from NUS Scotland are put in the newsletter to NCL's students. The Student President spoke at the UCU Dundee rally outside the Scottish parliament on a few weeks ago and she visited the Scottish parliament on the 27th of February along with Margaret McNeil for the community alliance event.

6.6 The Board noted the report and thanked the Student President.

7. NCL Finances Update:

7.1 NCL Cash Flow: Lynn Mackenzie informed the Board that there was £9 million in the bank and that cash flow was being carefully monitored. Lynn Mackenzie informed the Board that the approach of getting an advance from the SFC in February/ March which is then paid back to the SFC and also getting funds from AMCOL which are then paid back to AMCOL continues. There was a meeting of the AMCOL Board scheduled for the day after the Finance Committee and a request for funds was made with the approval of the committee.

7.2 NCL Financial Update:

7.2.1 Lynn MacKenzie recapped on the position with the Financial Forecasting Return (FFR) which was prepared and submitted to the SFC on 24th June 2025. The budgeted Group Underlying Operating Position (UOP) for academic year 2025/26 was £-1,349k deficit: College £-1,724k, Amcol £375k. The documents were presented to the Finance Committee on 8th September. The deficit was noted and in the period between the Finance Committee and Board meetings, the Executive Board prepared a proposal to balance the budget to break-even. This proposal was approved by the Board of New College Lanarkshire at the meeting on 6th October 2025. Mitigations to balance the deficit were agreed as: settlement received in relation to Motherwell building defects £475k, proceeds from the sale of Coatbridge land (estimated) £250k, other in-year savings £150k and Voluntary Severance Scheme £475k giving a total of £1,350k.

7.2.2 The college will present in the Mid Year Return a balanced UOP at break even for the College and its subsidiary Amcol, compared to the original FFR position of £-1,349k deficit. The assumptions used are per the MYR Guidance. The College deficit is forecast at £-375k offset by an Amcol surplus of £375k.

7.3 Scottish Government Budget 2026/7: Lynn MacKenzie informed the Board that the budget was increased by 10% but at this stage there were no figures from the SFC to show allocations to the colleges. There could be some scenario planning but it was very much a wait and see situation.



8. Strategy 2030 Update

8.1 Strategy 2030 – Board Update.

Elliot Scott presented his paper to the Board.

8.1.1 College Roadshow: since the formal launch of Strategy 2030, the College has undertaken a structured programme of engagement to ensure the strategy is widely understood and embedded across the organisation.

8.1.2 Strategy Delivery and Governance: to support the effective delivery of Strategy 2030, the College has established the **Strategy Office**, which will play a central role in driving strategic initiatives, developing partnerships and identifying new opportunities.

8.1.3 Strategy 2030 Projects Update:

- **Social Enterprise Development:** A workshop and mapping session has taken place with Inspirent, a government-funded organisation specialising in the creation and development of social enterprises. Initial scoping work has identified two potential social enterprise models within the College. The first focuses on internal operational areas including The Braw Wee Shop, training restaurants and hair & beauty salons. The second opportunity is being explored in partnership with Sureserve and focuses on providing structured work experience opportunities for CAD students, strengthening employer engagement while supporting industry-aligned learning.
- **Kirkintilloch Campus and East Dunbartonshire:** The College continues to engage strategically with East Dunbartonshire Council regarding the development of provision at the Kirkintilloch Campus. As a result of this engagement, additional activity has now been confirmed to commence in August 2026. This will include the introduction of full-time provision alongside HNC programmes delivered in partnership with local schools, strengthening progression pathways for young people within the region.
- **The Learning Well:** The Learning Well continues to play a central role in supporting the College's ambitions around digital learning, employer engagement and income diversification.
- **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs):** Further MOUs have now been signed with Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL) and HOCHTIEF in January and February respectively. Engagement has been ongoing with existing partners and is noted below:
 - Sureserve; exploration of social enterprise creation and support of the NCL Diploma as mentioned above. £5k donation to the NCL Foundation.
 - Cairnhill Structures; delivery of a new 'Engineering Futures' programmes with funding secured from SDS for two cohorts of students.
 - HOCHTIEF; social value event delivered at our Coatbridge Campus. A new Road Operatives course being launched to upskill and train staff at their Bargeddie site. HOCHTIEF staff undertaking health and safety training to complete CSCS card at NCL.

8.1.4 The student voice will continue to be key and there will be meetings to ensure this. Keith Fulton queried if the Strategy 2030 should incorporate more focus out-with as well as within Lanarkshire given that key partners operated more broadly than in Lanarkshire. It was agreed that this is inherent in the partnerships being formed but this aspect should come out more strongly in the strategy.



8.2 Strategising for Success

8.2.1 Strategising for Success: In February, Lisa Reid (Head of Strategy Office) and Sian Worthington (Staff Development Academy) facilitated a strategic workshop with Academic Heads of Department. The purpose of this session was to support departments in translating the ambitions of Strategy 2030 into aligned departmental strategies and priorities. This work represents an important stage in embedding the strategy operationally across the College. Heads of Department will be supported to align curriculum development, partnership activity and operational planning to the college's Strategy 2030 ambitions. The first main area of focus for all departments is on improving student results and outcomes.

8.2.2 The Board noted the paper from Jennifer Lowe giving a detailed mapping of how departments will align activity to Strategy 2030.

9. Chair's Report

9.1 Nomination Chair CSAO Committee: Ronnie Smith informed the Board that Barbara Philliben had agreed to act as Interim Chair of the CSAO Committee with the support of the Committee following the end of Dave Winning's term as a Board member. Ronnie Smith had also nominated her to become the Chair of the Committee and was seeking the Board's approval of this nomination.

Decision: The Board approved the nomination. The Chair thanked Barbara Philliben for agreeing to be the Chair of the CSAO.

9.2 Chair's Overview: Ronnie Smith said that he attended College's Scotland on behalf of the college. He commented that there was a new energy in the organization following recent appointments. He highlighted that policy had been concentrated into the Principals' Group through structural changes and that this did raise issues about the role of the Chairs.

9.3 National Committees: He was considering going to the upcoming Colleges Scotland AGM.

9.4 Board Recruitment: The Chair highlighted that the Board numbers had changed as NCL had moved to being a regional college only. The maximum number was now 20 and there was, therefore, a need for a Board recruitment to fill 3 non-executive Board places. The Nominations Committee would be set up to do this and he had asked Caroline Stuart the Regional Chair for Dumfries and Galloway to be the independent Chair on the committee and she had agreed. There was also a staff election in hand to appoint an elected academic staff member. EIS/FELA were yet to give their nominee to the Board.

9.5 Written Procedure: Ronnie Smith informed the Board that there had been a written procedure through the Chairs' Committee in January 2026 to approve the recommended sale of the Coatbridge Nursery land for the price of £250K. The Board noted the approval of the sale at this price.

10 . Update from College Employers Scotland:

10.1 Keith Fulton informed the Board that he had nothing more to add to the paper that had gone to the RGP Committee and to the Board. The Board noted the paper.



10.2 Moira Jarvie asked about the minutes for the JNC Professional Services meeting which hadn't yet been published. It was noted that the meeting hadn't actually taken place but the group would meet in the near future.

11. NCL Risk Register

11.1 Ronnie Gilmour informed the Board that there is a total of 22 Strategic Risks logged by the CRMG as at 3rd February 2026. Risks are considered by the group and the register has a summary which highlights new risks, risks that have either gone up or down and risks which are high level. The risk register shows the level of assessed risk for each risk and where there are control action plans in place.

- There are no risk movements.
- There are two new risks: Risk U –Risk of not being able to recruit appropriate staff to key strategic areas to support the delivery of the curriculum and in particular Modern Apprenticeships and Risk V - non -compliance with Martyn's Law (Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025).
- Two risks are above the committee's threshold level and therefore are subject to Control Action Planning. These are: Risk A - The college may not have sufficient liquid funds to meet short-term or medium-term cash commitments. Risk B - The College may be unable to sustain short-term operations at the required standard due to insufficient levels of funding.

11.2 The Board noted the report.

12. SEAP

12.1 The self – evaluation has been submitted to the SFC. There will be feedback next Monday and there will be a meeting with the students. The SFC liaison officer is Kelly France. There will be discussion about documentation processes and the papers required. This year will lead into preparation for the SFC full review which is scheduled for 2027/28. Staff members have been appointed as Quality Assessors as part of this process so their knowledge of the process will inform the colleges preparation. The college is on track with the work it has done, for example, on Strategising for Success and other work on complaints and student representation.

13. Principal's Update

13.1 Christopher Moore updated the Board as follows:

- Shirley Manson from the band Garbage had spent two and a half hours engaging with students which had been a major highlight for them and she had also left with a positive image of NCL and said that she wanted to come back.
- Students had displayed work at Palacerigg Country Park and there had been a great response from the public.
- There had been a violence against girls "Pampering Day" from the Hair and Beauty Department and this had over 100 participants and was done in partnership with Boots and Greggs.
- HND legal services students at NCL had written an introduction to Scots Law as a collaborative project with the Scottish Refugee Council, Fearless (Crimestoppers) the Scottish Government and Police Scotland. It is aimed at people who have moved to Scotland to help explain everyday rules and laws that may affect them as they settle into life here. It



has been well received by Lord Mulholland a former Advocate General of Scotland and member of the Court of Session. The introduction has been translated into 13 languages. A BA in law is about to be launched.

- Christopher Moore drew attention to the figure for Healthy Life Expectancy and that there are large differences between areas with North Lanarkshire being at the bottom with 52.3 for females and 52.9 for males. There is a 12-year difference with Edinburgh. This has to be an area of focus for the college to improve education and life chances and choices. NCL is looking to work in collaboration with NHS Lanarkshire and there will be a health symposium in June 2026 to start this process off.
- James Boyce the Head of College policy at the Scottish Government would be coming to speak to NCL.

14. Board Business

14.1 Board Events Calendar: The Board received a copy of NCL events and this would be updated at each meeting.

14.2 On – line training; Jennifer Lowe highlighted the on-line training in Brain Health which had been taken by 500 members of staff to date and Ronnie Smith informed the Board that he had commenced the course and recommended it to Board Members.

14.3 Register of Interest Updates; This would be a standing item on the Board agenda following recommendation is the External Audit report. There were no updates.

14.4 Approval of Publication of Papers from the Board : The Board approved the publication of the agenda , the minute, the budget letter from the Scottish Government, the Strategy 2030 update, the college registrars report, the events calendar, the revised Terms of reference and standing orders and scheme of delegation.

14.5 Committee Terms of Reference:

Action: The Board approved the changes made.

14.6 Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation

Action: The Board approved the changes made.

15. AOB: Board Members were asked to either leave their laptops or to bring them into the college for encryption to be updated as part of the colleges consistent drive on cyber security.

16. Date of Next Meeting: The scheduled date of the next meeting of the New College Lanarkshire Board is **5pm Monday 8th June 2026 in the Motherwell Campus Boardroom and via Teams.**

17. Board Members Only: Recommendations to the Board from the Remuneration Committee 12th March 2026.

17.1 At this point Board attendees other than the Government professional left the room. Keith Fulton who chaired the Remuneration Committee informed the Board Members that the Remuneration Committee had considered the salaries of the Executive Board in the light of salary



levels at other colleges and public sector pay policy and the settlements for members of staff through College Employers Scotland. The Chair had carried out a review with the Principal and the grid of key areas for assessment had been referred to by the Remuneration Committee.

17.2 The Remuneration Committee made the following recommendations to the Board:

- A proposal to recommend to the Board approval of the same uplift to members of the Executive Board as had been awarded to staff – 4.14%.
- A proposal from the Chair of the Board to recommend to the Board the same uplift to the Principal and Chief Executive – 4.14%

Decision: The Board approved the recommendation from the Remuneration Committee.

17.3 The Remuneration Committee was also recommending approval of a proposal from the Principal to create a post of Assistant Principal for Finance that would be advertised internally in the first instance.

Decision: The Board approved this recommendation.

17.4 The Board also received a separate proposal which came straight to the Board in respect of the severance package for the Chief Resources Officer and back dated pay. The Remuneration Committees Terms of reference are to make recommendations on pay awards for senior staff not to deal with severance payments.

Decision Redacted.



Minute NCL Board Meeting – 30th April 2026

5.30 pm On-line via Teams

Present: Ronnie Smith, Ruth Allison, David Alves, Yvonne Finlayson, Moira Jarvie, Kellyann McGrraith, Christopher Moore, Barbara Philliben, Lisa Reid, Joan Rosie, Alastair Rennie.

