



Pre - Board Presentation 4.30

Gavin Donoghue – Chief Executive of Colleges’ Scotland.

Board Agenda

NCL Board Meeting –5th October 2026

5pm –Coatbridge Campus Boardroom and via Teams

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Chair’s welcome | Ronnie Smith |
| 2. Apologies for Absence | |
| 3. Declarations of Interest | |
| 4. NCL Board Minutes 8th June 2026 (FI) | Papers Posted- RS |
| 5. NCL Committee Minutes (FI) ~ | Minutes Posted |
| 5.1 ARC 31 st August 2026 ~ | Alastair Rennie |
| 5.2 CSAO 31 st August 2026 | JR/JL |
| 5.3 RGP Committee 7th September 2026 ~ | Keith Fulton |
| 5.4 Finance Committee 7 th September 2026 ~ | Paula Blackadder |
| 6. NCL Student Association Report (FI) | Verbal Update - JA |
| 7. Strategy 2030 Update (FI) | Papers Posted – ES |
| 8. NCL Bids to Public Sector Reform Fund (FI) | Papers Posted –
RS/CM |
| 9. NCL Finances Update (FI) | |
| 9.1 NCL Cash Flow (See Forward Plan Appendix 5) | Paper Posted - LM |
| 9.2 NCL Financial Update 25/26 | Verbal Update - LM |
| 9.3 Forward Plan | Papers posted –
CM/LM/RG |
| 9.4 FFR Update | Paper Posted - LM |
| 10. Chair’s Report (FI) | Verbal Report – RS |
| 10.1 Board Recruitment | |
| 10.2 Chair’s Overview | |
| 10.3 National Committees | |
| 10.4 Written Procedure Chairs Committee – Data Vita MOU | |



- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 11. Update from College Employers' Scotland (FI) | Paper Posted –
KF/ET |
| 12. NCL Risk Register (FI) * | Paper Posted – RG |
| 13. Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) (FI) ~ | Verbal Update– JL |
| 14. Principal's Update (FI) | Verbal Update - CM |
| 15. Board Business | |
| 15.1 NCL Newsletter (FI) | Paper Posted – JL |
| 15.2 Register of Interest Updates (FI) | Verbal Update – GP |
| 15.3 Board Dates 2027 (FA) | Paper Posted - GP |
| 15.4 Board Events (FI) | Paper Posted - ES |
| 15.5 Updated Standards Commission Advice (FI) | Paper Posted – GP |
| 15.6 NCL