In Attendance: Elizabeth Arogbofa, Ronnie Gilmour, Jennifer Lowe, Lynn MacKenzie, Penny Neish, Diane McGill, Nicola Mulholland, Elliott Scott, Barry Skea, Elaine Turkington.

1. Chair's welcome:

1.1 Ronnie Smith welcomed Board Members to the meeting and thanked them for attending and for their time. This was noted at the meeting.

1.2 To set the context, Ronnie Smith informed the Board that this meeting was being held because the SFC had asked for a Forward Plan which is in addition to the Strategy 2030 and to the usual Financial Returns such as the FFR. This had resulted in considerable additional work on top of Strategy 2030 for the Executive Board and staff. It had also resulted in this additional meeting of the Board held to meet the SFC deadlines for receipt of the plan.

1.3 He informed colleagues that Keith Fulton had submitted a couple of questions for consideration and response in due course. The first was relating to section 5.2 of the plan which set out the fall in staff headcount over recent years going from 953 in 2021 to 706 by May 2024. It was also noted that data informed delivery had gone up from 295 credits in 2022/23 to 389 in 25/26. The question was how much of the increased delivery was due to staff reductions and how much to increased data delivery. This was noted by the Board and the Executive Board will provide a response.

2. Apologies for Absence: There were apologies from Paula Blackadder, Keith Fulton, Elaine Loudon, Chelsea McCue, Delphi Parker, Cath Pollock.

3. Declarations of Interest: Moira Jarvie declared her membership of the Cumbernauld Nursery Group and Jennifer Lowe that she was the Chair of this Group. Ronnie Smith declared his membership of the AMCOL Board and that he had been appointed as the Chair of the People and Place Board in South Lanarkshire.

4. NCL Forward Plan:

4.1 Members of the Executive Board took it in turn to set out key aspects of the Forward Plan set out in a power point presentation to the Board. The power point presentation is appended to this minute but will be redacted when the minute is published due to the confidential nature of the Forward Plan at this stage as it is a document to the regulator i.e. the SFC and for its approval.



4.2 The presentation covered the following areas:

- Scene Setting
- Pre-phase1 2023
- Recovery Investment
- Forward Plan 2024
- Current Financial Status
- Objectives
- Strategic Planning Measures
- Built Environment
- Community Benefits
- Key New Partnerships
- Financial projections and Scenario Planning
- Governance and Reporting
- An extension to the current VS scheme
- Cashflow.

4.3 There was discussion at the Board following the presentation.

- It was agreed that a lot of good work had gone into the plan from the EB to tight time scales.
- It was noted that Keith Fulton had commented on whether the plan should also have a wider focus than Lanarkshire given world skills, the City Region and key Lanarkshire partners who also worked out-with the Lanarkshire Region. This point was agreed and it was noted that there was already planned partnership activity with key partners who did operate widely.
- Moira Jarvie set out concerns about another voluntary severance scheme and the impact that they had on staff. The Board was assured that this would be an extension to the existing scheme. It would be advertised to all staff and there would be no bar to those who wished to re-apply. The concern about impact on staff and the resilience to deliver on the Forward Plan was expressed by other Board Members and management informed the Board that it was hoped that VS schemes would not need to be used again in the future. There was also discussion about the need to refresh the curriculum to deliver on the plan and Strategy 2030.
- There was also discussion about communicating the Forward Plan to staff as it was felt that this document gave a very clear contextual overview as to what had happened and why, how it had been mitigated and also what the route should be to progress with stability into the future. Some Board Members including Moira Jarvie felt that the document should be communicated to staff in the near future and others thought that it should be once the SFC had considered the document with feedback and probably at the start of the new academic year. This latter option was the preference of the Executive Board. It was agreed that the document should be circulated at the appropriate time.
- There was overall consensus that this was a very good document with ambition and exciting new approaches and opportunities to bring financial sustainability.



Decision 1: The Board approved a six - month extension to the current VS scheme.

Decision 2: The request to AMCOL for the transfer of £2 million to assist with cash flow which will be returned in due course.

Decision 3: The Forward Plan was approved by the Board and will be submitted to the SFC to the agreed timescale.

5. AOB: There was no other business.

6. Date of Next Meeting: The scheduled date of the next meeting of the New College Lanarkshire Board is **5pm Monday 8th June 2026 in the Motherwell Campus Boardroom and via Teams.**

Strategy 2030

June 2026 Board Update

Purpose	To provide the Board of Management with an update on key Strategy Office activity supporting delivery of Strategy 2030.
Author	Elliot Scott – Assistant Principal for Strategy and Impact
Date	Monday 8 th June 2026

Introduction

This paper provides the Board of Management with an update on key areas of work being progressed through the Strategy Office in support of the delivery of Strategy 2030.

The activities outlined in this report demonstrate continued progress in strengthening the College's approach to strategic delivery, governance, income diversification, partnership development and long-term institutional sustainability.

Strategy 2030 Monitoring, Reporting and Project Oversight

A key area of progress has been the development of the Strategy 2030 KPIs. Each Board Committee will receive updates on the strategic projects and KPIs most relevant to its remit. This will ensure that strategic monitoring is embedded within the College's existing governance arrangements and that the Board and its Committees maintain clear visibility of progress, as well as any areas requiring further action.

The proposed approach was presented during the committee cycle and now seeks final board sign-off and approval. This represents an important milestone in ensuring that the delivery of Strategy 2030 is supported by appropriate governance, oversight and assurance.

The Strategy Office will support the implementation of this framework by coordinating reporting, maintaining oversight of strategic activity and working with senior colleagues to ensure that updates are proportionate, meaningful and focused on the areas of greatest strategic importance. This approach will support clearer alignment between Strategy 2030 and Committee oversight, stronger evidence-based decision-making and greater assurance that Strategy 2030 related projects remain on track, are being monitored and are deliverable.

Alongside the KPI framework, development work and testing is ongoing in relation to a new project management and monitoring tool. Up-to-date project data is now being fed into the tool as part of the development and testing process. This will improve visibility of key project progress and

once fully developed, the project monitoring tool will provide an additional layer of control and assurance over key strategic projects. It will also support reporting to Executive Board and Board of Management, ensuring that project information is current and accessible.

Strategy 2030 Communication and Engagement

Work is ongoing to support the wider communication and embedding of Strategy 2030 across the College and with external stakeholders. A key part of this work has been the development of a Strategy 2030 booklet, designed to communicate the College's ambitions, priorities and strategic direction in a clear and accessible format.

Initial copies of the booklet were distributed to attendees at the Men's and Women's Health Symposiums held on the 2nd and 3rd June. The booklet will now be developed further and be distributed to staff, as well as at all key future College events, ensuring that Strategy 2030 remains visible and central to the College's engagement activity.

This work is important in supporting a shared understanding of the College's ambitions for the next five years. It also ensures that the Strategy is communicated consistently across different audiences and that strategic priorities are linked clearly to visible areas of activity, delivery and partnership working.

Health Symposiums

The Men and Women's Health symposiums provided an opportunity to engage attendees in important areas of public health, wellbeing and education while also demonstrating the role that New College Lanarkshire can play in supporting wider community and workforce learning.

As part of the symposiums, two free courses in men's and women's health were launched through The Learning Well. These courses form part of the College's "Better than 52" campaign and provide accessible online learning opportunities in areas of significant social and public health importance. The programmes were developed by Academic colleagues in the Dental Health and Social Care & Sport and Education departments.

The launch of these courses demonstrates the flexibility and potential of The Learning Well as a platform for delivering learning beyond traditional campus-based provision. It also highlights how the platform can be used to respond to emerging areas of need, support public engagement and extend the College's reach into communities and workplaces.

The Learning Well

Work on the NCL Diploma in Management and Leadership has now been completed. This marks the conclusion of a major strategic project identified within the College's Strategy 2030 ambitions and represents an important step in the development of The Learning Well as a platform for online learning, professional development, upskilling and reskilling.

The completion of the Diploma provides the College with a significant new online qualification that can be offered to employers, partners and individuals. The programme has been designed to support those in work who are seeking to develop their leadership and management capability, while also providing the College with a new opportunity for income generation and employer engagement.

The College now awaits Sureserve enrolling its cohort of employees onto the programme. This partnership represents an important early example of the type of employer-led engagement that The Learning Well is intended to support. It also demonstrates the potential for the platform to respond to workforce development needs while creating new commercial and strategic opportunities for the College.

Next steps for the development of The Learning Well includes professional and industry-facing qualifications in areas such as Health and Social Care, Health and Safety, Dental Nursing, Housing and other regionally relevant areas of significant employer demand.

This work supports the College's wider ambition to diversify income, develop new academic markets and strengthen employer-led provision.

Forward Plan

Following approval and sign-off by the Board of Management, the College's Forward Plan was submitted to the Scottish Funding Council.

The submission of the Forward Plan represents an important governance and strategic planning milestone for the College. The document sets out the College's priorities, areas of focus and planned activity, while aligning with the wider ambitions of Strategy 2030.

The College is now awaiting feedback from the SFC on the submitted document. Once feedback is received, the relevant areas will be reviewed and considered by the Executive Board and senior colleagues, with any required actions or revisions progressed through the appropriate governance routes.

Social Enterprise

Work remains ongoing in relation to the proposed creation of a social enterprise arm of New College Lanarkshire. This remains an important area of strategic development and aligns with the College's ambition to educate the student body about social enterprises while also providing opportunities to work within a social enterprise setting. The long-term ambition is to create self-sustaining social enterprises that enhance the curriculum and complement the wider student experience within the college.

A clear and robust proposal will be presented to the Board of Management once a framework has been developed for establishing social enterprises within the college. In keeping with good governance, it is important to note that a range of models are being considered and legal advice will be sought before any recommendation is made to the Board and appropriate board committees.

Given the significance of this proposal, it is important that the recommendation presented to the Board is carefully developed and supported by appropriate evidence and assurance.

Guidance from the Board of Management may be sought between now and the September Board meeting to ensure that the developing proposal reflects Board expectations and provides sufficient clarity on governance, risk and strategic intent.

Next Steps

- **Strategy 2030 Monitoring and Reporting:** The Strategy Office will begin implementing the approved KPI reporting framework, ensuring that quarterly Committee updates are scheduled and aligned to the appropriate strategic projects and Committee remits.
- **Strategy 2030 Communication and Engagement:** The Strategy 2030 booklet will be developed further and distributed at all key future College events. This will support wider communication of the College's strategic ambitions to staff, students, partners, employers and external stakeholders.
- **Project Monitoring Tool:** Development and testing of the project monitoring tool will continue, with live project data being used to support refinement of the system and to strengthen control and oversight of key strategic projects.
- **The Learning Well:** The College will support the enrolment of the Sureserve cohort onto the NCL Diploma in Management and Leadership and will progress the next phase of online course development to support the continued expansion of The Learning Well.
- **Health Symposiums and Better than 52 Campaign:** The two free health-related courses launched as part of the Better than 52 campaign will continue to be promoted and delivered through The Learning Well, supporting the College's wider ambitions around public health, community learning and flexible online provision.

- **Social Enterprise:** Work will continue to develop a robust Board proposal for September, with interim guidance from the Board of Management sought as appropriate.
- **Strategic Delivery and Governance:** The Strategy Office will continue to support the delivery, coordination and monitoring of key Strategy 2030 projects, ensuring that progress remains visible and aligned to the College's long-term ambitions.

Conclusion

The period since the previous update has seen continued progress across a number of important strategic areas. The approval of the Strategy 2030 KPI monitoring and reporting framework provides a stronger basis for oversight and assurance, while the completion of the NCL Diploma in Management and Leadership represents a major milestone in the development of The Learning Well.

The Strategy Office will continue to support monitoring, delivery and implementation of all Strategy 2030 related activity, providing regular updates to the Board of Management and its Committees as appropriate.

Strategic Priority	Strategic Lead	KPI
Driving Better Student Outcomes	Robert Allan	Student Retention Rate FE
		Student Retention Rate HE
		Student Success Rate FE
		Student Success Rate HE
		Student Success Rate Foundation Apprenticeships
		Student Wellbeing
		Student Progression Rate
		Student Success Rate Modern Apprenticeships
		Apprentice positive destination (%)

Operational leads and KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

Reports to CSAO Sub-Committee of the Board.

Baseline (2024/25)	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
29.7% withdrawal	National average		
23.9% withdrawal	National average		
65%	National average		
63%	National average		
56%	Baseline to be established		Targets agreed after release of pre
n/a	Baseline to be established		(internal/external
n/a	Baseline to be established		
62.30%	Baseline to be established		
n/a	Baseline to be established		

2028/29 Target

previous year data
)

Strategic Priority	Strategic Lead
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Public Health / Social Value

<i>Brain Health</i>	Jennifer Lowe
<i>Dental</i>	
<i>Neurodivergence</i>	

Health and Life Sciences	Elliot Scott
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Operational KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

KPI	Baseline (2025/26)	2026/27
Annual income generated		£25,000
New programmes	Baseline report on Public Health and Social Value - published August 2026	
Number of organisations engaged		
Number of learners enrolled		
UK partnerships		
International partnerships		
Projects/Initiatives		
Grant / Sponsorship		
Annual income generated	-	£150,000
New programmes, aligned with regional skills needs		

Reports to CSAO and Finnace for information.

2027/28	2028/29	Timeline	
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£50,000 £75,000

£150,000 £150,000

Strategic Priority	Strategic Lead
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Built Environment / Community Barry Skea

AI / Datavita

Elliot Scott

Regional skills

Elliot Scott / Department Head

Operational KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

KPI	Baseline (2025/26)	2026/27	2027/28
Employer Partnerships (MOUs)	4		
Annual income generated	£55,000	£250,000	£350,000
Annual income generated	-	-	£250,000
New programmes		Driven by recruitment tren opportunities aligned wit skills and new developme Lanarkshire.	
	2		

Reports to Finance Sub-Committee.

2028/29	Notes	
	Ensure relationships are effectively maintained. Oversight of project/partnership deliverables and outputs.	
£500,000	Targets may vary dependent on regional activity.	
£550,000	3 year plan	
ds and new h regional nts within		
	A visibly new, industry relevant and employer led curriculum.	

Strategic Priority	Strategic Lead
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Undergraduate School	Nicola Mullholland
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Schools (NLC/SLC/EDC)	Nicola Mullholland
Apprenticeships SDS	Barry Skea

Operational KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

Reports to CSAO and Finance Sub-Committee.

KPI	Baseline (2025/26)	2026/27
Number of learners enrolled (combined)	346	400 (target)
Annual revenue generated	£1,718	£2,300,000
Learner satisfaction rate	?	Targets agreed after data (in
Student Success Rate HE	?	
Student withdrawal Rate HE	?	
Annual revenue generated	£400,000	£450,000
Annual revenue generated	£100,000	£100,000

2027/28

2028/29

£2,300,000 £2,300,000

er release of previous year
internal/external)

£450,000 £450,000

£100,000 £100,000

Strategic Priority	Strategic Lead
The Learning Well (TLW)	Elliot Scott
TLW 2.0	Elliot Scott

Reports to Finance Sub-Committee & CSAO for information.

Operational KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

KPI	Baseline (2025/26)	2026/27 Target
Number of learners enrolled	190	200
Annual revenue generated from TLW	£390,000	£400,000
Learner satisfaction rate	Baseline to be established	80%
Annual income generated from TLW	tbc	£200,000
Number of learners enrolled	Reports will show learner number	

2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
200	200
£400,000	£400,000
85%	90%
£520,000	£600,000
rs in relation to income.	

Strategic Priority

Strategic Lead

The College of Social Entrepreneurship

Lisa Reid

Operational KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

Reports to CSAO Sub Committee & Finance for information.

KPI	Baseline (2025/26)	2026/27	2027/28
Active/Registered Social Enterprises	-	1	1
Learners engaged	-		
Grants / Sponsorship	£0	£0	£0
Sales	£0	£0	£0

2028/29	Target (2030)	Measurement Method / Source of Data
2	3 sustainable enterprises operating annually	Active student led Enterprises
	[x] students annually	Student Records
£0	Reliance on funding to be minimal	Finance reports
£0	Self sustaining Social Enterprises	Finance reports

Notes

BAHD Salon(s)

BAHD Salon(s)

Strategic Priority	Strategic Lead
Leading Lanarkshire's Sustainable Future	William McCallum
	Margaret McNeill
Leading Lanarkshire's Sustainable Future	Margaret McNeill

Operational KPIs to be set by strategic lead.

Reports to RGP Sub -Committee of the Board.

KPI	Baseline (2025/26)
Estates and Infrastructure	Baseline established in SFC report 25/26
Sustainable behaviours (UNSDGs)	Mapping activities against UNSDGs

2026/27

Targets agreed after release of data in SFC report.

Ongoing updates on how we meet and are advancing in relation to UNSDGs

2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
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TBC

TBC

Ongoing updates on how we meet a Ongoing updates on how w Ongoing upd

Notes

Energy management, Carbon Footprint reduction.

Clear link and meeting of SDGs



Resources and General Purposes Committee – May 2026

Item 7.1 NCL College Registrar Update

This paper provides a summary of current and planned activity in the areas above to provide an update for the Resources and General Purposes Committee. Where the approval/ratification of the Committee is required, this is highlighted at the appropriate points.

1. Professional Services Review

Staff engagement continues with the External Funding & International team regarding the future direction of those activities. This is the final team to be consulted with regarding the original Professional Services Review proposal.

2. College Employers Scotland (CES)

2.1 National Negotiating Committee (NNC) Website

The [National Negotiating Committees \(NNC\) website](#) has been launched to support the revised National Recognition and Procedures Agreement arrangements and provide a central source of information relating to National Bargaining for both Lecturing Staff and Professional Services Staff.

The website includes key information on committee matters, membership, meeting minutes and updates on national workstreams, including Job Evaluation.

2.2 Job Evaluation (JE)

A joint communication on the status of Job Evaluation has been added to the [Latest News](#) section on the NNC website.

The Joint Secretaries updated the Job Evaluation Project Board (JEPB) meeting on 22nd April 2026 that they had begun the process to explore alternative scheme providers for Job Evaluation to understand if any scheme providers are able to provide the level of satisfactory transparency to move forward. Discussions have begun with five potential scheme providers, including that of the current provider ECC-FEDRA.

Once the process is concluded, the Joint Secretaries will compile and submit a final report with their findings and conclusions to the JEPB for consideration at the next scheduled meeting on Wednesday 24th June 2026.

2.3 EIS-FELA Pay Claim

The National Negotiating Committee (NNC) – Lecturing Staff (LS Committee), met on Thursday 30 April 2026 to continue discussions on the 2026/27 and 2027/28 pay claim. The management representatives acknowledged the points raised and it was agreed the Joint Secretaries would continue offline discussions on the areas discussed.

The next scheduled meeting is Thursday 11 June 2026. However, a further meeting on pay has been provisionally scheduled to take place on Thursday 14 May 2026 subject to discussions with the Joint Secretaries.

2.4 National Grievance Policy and Procedure

Work has commenced on the initial annual review of the National Disciplinary Policy and Model Procedure, following its agreement in April 2025.

3. Joint Negotiating Committee Update

3.1 JNC Academic

There has been no further meeting of the JNC Academic since the meeting which took place on 10th December 2025.

The next meeting of the JNC Academic is scheduled to take place on 3rd June 2026.

3.2 JNC Professional Services

A JNC Professional Services meeting took place on 2nd April 2026. Discussion topics included:

- Professional Services Review.
- National Disciplinary Policy and agreement on the content of a local procedure for NCL.
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure. The trade unions confirmed their agreement with the content.
- Signing of a Collective Agreement, effective 1st April 2026, regarding the calculation of holiday pay for non-contractual overtime.

The next meeting of the JNC professional Services is scheduled to take place on 11th June 2026.

4. Policies and Procedures

- Following on from the Collective Agreement, an Overtime and Time Off In Lieu Policy and Procedure for Professional Services staff has been published.
- The National Disciplinary Policy and local College procedure has been signed off by all 3 locally recognised trade unions and has been put forward for publication. Manager training will follow.
- A Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure is awaiting sign off from local EIS-FELA representatives prior to publishing.
- The following policies and procedures are being drafted – Dignity at Work (including Sexual Harassment), and PVG.

5. Absence Management

The NCL Absence percentage for Q2 was 8.47% which was similar to Q1 2026. The top 3 reported absence categories in this quarter were:

- Ear/Nose/Throat
- Stomach/Bowel

- Psychological

Whilst two out of three categories were also in the top 3 in Q1, these are not consistent and indicate that a change in the season may have had an effect on staff wellness.

As a result of this absence rate level, an Absence Action Plan Working Group is to be formed to consider additional measures to support the management of attendance at work.

Three guidance documents have been produced and published by HR to support managers, and additional guidance for staff is being drafted:

- Managing Long Term Absence
- Reasonable Adjustments
- Supporting the Return to Work Process

Sector benchmarking commenced in AY25/26, however this has been paused due to the group's chair leaving the sector. It is expected that benchmarking will be resurrected in the future. However, what was discovered was that, due to the various methods of recording information, different systems, policies and process, benchmarking absence across the sector is challenging. The group did agree on standard categories for absence. It is also intended that any future benchmarking should be widened to compare other relevant data across the sector such as turnover, case management, EDI and recruitment data.

5. Employment Tribunal Update

Following the signing of the Collective Agreement, the formula for calculating the eight sisted tribunal claims has been established, and lawyers for the College and all claimants continue to actively work towards settlement of their cases.

The College has received two new Employment Tribunal claims since the last RGP Committee update:

- A claim for unfair dismissal/wrongful dismissal/disability discrimination/discrimination arising from disability/alleged failure to make reasonable adjustments. The Preliminary Hearing scheduled for May has been cancelled by the Tribunal Service and we await a tribunal hearing date.
- A claim for constructive unfair dismissal. A hearing has been scheduled for May, however we have requested a postponement due to lack of availability of witnesses.

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

6.1 Leaders Unlocked: Student Commission for Racial Justice

NCL has signed up to the Leaders Unlocked: Student Commission for Racial Justice pilot project, one of five participating FE colleges in Scotland. This student-led project will give young minority ethnic students at NCL a platform to influence change at NCL and within Scotland's education sector. The project will commence at the start of the next Academic Year (26/27) and will run for 3 years.

6.2 Bystander Intervention Skills

The All Staff Essential Learning (ASEL) package comprises a series of modules that embed EDI across NCL. EDI modules have been developed and refreshed each year to ensure the content remains

relevant and impactful for NCL. This year's focus will be on strengthening Bystander Intervention skills, equipping staff with the confidence and tools to safely and effectively challenge inappropriate behaviour.

6.3 Mainstreaming Toolkit

Scottish Government recently launched a Mainstreaming Toolkit designed to support public sector organisations in embedding EDI into all areas of policy, practice, and decision-making. The Toolkit provides practical guidance, resources, and examples of good practice to help ensure equality considerations are consistently integrated rather than treated as a separate activity.

We are currently reviewing the toolkit to explore how it can be effectively utilised across our existing processes and EDI work at NCL.

It has been agreed the Mainstreaming Toolkit will be piloted with the Supported Learning and Access & Progression department, allowing us to test its application in practice and assess how it can strengthen our approach to mainstreaming. This will help inform wider rollout and ensure alignment with our ongoing commitment to the PSED.

6.4 EDI Regional Network

NCL is working with external partners across the region including Police Scotland, North Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire to establish an EDI contact network. The aim of this network is to strengthen collaboration and improve how we share and align our equality outcomes and priorities. This will support more effective partnership working, enabling us to identify areas of common focus, reduce duplication, and explore opportunities for joint initiatives with overlap. Ultimately, this regional approach will help enhance impact and drive more coordinated progress on EDI across Lanarkshire.

7. Strategy 2030 – People

One of the key enabling elements for the delivery of a successful Strategy 2030 is NCL's People. To introduce the People element, a small working group has been set up, drawn from Brand & Marketing and Human Resources, to develop, in the first instance, an initial landing page on the intranet. The intention is that this would eventually become the recognised place for "all things people", such as HR policies, employee benefits, wellbeing, and development opportunities. However, the initial approach will be to begin to introduce the People brand gradually through pages highlighting employee recognition, retirements, "meet the teams", etc, and build a platform outwards from there.

Elaine Turkington

College Registrar

May 2026

Advice to SFC: Legacy learning and recommendations

From members of the Lanarkshire RSB

July 2025

1. Purpose and Context

This report outlines the views gathered from two focus groups facilitated by SFC in July 2025 attended by self-selecting members of the Lanarkshire RSB. The purpose was to consider the learning from the operation of the Lanarkshire Regional Strategic Body (RSB) – known as the Lanarkshire Board - and to provide advice and recommendations to SFC in its outcomes and assurance role moving forward. **We also confirmed at the time that this advice was for SFC only.**

The material reflects views of members of the Lanarkshire Board at the point just prior to its dissolution in July 2025 and seeks to inform future approaches across the two colleges to achieving outcomes and regional collaboration to meet the skills needs of students, employers and stakeholders.

Twelve members of the Lanarkshire Board attended over two sessions, in addition to the two Governance Professionals. Two members attended both sessions.

SFC has reported the views as outlined by the members in the sessions. Most comments were supported by more than one member. SFC collated the responses around four key themes. Messages/views are described as strong where there was consensus across the group on issues raised.

SFC will discuss the key recommendations in this report with both colleges in June 2026.

2. In summary

There was a strong message that dissolution of the Lanarkshire RSB (removal of the duties and responsibilities for the NCL Board) would, at its core, have positive outcomes for the two individual colleges. However, it was also noted with equal weight that there would be a need for the two colleges to continue to work in collaboration to reach a shared understanding and agreement on how they will meet the skills needs of stakeholders in their dedicated geographical region and contribute to the wider Scottish economy.

3. What did the members of the Lanarkshire RSB tell us?

The following is reported as it was shared in the meetings

3.1 Effectiveness of the regional structures in place since 2014

The original regional governance model created structural challenges, particularly due to the dual role of the NCL Board as both a regional body (The Lanarkshire Board) and the board of the college. This led to perceived challenges for the RSB in aligning agendas and timings of meetings and carrying a heavy governance and audit role over the past few years.

There were historical tensions at play across the two colleges following key disagreements at the point of regionalisation, and in lead up to the merger (two-phased).

The “assigned college” model did not achieve parity of esteem, largely because the assigned college had no direct relationship with SFC and limited influence over funding or strategic change. It relied on support from the RSB to progress proposals for change.

Legislative and policy terminology around “regional colleges” lacked clarity and was not consistently aligned with geography, contributing to stakeholder confusion.

There was insufficient consideration of travel-to-learn and travel-to-work patterns, including outlying areas beyond core local authority boundaries.

The governance relationships between the two colleges improved notably in the final years of the RSB’s operation.

3.2 Collaboration and partnership working

Regional collaboration was most effective when there was goodwill, willing and flexible partners across various aspects of operations and curriculum, and open and empowering leadership. Where these conditions were absent, collaboration was significantly constrained.

In the more recent past, cross-college relationships became more constructive, with evidence that collaboration can deliver benefits for learners, communities, and employers when conditions are right.

Following dissolution, colleges should continue to work together informally through information sharing, joint engagement with employers, and collaborative approaches to recruitment and retention. (broad agreement)

Collaboration was seen as extending beyond Lanarkshire, with recognition of strong interdependencies with the wider Glasgow region. (broad agreement)

3.3 Role of Colleges and Partners

Board members expressed concerns regarding the role of colleges at local, regional, and national levels, including the diminished use of the concept of colleges as “anchor institutions”.

Strong partnerships with universities were identified as critical to meeting employer needs and delivering provision at the appropriate level, where the partnerships are based on equality and mutual benefit rather than institutional dominance.

At the same time colleges were described as being under increasing pressure from schools in retaining learners longer and universities recruiting directly from schools, with implications for college in the middle and impacting on their future sustainability.

3.4 Financial Sustainability and External Pressures

Funding constraints were identified as a major and ongoing risk, with rising pay, fixed costs, and cost-of-living pressures affecting both institutions and communities.

Cost-cutting measures across the sector were reported as widespread, with indications that the majority of colleges could face deficits within a short timeframe without structural change or increased funding.

Improved, proactive engagement between governing bodies (College Boards) and senior officials of SFC and Scottish Government would help build mutual understanding of financial pressures and strategic constraints. (broad agreement)

4. Recommendations to SFC

Based on the views shared in the sessions, the following recommendations emerged.

Sector wide:

Clarify regional approach and governance models

Any continuing or new regional arrangements should have clearly defined purposes, lines of authority, and decision-making powers, with governance models that ensure parity of esteem for all participating institutions.

Embed an understanding of geography and transport links in planning provision

Regional and local planning should explicitly consider travel patterns, transport infrastructure, and learner choice to better align provision with real-world behaviours.

Redefine the role of colleges in the skills system

National and sector partners should articulate a clearer, shared understanding of the role of colleges within local, regional, and national skills ecosystems, including their relationship with schools, communities, employers and universities.

Address financial sustainability at system level

Without increased funding or fundamental changes to operating models, financial pressures will continue to undermine delivery. System-wide solutions are required rather than institution-by-institution mitigations.

In Lanarkshire:

Increase understanding of current and future skills needs

The colleges will need to be aware of what evidence is available, where/who from, and work to develop a shared understanding of current and future skills needs and act accordingly – in partnership when required. This might be as two colleges or a wider group of six in the west.

Strengthen direct engagement with SFC, Scottish Government and regional stakeholders

The colleges should have transparent and meaningful routes for engagement with SFC, Scottish Government and Local Authorities, particularly on matters of funding, curriculum/ provision which responds to identified needs, and strategic priorities.

Adopt flexible, informal but structured collaborative approaches

Collaboration should focus on practical outcomes—such as employer engagement, learner pathways, and data sharing—without reliance on rigid or overly complex structural arrangements.

Keep education local and engage with local communities

Consider the scope to develop a regional hub in future where colleges and universities come together with other stakeholders to ensure delivery meets local and regional needs.

In summary

The experience of the colleges and region designated as Lanarkshire was framed as a source of learning for any existing or future regional or sub-regional arrangements across the sector.

The move to work and plan separately as regional colleges was widely welcomed by the participants, particularly due to the opportunity for more focused governance, clearer strategic discussion, and reduced board complexity.

Despite dissolution of the RSB, there was a strong expectation that collaboration would continue, in less formal, more flexible ways to support learners, employers, and communities. At the same time to continue working in partnership to meet the skills needs of their stakeholders in their dedicated geographical region and contribute to the wider Scottish economy.

Appendix 1

Comments shared in advance of the session via the Padlet

Looking back and lessons learned:

“The challenge of this governance model was that it was not possible to achieve parity of esteem for the assigned college as SFC did not engage with the assigned college directly.”

“The model in itself was not structured in a way to support fair governance of the region in these matters.”

“The SFC review of the Lanarkshire Region clearly sets out the challenges and impact of the current structure in meeting the needs of the region.”

“When working well, regional partnership arrangements can be a positive experience for all concerned. Latterly this has been the case in Lanarkshire.”

“It's crucial that bodies such as the SFC recognise and understand how the different regional set-ups work(ed), what they were trying to achieve and what the barriers were to them achieving it.”

“Working together as a Region has had its challenges over the years. Recently, with changes in leadership, this has been more harmonious.”

What are you looking forward to in the future

“More focused strategic discussion for our college. This should mean less Board papers to read, allowing us to take more time over our individual colleges.”

“A continuation of the huge strides that have been made, over the last three years in particular, in inter-college working. “

“It would be highly questionable if the colleges were not able to continue to work together constructively for the benefit of the communities - learners, residents, businesses - that they are there to serve.”

“Both colleges have continuously stated that working collaboratively with the whole region is the future. There is a strong commitment to maintain positive relations and to continue to work collaboratively.”

“Both colleges seek to address the needs of the communities that they serve and to continue working together to do so.”

What approach will be most effective in the future in terms of understanding and responding to regional skills needs and what would be needed to make that successful?

“There is much to be gained in working together on student recruitment and retention.”

“Working closely with the Lanarkshire employers together and sharing of information.”

“Build on synergies across both colleges to be able to support the Lanarkshire communities and work with employers.”

“Open discussion, sharing of information and where possible, mutually beneficial working practices. And not solely within the Region either, but also across the Glasgow City landscape for which Lanarkshire is a huge provider of people, skills and businesses.”

“The financial challenges facing the sector are undoubtedly increasingly challenging. Going forward building a positive and proactive collaborative approach between the colleges, and jointly with SFC would assist in building understanding of the pressures and opportunities each college faces.”

“The various strands of the education sector require greater clarity, stability and finances to enable their most effective contributions and community inputs. It is to be hoped that the Scottish Government's relatively recent reviews will help in relation to the first two elements above, but these will continue to be negatively impacted upon if the appropriate levels of financial support are not made available.”

End

The NCL Board of Management

Self-Evaluation Report 2026 and Board Development Plan 2026-27

“The Board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every three to five years.”

Extract from the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges

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| Section 3 | NCL Board and Committee self-evaluation Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit and Risk (ARC) Committee discussion |
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PART 2: CONFIDENTIAL *not for publication*

SIM's confidential report on the effectiveness of the Chair

SECTION 1

New College Lanarkshire Self-Evaluation Framework 2026

1 Background

1.1 The Code of Good Governance for the College Sector (*extract at Appendix 1*) sets out that the Board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process.

1.2 The New College Board – formerly the Lanarkshire Board – has undertaken annual self-evaluations as required by the Code of Good Governance. The framework for the self-evaluation has been conducted using questionnaires which have been derived from CDN templates as follows:

- Review Questionnaire for each of the main Committees – CSAO, ARC, RGP and Finance – sent out to each of the Committee members asking them to complete the questionnaire and send it back to the Board Secretariat.
- A second Committee questionnaire sent out to each of the Committee Chairs again asking for this to be returned to the Board Secretariat.
- A Board Effectiveness Questionnaire on sent out to each member of the Board asking them to complete it and send it to the Board Secretariat.
- A Review Questionnaire on the performance of the Chair sent out to each member of the Board asking them to complete and to send back to the Board's SIM.
- One to one sessions annually with the Chair and each Board Member to agree a Personal Development Plan (PDP) for each Board Members with follow up training mentoring arranged if required.

1.3 This Framework results in the following outputs:

- A Self-Evaluation report which is collated from the Committee and Board Review Questionnaires returned from the Board Members.
- A review of the Chair which is produced from returned questionnaires by the SIM.
- A Board Development Plan for the Board.
- Individual PDPs.

2. Self-Evaluation Issues

2.1 The basic issue is that the completion and return of the questionnaires from Committee and Board Members is decreasing despite the best efforts of the Board Secretariat to have this prioritised and persistent follow up from them with Board Members. This is also the case with the questionnaire on the Chair's performance from the SIM.

2.2 Although distribution of the questionnaires was phased, Board Members felt that they had no longer completed one set of forms when they were asked to complete another and there is no defined period for implementation of any suggested improvements.

2.3 There have been suggestions from Board Members that there should be an approach which is cyclical over a longer period. A year of the evaluation questionnaires followed by an implementation period / focus on issues identified and then external review after 5 years.

2.4 CDN undertook an external evaluation of the Lanarkshire Board in 2025 and they were specifically asked to review and comment on the Self-Evaluation framework. The comments from CDN in their external evaluation report are as follows:

The Code requires that the Board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and that there is a robust self-evaluation process in place. Members are asked to evaluate the performance of the Board and any committees they are members of. However, there does seem to be an element of 'survey fatigue' and concerns around the frequency that members are expected to complete questionnaires.

The self-evaluation process could be simplified by reducing the number of questionnaires and introducing a workshop-based approach to self-evaluation. These could be independently facilitated and would be aimed at producing more meaningful results based on discussion between members.

Rather than repeating the same exercise each year, annual self-evaluation could be achieved within the context of a three-year cycle of

- self-evaluation
- action planning and the production of the Board Development Plan,
- workshops to review progress review against the Board Development Plan and the identification of further areas for development to be included for the coming year.

This would provide a more dynamic and effective approach to annual self-evaluation, reduce 'survey fatigue' and present further opportunity board member engagement and team building.

2.5 There are also new factors to take into consideration: the first is the document from the SFC on its expectations from Good Governance and the CDN's document in response to that and secondly there is also the recommendation from the external auditors in their annual report that there is a review – post dissolution as follows:

The Strategic Regional Board was dissolved on 30 July 2025. Under the Strategic Regional Board arrangements, South Lanarkshire College officers attended committee meetings. The dissolution provides an opportunity for the college to review and re-assess governance arrangements to ensure these remain appropriate for NCL. There is a risk that committee arrangements are not revised to suit the needs of NCL. **Details of agreed action:** Committee structure will be included in the evaluation for 2026 and this will start in the February / March 2026 Board cycle

2.6 The SFC expectations document places emphasis on external evaluations (calling them Governance Effectiveness Reviews (GERS) as opposed to external evaluations) with the view that at the moment they are focussed on Board Development but that they should also give financial assurances. The SFC sets out the availability of following documents under the OFAM:

- Internal audit reports

- Corporate Governance Statements within the external auditor's annual reports and the Financial Statements
- Annual Reports and accounts meeting the FM and sector good governance
- Governance Effectiveness Reviews

The SFC will now consider the opinions in the external audit reports and monitor the timely response to recommendations. It will enhance contact with the internal and external auditors, look to whistleblowing policies being in place and that there is scrutiny of institutional strategies with consistency of information to Boards. There will also be assessment of the quality of financial oversight exercised by the Finance Committee and the Board. This should be a clear component of the GERS process and revised guidance should highlight this requirement.

2.7 The SFC notes the need for additional guidance on what assurances are required and notes that there is no standard approach to the GERS. 'On Board' who were asked by the SFC to undertake a desk exercise reviewing the GERS have recommended document review, observation of Committees and the Board meetings. A survey or questionnaire, Board Member interviews and a workshop to give Board Member reviews. This is the method used by CDN in the Lanarkshire Board/NCL external review last year.

2.8 The SFC highlights the need for improved Board Training and CDN have highlighted the training that is available on their website. The SFC will work with CDN and Advance HE on supplemental training on SFC expectations of Board Members.

2.9 There is also reference to the OFAM meetings engaging with institutions about the 'On Board' review findings and at the NCL OFAM meeting the SFC manager stated that governance would be on the agenda for at least one of the four OFAM meetings held with the SFC each year. This may be with Board Members included in future.

3. Proposed Revised Self- Evaluation Format for 2026.

3.1 It is proposed that the framework is adjusted this year as follows:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking the review of the Committees by setting out time in each Committee to go over the last collated return from that committee thus holding a workshop within the committee rather than separately organising another meeting unless there is a need to do this. In other words, the committee will look at what it said collectively the last time and update or amend. There will be an additional section in the questionnaire for the comments from the Chair of the Committee instead of asking them to complete a further questionnaire. • The same approach would be taken for the Board review with an additional section in the questionnaire for the Board Chair to make comment. • The SIM review will stay as usual with a questionnaire sent out to all Board Members and a separate report compiled by the SIM. • The one to ones with the Board Members would be conducted as usual. • An updated Board Development Plan will be produced for the Board. |
|---|

3.2 There has already been discussion of the SFC expectations document in the NCL ARC and Audit Scotland were asked if they had been consulted on this requirement for additional financial assurance. It would appear that there had been no consultation at this stage. Audit Scotland already undertake a review of Board documentation – Committee and Board Minutes, whistle blowing and

other policies, the Register of Interests. There is a Governance Statement in the Financial Statements which has been formatted on Audit Scotland's advice. There are potential approaches to provide the financial assurance that the SFC want (once they have come to a view on what this is) and this could come through the external audit process and be incorporated into the GERS when it is undertaken. For example, this could be in terms of an enhanced governance statement in the accounts or an additional letter from both auditors as part of the annual audit process. This would be provided with the accounts in December and this could then be incorporated into the self- evaluation process in the following board cycle in February March which will be reported to the Board in June. The Code of Good Governance checklist could be reviewed by the Executive Board and also go to the Board in June. The OFAM meeting could have the Financial Assurances on its agenda and this completes the inclusion of the SFC in the process. This would keep any additional work to a minimum and give an annual review which can then be incorporated to a three- or five-year cycle with the GERS.

3.3 There should be dialogue with the auditors, the SFC, Colleges Scotland, CDN on the simplest and least burdensome and effective way of getting the assurance required and incorporating this into the accounts/self- evaluation process.

4. Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that this approach set out at para 3.1 above is trialled for this year and is part of a cyclical approach that would require a full review every third year with an external evaluation every 5th year. It is noted that the SFC may look to a GERS every 3 years – the Good Governance Steering Group will determine this. In this case, there would be a GER every third year with the new follow up arrangements proposed above in years 2 and 3.

SECTION 2

Lanarkshire Board Development Plan 2025/26

CDN carried out an External Effectiveness Review of the Lanarkshire Board from January 2025 presenting its final report at 9 June 2025 meeting of the Board.

It was an external effectiveness review of the combined Lanarkshire Board (Regional Strategic Body) and the New College Lanarkshire Board (Regional College) with South Lanarkshire College assigned to the Lanarkshire Board.

The Lanarkshire Board (RSB) was to be dissolved on 31 July 2025 by Scottish Government and New College Lanarkshire (NCL) and South Lanarkshire College (SLC) would then become two distinct Regional Colleges.

CDN noted that the transition from an RSB to a smaller and simpler structure as a Regional College presents a range of opportunities for the New College Lanarkshire (NCL) Board to spend more time on strategic decision making, operate as a team, and continue to innovate and focus on the needs of NCL students.

It was also noted that the transition was being carefully planned and that it will be important to ensure that the Board of NCL has the right number of members with the blend of skills and experience required by the college. This will require succession planning and building the 'new' Board as a team, which should be a priority.

CDN made the following observations:

- This is a strong Board with an excellent range of skills and experience amongst the membership.
- The launch of the NCL Strategy 2030 is an opportunity to harness the enthusiasm and commitment of the Regional College Board around the new strategic plan. Board members have been engaged in the development of the new strategic plan.
- The Board benefits from strong leadership from an experienced and skilled Chair who encourages contribution from all members, builds consensus, and effectively sums up Board discussions and decisions.
- There is a constructive working relationship between the Board and the executive team based on respect and a mutual understanding of each other's roles. This is an engaged and supportive Board.
- Compliance with the Code of Good Governance is monitored and reported to the Board through a compliance checklist which is maintained by the Governance Professional.

Recommendations and Board Development Plan 2025/26

1. Strategic KPIs

The Board should agree on a set of strategic KPIs to underpin the strategy.

- Members should receive regular reports on progress against the agreed KPIs with a supporting narrative highlighting any variances and executive team interventions.

***Comment:** There were special meetings of the Board on 3 February and 3 November 2025 to consider Strategy and this came to the Board for final discussion and approval on 8 December 2025. Since the launch of NCL's Strategy 2030 a Strategy Office has been set up to underpin all of the related operational activity required to deliver Strategy 2030. A detailed action plan has been drawn up with KPIs for each element together with a reporting schedule to keep the Board Committees informed of progress/variance relevant to the committees' area of interest. The Board will be updated at each of its meetings.*

2. Build the new Board team

- The transition to a smaller regional board and the development of the new strategy presents an opportunity to harness the enthusiasm and commitment of NCL board members around the strategic plan and build the 'new' board team.
- Succession planning is important to ensure the Board, and the committees have the skills and experience required by the 'new' Board.

***Comment:** There is enthusiasm for the new structure and there is now the capacity to focus solely on NCL issues. There is more time in committee and the Board now that there are no SLC items and papers on the agenda. The Chair has a focus on succession planning and this will be a feature of the next recruitment round in 2026.*

3. Student Association Reports to the Board

- As part of the transition to the new structure consideration should be given to moving the Student Report up the Board and committee agendas to be the first item after the minutes and declarations of interest.

***Comment:** The Student Association Report has now been moved up the agenda for the CSAO Committee and the Board.*

4. Board and Committee Papers

- Board papers can be lengthy; the volume of papers should be kept under review. Board papers would benefit from a brief introduction highlighting the purpose of the paper and the Board action required, for discussion, for noting or for decision.
- Board and committee minutes should be more succinct, referencing the papers presented to the Board or committee, and recording the decisions made and action points.
- Finance committee and Board papers would benefit from greater structure, clarity, and narrative, especially for members who do not have a background in finance or accountancy.

***Comment:** There are now fewer papers post dissolution and this will be monitored. There is a Board cover sheet and its use will be further promoted with the Executive Board. The Board Minutes are under discussion. It had been agreed at the Finance Committee on the 17th November 2025 that the Finance reports will be reviewed for future meetings.*

5. Committees

- Consideration should be given to the ARC and Finance committees meeting, annually, to discuss issues that are common to the work of both committees.
- To avoid any overlap or duplication the Chairs Committee should monitor which reports are submitted to each committee.

***Comment:** There was a joint meeting of the ARC and the Finance Committee on the 1st December 2025 to recommend the accounts and financial statements. This is the first joint meeting and this will become a standing arrangement.*

6. Board Member Development

- Members would benefit from the opportunity to hear directly from key stakeholders. Consideration should be given to introducing informal stakeholder engagement sessions before Board meetings.
- A key stakeholder mapping exercise would enable members to better understand the wider operating environment and support effective decision making.

***Comment:** There have been presentations to the strategic board meetings from internal auditors, Wylie Bisset Glasgow (wbg), and CDN as well as presentations to the CSAO. The strategic board day on the 3 November was held the UWS site in Blantyre with a tour of the facilities by UWS. There was a presentation to the February 2026 meeting of the CSAO committee. There will be other*

presentations organised during 2026. There was a paper on partnerships going to the Board on the 8th December 2025 along with Strategy 2030.

7. Annual Board Self Evaluation

- A more dynamic approach could be considered based on a three-year cycle of evaluation, as detailed above.

***Comment:** This is under discussion and any impact from the recent SFC paper on expectations of governance is being considered along with the CDN response. There will be further discussion with CDN and with the SFC.*

8. Website

- Post dissolution, review the Board section of the college website to add biographies for all members and to ensure that all the governance documentation is up to date.

***Comment:** The website has been refreshed with some last adjustments still to be made for new photographs etc.*

SECTION 3

NCL Board self-evaluation 2026

Board Workshop

As discussed previously, to eliminate the use of questionnaires to individual Board members, we undertook a different approach which was to have a workshop prior to the Board meeting in March. A briefing was prepared for Board members to explain the approach and to provide summary information and conclusions of the self-evaluation in 2024 and the CDN review in 2025. Similar aide memoire briefings were prepared for each Committee.

The original intention had been for each committee and the Board, separately at their respective meetings to give some thought to their effectiveness and whether changes were needed. However, time and committee business had proved this to be mostly unworkable and that therefore the Workshop would range across the 4 main committees and the Board.

The SIM added that the annual Review of the Chair, which he was undertaking, would still be done via questionnaire, which would be circulated in the next 10 days.

Ronnie Smith put the question to the meeting: **‘Is there anything we are missing from the current committee structure?’**

One point of concern was that on their recent visit to NCL, representatives from Education Scotland were not clear what areas were covered by the Resources and General Purposes Committee (the RGP). At its most recent meeting (23 February 2026) RGP members demitted to the Executive Board the task of finding a title for the committee which accurately reflected its remit. KF said that it was of particular importance to demonstrate to external agencies where HR issues were reported. The titles of 2 of the other main Board committees: Audit and Risk (ARC), Finance, were self-evident, however the meeting agreed that the current Curriculum, Student Affairs and Outcomes Committee, the CSAO,

should be re-titled to reflect the College's focus on students along the lines of the internal committee 'Students, Education, Learning and Teaching' (SELT) Committee. Such a student-centred committee could receive reports on disciplinary matters which would meet the QAA's agenda.

The incoming chair of the CSAO Committee commented on the helpfulness of the development of the recently introduced themed approach to meetings. This enabled staff to showcase their specialisms and projects to the CSAO and to provide a much wider and deeper understanding to committee members.

Ronnie Smith posed the question: **'Is the right information being reported to the appropriate committee?'**

There have been some recent issues around which committee is lead on a specific issue such as RGP and Finance, consequently information has been shared to both committees, however the issue of priorities remains. It was suggested and agreed that 'issues for the Board' should be a standing item on the Executive Board's agenda to enable the Exec Board to recommend the appropriate route.

Additional committees?

Following further discussion on possible additional committees to encompass community and partnership alongside the reshaping of the current CSAO it was agreed that creating any new committees would be unworkable given the need for committees to be quorate and membership is already stretched given the number of Board members available to serve on the 4 committees. It was agreed that student reporting should reflect what is required by QAA/Education Scotland.

Governance

Ronnie Smith said that he was satisfied that the appropriate governance was in place, the issue was where more complex proposals coming from the Executive Board are scrutinised. It was agreed that the key points from the discussion should be written up and circulated to the Chairs for their consideration. It was also agreed that the role of the Board is to establish/enable the strategic framework from which the Executive Board develops and delivers the operational activities and priorities. The role of the Board is to scrutinise and facilitate, not to become a stumbling block; the Principal and the Executive team should be enabled to undertake the operational business of the college.

Ronnie Smith invited further thoughts and comments from members.

The Chair of the Finance Committee commented on the improvement in the presentation of papers for this committee following her requests on taking up the chairmanship and proposed that further consideration should be given to the development of key financial metrics in addition to management accounts. The chair posed the question to Board members who do not have a background in finance on whether they would welcome enhancing their understanding say through the mentoring programme to enable better understanding of the discussions around finance.

One of the recommendations in the External Effectiveness Review 2025 was that the minutes of the Board and committees should be less detailed. However, members felt that it was important to retain the context of the discussions in the notes, otherwise Committee Chairs would not be able to report to the Board by exception but would have to take up time explaining the background of an issue. This was accepted by the meeting.

ARC self-evaluation discussion

ARC Self- Evaluation discussion at its meeting on 16 February 2026: The Committee considered the points that had been raised in the previous self- evaluation and the general comments in the CDN External Evaluation Report as set out in the ARC self- evaluation paper. It also considered the questions posed for the ARC in this paper as follows:

Was the joint meeting with the Finance Committee useful? Should we continue to do this?

The Chair commented that the joint meeting with the Finance Committee which took place in December and was a recommendation captured in the Board Development Plan had been useful and this was supported by other committee Board Members. This was a good time of the year to hold the meeting.

How can we continue to develop members' understanding of the work carried out by the college to enable better understanding of the financial pressures the college and the sector are currently experiencing?

The chair commented that being a member of the Chairs Committee helped with this for those who were committee chairs. There was a lot of information available in addition to discussion at Committee and at the Board. The Risk Register is also a useful source of information.

Any other points you wish to make with regard to the committee structure currently in place?

There was discussion about formal succession planning within the committees for members to step up to the role of a Chair and whether there should be committee Vice Chairs. It was proposed that this would be open for Board Members to self-nominate by contacting Ronnie Smith or the Governance Professional.

Are there any other points we should be taking into consideration to ensure that the ARC serves the college's strategy 2030?

The ARC is actively involved in the work of the Board and in Strategy 2030 and it should continue with its engagement.

SECTION 4

Conclusions from the Workshop discussion:

1. Further consideration of the names and remits of the RGP and CSAO:
 - Suggestions for RGP:
 - Estates, IT and People Committee
 - Suggestions for CSAO:
 - Students Committee
 - Students, Education, Learning and Teaching Committee
 - Students and Partnerships
2. To appoint Vice Chairs for the 4 main committees.
3. Additional committees are unnecessary and would be difficult to populate to ensure meetings are quorate, given the size of the Board.
4. Reporting of HR issues sits within the RGP.
5. Maintain the annual meeting of the ARC and Finance Committees.

6. Where are complex issues scrutinised? How to decide the priorities between the RGP and Finance Committees where both have a strong interest? Ensure both Committees are kept informed (ie share papers and updates), and for the respective chairs to discuss if necessary.
7. Take the committee titles and remits to the Chairs' Committee for further consideration and update if required.
8. Retain the detail in the recording of the committee and Board meetings.

SECTION 5

Board member individual meetings with the Chair

During April and May 2026, the Chair undertook a series of individual meetings with Board members. The majority of these 1-hour sessions took place online, with 3 taking the form of face-to-face meetings as requested by the individual Board members.

Feedback from these meetings is very positive and a number of helpful suggestions emerged:

- To meet with the Board Secretary to consider items for the meetings agendas **(already implemented)**
- Support for the resumption of the mentoring programme
- As part of succession planning for the college, consider the benefits of appointing Vice Chairs to the Committees **(already partly implemented)**
 - Give careful consideration to the membership of the Finance and ARC Committees where some background understanding is helpful when refreshing membership **(in progress)**. This will open up opportunities for new Board members, following the forthcoming recruitment exercise and allow development for existing members of the Committee into further responsibilities
 - Ensure arrangements in place for the chair of the Finance Committee to meet with the Head of Finance to discuss reporting cycles and arrangements for the Committee's consideration and to improve scrutiny of key aspects of the college's finances. **(in progress)**
 - Investigate the prospects for more specific benchmarking and performance appraisal against financial planning.
 - Work with other Committee chairs to establish improved understanding of cross committee working. Ensure the practice of having a lead committee for specific topics does not exclude interests from other committees. This may require improved liaison with the Registrar and Executive Board more generally to assess where primary and secondary interests may lie.
 - Try to achieve more participation from all Board members in scrutinizing and contributing to important documents.

SECTION 6

Shaping the Board development plan 2026-27

1. Arrange for further strategy briefing sessions for Board members as appropriate and as agreed with the Principal.

2. While there are no major issues with any of the Committees, work is on-going to rename the Curriculum, Student Affairs and Outcomes Committee (CSAO) and the Resources and General Purposes Committee (RGP) as discussed in the Board workshop.
3. Following the suggestion at the Board's discussion, the appointment of Vice Chairs to the 4 main Committees is in progress.
4. Committee membership is under review to enable other Board members to join or switch committees.
5. Add 'issues for the Board' as a standing item on the Executive Board's agenda. This particularly relates to strategic projects where a Board process is necessary.
6. Revival of the mentoring/buddy scheme for new and existing Board members as required.
7. Implementation of the arrangements requested by the Chair of Finance regarding the presentation of papers, meetings with the Head of Finance, and with the Board Secretary for agenda setting.
8. Follow up informal inductions for new Board members with directions to login to the CDN Governance website for additional sector materials and guidance documents.
9. Continue with development sessions on relevant topics as they arise or as requested.

SECTION 7

SIM's review of the Chair

Summary

Good and continuing progress has been made since the Performance Appraisal of the Regional Chair took place last year. The then overarching achievement of 98% of Board Members strongly agreeing or agreeing that the Chair was at least satisfying all the objectives and indicators attached to his role was, because of such as the incoming operational changes in Lanarkshire and the issues facing the education sector in Scotland as a whole, perceived as being something that would be difficult to match. But, albeit marginally, matched and bettered it has been, with the Chair now achieving an overall 99% strongly agree/agree success rating.

Currently, there is no getting away from the reality that, overall, FE Sector finances remain a decidedly difficult subject area. Greater clarity is required from both the Scottish Government and thus the Scottish Funding Council, on how it sees the Sector progressing in both the short and longer term. However, and more positively, it is felt also that the dissolution of the Lanarkshire Order has opened up new operating opportunities for the College's Executive Team, staff and learners to (potentially) benefit from, as well as at the more strategic Board level, where a view is that Members are now more able to engage and focus on matters and developments that they can more directly relate to and influence. Continuing arrangements to provide support and development opportunities to Board Members, helping them become more informed and to engage increasingly more effectively will be required if the College is to fully realise the benefits of this.

It is very evident from the responses to this appraisal, that the Chair continues to be seen as an effective leader of the Board, that he communicates well and inspires surety and confidence in his governance and guidance around processes, procedures and issues. While some improvements have been highlighted during the review, the overall success rating of 99% afforded him, amply demonstrates this.

And as noted in past reports, whilst not a specific element of the annual performance appraisal of the Chair, it would be remiss not to add that, on several occasions during the year, the Chair has commented on how well he has been supported by both the Board Secretary and his Assistant. He has acknowledged the strength of their organisational and administrative skills and how they have contributed significantly to how well he, the Board and its various Committees have functioned as a result.

With the advent and implementation of the various strands of Strategy 2030, there is a lot to look forward to. It's fair to say also, that there appears to be a significant belief that the College has the right Chair and people at Board and Executive Team levels to help ensure that success is delivered.

SECTION 8

Appendix 1:

Extract from the Code of Good Governance:

***D.24** The board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every three to five years. The board should determine the timing for this externally facilitated review as part of the annual effectiveness review. The board is not required to conduct a self-evaluation of its effectiveness in the same year as an externally facilitated evaluation. The board must send its self-evaluation (including an externally facilitated evaluation) and board development plan (including progress on previous year's plan) to its funding body and publish them online.*

***D.25** The board must agree a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the board chair and the committee chairs. The evaluation of the board chair should normally be led by the senior independent member.*

***D.26** The board must ensure all board members are subject to appraisal of their performance, conducted at least annually, normally by the chair of the board.*

***D.27** The performance of regional college chairs will also be evaluated by the Scottish Government, as regional college chairs are appointed by the Scottish Ministers and are personally accountable to them.*

***D.28** The performance of assigned, incorporated college chairs will also be evaluated by the regional strategic body, as they are appointed by the regional strategic body and are personally accountable to them.*

New College Lanarkshire News

Communications Roundup | February – April 2026

Prepared by Daniel Byron

Contents

Every news story published on the college intranet during February, March and April 2026.

February 2026 — 18 stories

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|--|---|
| - Rose Bowl win — Best College in Scotland | - Cairnhill Welding School opens |
| - ESOL & Dental International Week | - Pamper Day for survivors of abuse |
| - Law Society careers event | - ESOL visit to Kelvin College |
| - Show Racism the Red Card | - MasterChef masterclass |
| - International Week panels & events | - HOCHTIEF Memorandum of Understanding |
| - Braw Wee Shop charity mug launch | - Scots Language at Holyrood |
| - Egypt nursing partnership visit | - NCL Foundation raises £4,290 + Summerlee Exhibition |
| - Principal appointed Deputy Lieutenant | - Rotterdam's Albeda Startcollege visits NCL |
| - Abbie Hendry — first Sports Ambassador | - Sureserve donates £5,000 + UWS Court Medal + Cycling Scotland |

March 2026 — 16 stories

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Tommy Gemmell statue unveiled in Craigneuk | - Dougie Imrie — second Sports Ambassador |
| - The Little Iceberg musical with all-NCL cast | - CLIC wins City & Guilds Award at Westminster |
| - Scots Law guide published in 13 languages | - Thermomix visit + Can Return Scheme nomination |
| - Field & Forest Machinery apprenticeship | - Brain Health workshop + Viewpark conservation |
| - Ready for Retail cross-campus visit + Sunday Herald | - BA students visit UWS campus |
| - Cairnhill partnership raised in House of Commons | - Josh Littlejohn MBE — NCL Fellow |
| - PPG & Bell visit + Anas Sarwar at Braw Wee Shop | - Jackton Distillery visit + Capital Radio presenter |
| - First BA Business & Leadership cohort graduates | - Culinary gold + AHT nominations + DFN SEARCH Day + Cumbernauld Creates |

April 2026 — 10 stories

- | | |
|--|---|
| - Premature — feature film debut (80% NCL cast & crew) | - Hairdressing Showcase at Cumbernauld |
| - Boccia Festival 2026 at Ravenscraig | - Five Herald Education Award nominations |
| - Lights, Camera, No Limits — students film with Volvo | - ESOL students compete at national College Cup |
| - 'Stars aligned' — mature student's road back via music | - AI in the clinic — NCL join Romanian uni research |
| - Project SEARCH wins Gold Transformational Outcomes Award & staff Social Value Awards | - NCL student to compete at Worldskills in Shanghai |

• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A Cut Above the Rest — Rose Bowl Winners



NCL won the AHT Rose Bowl for Best College in Scotland for the second consecutive year, with the event hosted at the College. The competition has run since 1963 to develop students to a national

standard. Former student Kathleen-Anne returned to judge, having completed her HNC Hairdressing and HND Make-up Artistry at NCL. Former Coatbridge College lecturer Jene Fleming was honoured with a lifetime award for 53 years of service to judging. Winners now progress to the national finals in Blackpool. NCL also received two AHT national nominations: Effective Team Collaboration and Outstanding Employer Engagement.

2nd year

In a row NCL has won the Rose Bowl

The future of our industry is in very capable hands.

— John O'Hara, AHT Scotland Chair

• PARTNERSHIPS & INDUSTRY

Engineering Futures — Cairnhill Welding School Opens

A new era for engineering training in Lanarkshire officially began with the opening of NCL and Cairnhill Structures' Welding School in Coatbridge, attended by Principal Professor Moore. Cairnhill is a market leader in steel fabrication and the partnership will help sustain Lanarkshire's proud engineering tradition for years to come.



The precision and quality of their steel work shows they are inheritors of a proud Lanarkshire tradition.

— Professor Christopher Moore, Principal

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

ESOL & Dental — International Week

Level 3 ESOL and Level 6 Dental students came together in the clinical skills room to celebrate International Week. ESOL students led discussions on food, traditions, dental care and favourite museum visits. Dental Lecturer Lesley McIntosh: "The energy in the room was amazing — great conversations and lots of laughter."



• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Pamper Day for Survivors of Abuse

Survivors of domestic abuse were welcomed

to a pamper day at Coatbridge Campus in partnership with the National Campaign Against Violence Against Women and Girls. Led by Neil McMullen, teams from Dentistry, Childcare and beyond provided hair styling, nails and massages. Michelle McManus attended in support.

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Law Students Get a Flavour of Legal Careers

Over 100 legal students from NCL and South Lanarkshire College attended a Law Society of Scotland Careers Event at Motherwell Campus. Solicitors Alanis Hunt and John-Paul Banks-McGregor, alongside LLB students Ryan Mitchell and Zeena Muhsin, took part in Q&A panels. Wendy Paterson (Head of Lanarkshire Business School): "This was a valuable event that allowed students to gain insight into career paths they may take."

“

The law students had a great afternoon with very valuable insights into what the future may hold for them.

— Carolyn Conlin, Academic Leader

• INTERNATIONAL

ESOL Students Visit Kelvin College

NCL's ESOL students travelled to Kelvin College's Haghill Campus to showcase cultural dress, share food from home and exchange cooking ideas. Arranged by lecturer Khadija Hadji, this was the first cross-college ESOL event — a vibrant celebration of culture.



• VALUES IN ACTION

NCL Gives Racism the Red Card

NCL supported Show Racism the Red Card at their BUC semi-final against the University of Stirling. Campaign Manager Billy Singh: "In our schools we have, on average, 50 recorded racist incidents a week. Football fans can be a force for good — by being active anti-racists we can change hearts, minds and lives."

• INDUSTRY LEARNING

MasterChef Masterclass for Culinary Arts Students

NCL Culinary Arts students received a masterclass from MasterChef quarterfinalist and Cameron House chef Rohan Wadke. The session covered recipe development, flavour profiling and advanced kitchen techniques. Sustainability Lead Margaret McNeill: "It was an incredible experience — real motivation for the chefs of the future."



“

From my own experience I know how far good mentorship and the right guidance can take you.

— Rohan Wadke, 2nd from left, MasterChef & Cameron House

• INCLUSION

International Week — Panels, Buffets and Gaming

International Week panels toured Cumbernauld, Coatbridge and Motherwell, hosted by Jaz Sandhu. MLOne students produced Haggis Arancini, Sticky Irn Bru Chicken and Thai Spiced Stovies. Students joined an International Gaming Day including a Rocket League match against Iceland and a Twitch livestream. Computing students began a new research collaboration with Romanian medical students on AI in clinical decision-making. ESOL students hosted an Atrium event featuring Ukrainian songs.



Staff and students explored the many unique identities that shape who we are.

— Jaz Sandhu, International Week Host



PARTNERSHIPS & INDUSTRY

HOCHTIEF — Memorandum of Understanding

NCL signed an MOU with HOCHTIEF — a global construction firm with more than 115 years of experience — to help bolster the local workforce in North Lanarkshire. Councillor Michael McBride: “Absolutely crucial for us as an authority, for HOCHTIEF, for the College, and for our community.”



• NCL FOUNDATION

Braw Wee Shop — Charity Mug Launch

Supported Learning students and the Automotive department launched a charity mug featuring lecturer Chris Wallace’s race car, number 7. All proceeds go to the NCL Foundation. Mugs are £4 at Cumbernauld’s Braw Wee Shop, with plans to expand to Motherwell and other merchandise lines.

• ARTS & CULTURE

NCL Lecturer Takes Scots Language to Holyrood

NCL lecturer Bobby Wallace attended the Love Yer Leid event at the Scottish Parliament, organised by Dr Sylvia Warnecke (Open University) and sponsored by Emma Harper MSP. Lecturers from across Scotland demonstrated embedding Scots in the classroom. Education Secretary Jenny Gilruth: “This is a key part of our commitment to celebrating and protecting Scotland’s languages.”



Embedding Scots into Scottish classrooms is an essential equality and inclusion initiative.

— Dr Sylvia Warnecke, Open University



• INTERNATIONAL

Nursing Staff Visit Mansoura National University, Egypt

Staff Nicola Mulholland and Hazel Scott travelled to Mansoura National University in Egypt, funded by the Scottish Education Exchange Programme. Discussions focused on Dental Nursing, Brain Health and Care of the Elderly, building on a reciprocal visit to NCL in October 2025. The delegation was received by University President Professor Doctor Sherif Y. Khater.

We're looking forward to continuing our discussions and strengthening this partnership in the future.

— Hazel Scott, NCL Staff

• NCL FOUNDATION

NCL Foundation Raises £4,290

The NCL Foundation raised £4,290 at a fundraising evening with Frank Pilkington, supported by the Braw Wee Shop (£1,500 gift). The Foundation provides 3,500 breakfasts monthly across all campuses, discreetly and with no questions asked. A student had told Professor Moore: "If it hadn't been for that breakfast, I might not have been able to stay at college."

• ARTS & CULTURE

Summerlee Exhibition — 160 Years of Coatbridge

Summerlee Exhibition opened, celebrating 160 years of Coatbridge. Art by Carrie 'Toots' Thompson captures the town's transformation from industrial roots to the present day. Texts were collated by NCL staff Calum Crosbie, Sharon McCabe and Stuart Campbell. A key feature spotlights Dr David Ross, whose leadership shaped the legacy of Coatbridge College.

• LEADERSHIP

Principal Appointed Deputy Lieutenant for Lanarkshire

Lord Lieutenant Lady Susan Haughey conferred the position of Deputy Lieutenant for Lanarkshire on Principal Professor Christopher Moore at a ceremony at Motherwell Campus. Deputy Lieutenants are recommended by the Lord Lieutenant and approved by the Monarch. Duties include attending 100th birthday parties and overseeing citizenship ceremonies. Lady Haughey joked she "can't wait to mark the quality of Christopher's work!"



An honour for NCL and for Lanarkshire

I'm moved to have this opportunity to do this for Lanarkshire, and for our College.

— Professor Christopher Moore

• INTERNATIONAL

Rotterdam's Albeda Startcollege Visits NCL

Staff from Albeda Startcollege visited Motherwell and Coatbridge over three days to deepen European educational collaboration. Key outcomes include agreement to organise European friendly skills competitions across countries. Albeda plans to return in November 2026 with students, focusing on Construction, Hospitality and Services.

The aim is to invest in European cooperation and exchange across four countries.

— Brando Lemens, Education Leader, Albeda

• SPORTS

Scottish FIFA Referee Abbie Hendry — First Sports Ambassador

Scottish FIFA International referee Abbie Hendry visited sports students at Motherwell Campus and was named the department's first Sports Coaching & Development Ambassador. Promoted to Category 1 status in January 2026, Hendry led the first all-female officiating team for a Highland League match and has taken charge of Women's Old Firm clashes on Sky. Students completed a refereeing masterclass on the pitch.

Bringing Abbie on board highlights the strength of our Sports Coaching & Development programmes.

— Chris Wilson, Head of Department

• NCL FOUNDATION

Sureserve Donates £5,000 for Free Student Breakfasts



Sureserve Energy Services UK — the UK's largest retrofit organisation — donated £5,000 to the NCL

Foundation, providing free breakfasts for a month for around 3,500 students. Sureserve signed an agreement with NCL focused on Net Zero workforce skills and is planning a social enterprise to offer paid work to NCL students. Robert Stirling (MD): "Success starts with a healthy start to the day. We are proud to support the NCL Foundation."

3,500

free breakfasts every month

Through Sureserve's generosity, we are ensuring all our students are ready to learn each day.

— Professor Christopher Moore, Principal

• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

UWS Court Medal — Mark Anderson

NCL BA Business & Sustainability graduate Mark Anderson won the University of the West of Scotland Court Medal — the highest academic honour UWS bestows, recognising exceptional achievement throughout an undergraduate degree. Academic Leader Angela Spalding: “Mark’s success reflects his academic excellence and commitment to sustainable business.”

• STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Cycling Scotland Staff Training

A group of NCL staff — Claire McRae, Leonard Gingell, Sharon McCabe, John Dempster and Abraham ‘Boo’ Lindhof — completed a Cycling Scotland course at Motherwell Campus led by trainer Bill Ross, building skills to support future cycling activities across the College.

• MUSIC & CULTURE



NCL Lecturer to Support Garbage at Edinburgh Castle

NCL lecturer Yvonne Kay — a member of Goodbye Mr Mackenzie, the band that launched Garbage frontwoman Shirley Manson — will support Garbage at their final headline gig in Scotland at Edinburgh Castle this summer. Manson visited NCL last month to speak

to music students. She later praised students on Instagram: “I was extremely struck by your bright, curious minds and taxing questions. Bravo to you all.”

Having her speak to the students was an incredible experience. She was honest, generous, and genuinely inspiring.

— Yvonne Kay, NCL Lecturer

Sixteen stories this month: national award wins, an NCL film premiere, a Fellowship ceremony, Westminster recognition, and a packed calendar of student and community events.

• HERITAGE

'Man of Steel' — Tommy Gemmell Statue Unveiled in Craigneuk

A statue of Celtic legend and Lisbon Lion Tommy Gemmell was unveiled in Craigneuk — just over a mile from Motherwell Campus — with NCL staff and students among more than 400 at the ceremony. Gemmell scored in the 1967 European Cup final against Inter Milan. The plaque reads: 'Tommy Gemmell, Man of Steel.'

He never forgot his roots. He cared deeply about this area and the people in it.

— Martin McCrum, Tommy Gemmell Project Committee

• SPORTS

Raith Rovers Manager Dougie Imrie — Second Sports Ambassador

Raith Rovers manager Dougie Imrie was named the second ambassador for NCL's HNC Sports Coaching & Development (Football) programme. Imrie spent the day speaking about his route into management, leadership standards and the pressures of senior football. The visit also included a practical coaching session on the pitch.

The programme connects education with the realities of working in sport.

— Ross Paterson, NCL Sports



• ARTS & CULTURE

Former NCL Students Star in The Little Iceberg Musical

Every cast member of a new musical at Lanternhouse Theatre, Cumbernauld, is a former NCL student. The Little Iceberg is written and directed by Milly Sweeney, winner of the St Andrews Playwriting Award 2024 and The Stage Debut Awards Best Writer 2025. She also has a new play premiering at A Play, A Pie, and A Pint, starring Jonathan Watson. Alan Cumming called Milly "a great new Scottish voice."

As far as performing arts education goes, it's [NCL] the best you can get.

— Milly Sweeney, Playwright & Former NCL Student

• AWARDS

CLIC Wins City & Guilds Award — NCL Praised in Westminster

The College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC) partnership, of which NCL is a founding member, won The City & Guilds Award for College Engagement with Employers at the AoC Beacon Awards. NCL is the lead hub for Digitally Enabled Health, supporting employers across health, care, wellbeing and life sciences. Launched in April 2024, CLIC supported more than 300 businesses in its first year, well exceeding its target of 200. Separately, NCL's Engineering Futures programme was praised on the floor of the House of Commons by Minister Luke Pollard MP.

300+

businesses supported by CLIC in year one

I praise New College Lanarkshire for its work.

— **Luke Pollard MP, Minister for Defence Readiness**



• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

HND Students Launch Scots Law Guide in 13 Languages

Former Lord Advocate Frank Mulholland launched A Guide to Scots Law — updated for the first time in a decade, now in 13 languages — at Coatbridge Campus. Created with the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, Crimestoppers and the Scottish Refugee Council. Student Tamara Sanchez Fernandez, originally from Spain: “When you come to a country, the last thing you do is check the laws. It was a challenge, but I loved it.”

I am proud of them for their work to help the disadvantaged at a time when they need it most.

— **Lord Frank Mulholland, Former Lord Advocate**

• INDUSTRY LEARNING

Students Get Hands-On with Thermomix

Former NCL ESOL student Ana Jornea returned to the College, now representing the professional Thermomix TM7 brand for Vorwerk. She gave a presentation to over 30 students and staff. The Hospitality & Professional Cookery department also received a Thermomix machine for student training. Ana: “The College gave me so much, and I hope today was valuable for the students.”

• AWARDS

Can Return Scheme Up for National Award

NCL has been nominated for a LetsRecycle.com Award for Excellence in Recycling following a five-week Deposit Return Scheme trial with Coca-Cola. Over 20,177 bottles and cans were recycled across all three campuses — compared to just 255 in the same period the previous year. The RVMs were used eighty times more than before. The awards are hosted by comedian Jimmy Carr in London.

• APPRENTICESHIPS

Field & Forest Machinery — Building the Future Workforce

NCL apprentice Jack arrived at Field & Forest Machinery as a fresh face; two years on, he is trusted to work independently from a technical drawing. Operations Manager Eddy Kattanach: "His skill level has probably increased tenfold." NCL tutors visit Jack in the workplace, meeting with both Jack and his line manager in the fabrication shop.

You can tell that they really care — not only the mental health support, but the Ready Set Apprentice events.

— Jack, NCL Apprentice

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Brain Health & Women's Health Workshop

Ahead of International Women's Day, Head of Department Lynn Orr and Lecturer Lisa Burgess delivered a workshop on women's brain health at Auchinairn Community Centre in partnership with East Dunbartonshire Council. East Dunbartonshire Provost Gillian Renwick said it was "a wonderful initiative" and highlighted the importance of focusing on women's health.

• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Conservation at Viewpark

Level 6 Animal Biology and Conservation students partnered with Viewpark Conservation Group to restore Viewpark's natural environment: planting trees to stabilise riverbanks and collaborating on a new hedgerow. Sustainability Lead Margaret McNeil: "A fantastic partnership providing students with valuable hands-on experience while making a real difference to the local environment."

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Ready for Retail — Cross-Campus Visit

Motherwell Campus Ready for Retail students visited the Braw Wee Shop in Cumbernauld for a day of inter-college working. Students shared ideas, asked each other questions and exchanged handmade presents — the latest example of collaborative working between campuses.

• MEDIA

NCL Featured in the Sunday Herald

Academic Leader Kathleen Sheridan was featured in the Sunday Herald for her 'A Career in Education: Let's Explore' access course at Cumbernauld. Student Katy Thomson, 23: "The course has healed the relationship I had with education. I value my learning. I have the confidence to ask questions. I have learned how to learn."



• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

BA Students Tour University of the West of Scotland

Third-year BA students toured the UWS Lanarkshire campus ahead of their fourth-year transition, organised by lecturer Shaheen Tariq. Four NCL alumni currently in their final year at UWS — including Courtney, now on internship with the Scottish Parliament — shared their experiences. Student Alex said the visit “will definitely help ease us into our transition.”



Very insightful for what our 4th year will look like — making me excited for next year.

— Rebekah, NCL BA Student

• INDUSTRY LEARNING

PPG & Bell Decorating Group Visit

Students on NCL’s Construction Trades Technology programme got an insight into the future of their industry as PPG — the global coatings company behind Johnston’s and Leyland — visited Motherwell Campus to showcase their latest products in partnership with Bell Decorating Group.

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Anas Sarwar Helps Out at the Braw Wee Shop



Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar was enlisted to help out at the Braw Wee Shop during his visit to Motherwell

Campus. He threw himself into the task with enthusiasm — though it emerged he had a particular fondness for Creme Eggs that those around him found hard to ignore.

• FELLOWSHIP

Josh Littlejohn MBE Made NCL Fellow

Josh Littlejohn MBE, co-founder of Social Bite, was awarded a Fellowship at Motherwell Campus in recognition of his outstanding contribution to social enterprise and tackling homelessness. Social Bite’s cafes provide employment, food and dignity to people who have experienced homelessness. The Rutherglen Social Bite Village is currently under construction in Lanarkshire. NCL and Social Bite will explore co-creating social enterprises on campus.



A proud day for NCL

From my first visit I was impressed with the ethos of social justice at the heart of everything here.

— Josh Littlejohn MBE, NCL Fellow

• INDUSTRY LEARNING

HNC Marketing Students Visit Jackton Distillery

Students from NCL's HNC Marketing course visited Jackton Distillery in East Kilbride for a behind-the-scenes look at one of Scotland's emerging whisky brands, arranged in partnership with RAER. The visit covered brand building, customer experience design and marketing strategy.

Hearing from industry professionals truly brings classroom theory to life for our students.

— Angela Spalding, Academic Lead

• MEDIA

Capital Radio Presenter Katy Johnston Visits NCL

Capital Radio Scotland drivetime presenter Katy Johnston — a member of the Radio Academy's 30 Under 30 — visited Supported Learning students at Motherwell who are completing a Podcasting unit. Students asked her about conducting interviews, controlling the playlist, the most famous people she's met, and her worst fears.

It's been lovely to come to the College and meet and get to know you all.

— Katy Johnston, Capital Radio Scotland



• STAFF DEVELOPMENT

First BA Business & Leadership Cohort Celebrates

Sixteen NCL colleagues celebrated completing their BA in Business & Leadership at a ceremony in the Wellbeing Academy. The one-year course, delivered in partnership with UWS, is fully flexible and blended. Among the cohort is John O'Hara, the first in his family to earn a degree: "The course was a task — studying, exams and work. But it's worth it. 100% I'd do it again." Principal Professor Moore congratulated the group as the first cohort to complete the course.

“

It's worth it to come away with a degree — 100% I'd do it again.

— John O'Hara,
First BA
Business &
Leadership
Graduate

Culinary Students Bring Home National College Team Title



NCL won the National College Team title at the Scottish Culinary Skills Challenge 2026, defeating Fife College, Edinburgh College and Perth UHI. Students from Motherwell and Cumbernauld campuses collected 4 gold, 4 silver and 6 bronze medals.

Separately, the Wellbeing Academy and Beauty, Aesthetics and Hair Design departments received two AHT national award nominations. And DFN Project SEARCH students marked National Supported Internship Day by donning orange across all campuses to celebrate inclusive employment.

14 medals

at the Scottish Culinary Skills Challenge

Our students excelled, representing themselves, the department and NCL exceptionally well.

— **Darren Pettigrew, Head of Department**

Cumbernauld Creates Exhibition at Palacerigg Park

Art and Design students brought their work to Palacerigg Country Park as part of Cumbernauld Creates, conceived by artist Amy Devlin (13–15 March). Professor Moore pledged an ongoing relationship with Palacerigg: “I would like for us to commit to this place — you might be sorry that this might be one of our new classrooms going forward.”



Our mission is to democratise art. By the time students leave us, they say: I am an artist.

— **Professor Christopher Moore, Principal**

APRIL 2026

Eleven stories this month: a feature film debut, national award nominations, a WorldSkills selection, inclusive sport, student research making international headlines, and a college-wide celebration of staff who go above and beyond.

• FILM & MEDIA

Premature — NCL Makes Its Feature Film Debut

NCL lecturer Kevin Walls has made his feature film debut with *Premature*, a Scottish romantic comedy premiering 18 September 2026. Around 80% of the cast and crew are current or former NCL students and staff, including HND Television Production and BA Filmmaking students in crew roles. The trailer ran at the Grosvenor Picture House ahead of James McAvoy's *California Schemin'*. Stars James Rottger (Gary Tank Commander) and Elle Watson in her feature debut, with Gail Watson (River City) in a key supporting role.

80%

of cast & crew from NCL

Most people are either staff or students from here. They came back for days!

— Kevin Walls, NCL Lecturer & Director

• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Hairdressing Showcase at Cumbernauld

NVQ3 Hairdressing students hosted a Showcase event on Cumbernauld Campus displaying Avant Garde Creative Looks to an invited public audience. The class collaborated with VQ2 students and the Learning Engagement and Estates team. Lecturer Katrina Stevenson "couldn't have been more proud" of the students' achievements.

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Boccia Festival 2026 at Ravenscraig

Over 100 students from Edinburgh College, City of Glasgow College and NCL competed at Ravenscraig, supported by Scottish Disability Sport. Active Campus Coordinator Kirsty Strang: "Days like today show how inclusive sport brings people together, builds confidence, and creates



plenty of fun memories." Edinburgh College thanked NCL for being "such excellent hosts."

Five Herald Education Award Nominations

NCL — Scotland's College of the Year — enters the Herald Education Awards 2026 with five nominations:

- **Outstanding Business Engagement** — Scottish Institute for Dental Education (SIDE): a sector-leading employer-college partnership transforming dental education in Scotland, with flexible pathways including Modern Apprenticeships, blended learning and a fully online Dental Nursing programme.
- **Outstanding Student Contribution** — Brooke MacFadyen (Access to Teaching): diagnosed with a grade II brain tumour in her early 20s, Brooke has excelled academically while campaigning for access to the treatment vorasidenib, recently approved for use in Scotland.

- **Outstanding Community Contribution** — Walking Football & Social Medicine: NCL Physical Activity & Health students work within Motherwell FC Community Trust's Walking Football club, delivering targeted health interventions to older men facing physical and neurological challenges.
- **Partnership Award** — Brain Health Scotland Centre for Health and Social Care: launched at NCL's Motherwell Campus in October 2025, responding directly to dementia being the leading cause of death in Scotland.
- **Partnership Award** — CLIC (College Local Innovation Centres) with Glasgow City Region Colleges: jointly shortlisted alongside Glasgow Kelvin College.

Ceremony: Wednesday 20 May 2026, DoubleTree by Hilton, Glasgow.

• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 — NCL Graduate Selected for Team UK

Former NCL student Stuart Lyons — HND CAD graduate — has been selected to represent the UK at WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 this September. He will compete in Mechanical Engineering CAD at the 'Skills Olympics', drawing competitors from 80+ countries and over 250,000 visitors. A proud moment for NCL and for Lanarkshire.

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Lights, Camera, No Limits — Students Film with Volvo



Students with additional support needs premiered a series of professional short films produced in partnership with car manufacturer Volvo, creative agency Studio L/R, and North Lanarkshire Council's No Limits programme — which supports young people aged 16–19 with ASN into employment. NCL's Film & TV students filmed and edited the pieces, while No Limits participants — including Lauren, Lucie and Jamielee — developed scripts and storyboards with Studio L/R workshops. Lecturer Alec Cheer coordinated the collaboration from

start to finish, with industry partners praising the professionalism of the results.

"Working with the students provides a great opportunity to gain that client-creative team experience."

— Alec Cheer, Lecturer in Visual and Creative Arts

• SPORTS

ESOL Students Fly the Flag at National College Cup

NCL's ESOL students represented Coatbridge at the national ESOL College Cup — an eight-team, seven-a-side tournament hosted this year by Edinburgh College. Joining colleges including Glasgow Kelvin, Glasgow Clyde, Forth Valley and Perth, NCL's squad were praised for their sportsmanship throughout, with eventual winners Dundee & Angus College taking the title.

"It was a brilliant day bringing students from so many different cultures together through football, celebrating what they have in common."

— Kirsty Strang, Active Campus Coordinator



• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

‘The Stars Aligned’ — Iain’s Road Back Through Music

Iain McMillan, 50, enrolled on NCL’s NQ Creative Music & Sound Production course at Motherwell after recovering from non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. A former HMV employee with a lifelong passion for music, Iain used the course to turn curiosity into craft — learning DAWs,

developing critical listening skills and building a professional portfolio. He is now progressing to HNC/D. His story is one of several being highlighted to prospective students ahead of NCL’s open days in May 2026.

“I’ve achieved everything I set out to achieve. The stars aligned for me.”

— Iain McMillan, NCL Student

• INTERNATIONAL

AI in the Clinic — NCL Joins Romanian University in Groundbreaking Research

NCL Computing students Lia Barlow and Mark Stewart collaborated with medical counterparts from the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Craiova, Romania, on a jointly authored academic paper examining AI in clinical decision-making. The fully online, interdisciplinary project — which emerged from International Week — investigated machine learning, algorithmic bias, patient safety and ethical accountability, with staff describing the academic rigour as exceptional.

• AWARDS

Gold Standard — Project SEARCH Wins Transformational Outcomes Award

NCL’s Project SEARCH programme — delivered in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire and supported employment services at University Hospital Wishaw — has contributed to the hospital receiving a prestigious Gold award for Transformational Outcomes. The internationally recognised supported internship programme combines real workplace placements with classroom-based learning. NCL Lecturer Katie Murphy and Job Coach Joan McAleavy were central to building the inclusive culture the award recognises.



“The Gold award recognises the significant impact the partnership has had, not only on individual interns, but on the wider culture of inclusion at University Hospital Wishaw.”

— Project SEARCH Award Citation

• VALUES IN ACTION

Social Value Champions Celebrated Across All Three Campuses

NCL's Social Values Awards took place across Cumbernauld, Motherwell and Coatbridge, with more than 50 staff at each ceremony. Winners — all nominated by colleagues — included Paula Etherson, Jacqui Clarke and Tommy Marshall (Gallus Award) in Cumbernauld; Andrew Ure, Jaz Sandhu and Michelle Docherty in Motherwell; and Nicola Bradford, Aileen Kane and Alec Cheer (Gallus Award) in Coatbridge.



"Social value isn't an add-on at NCL — it's at the heart of everything we do."

— **Elliot Scott, Assistant Principal**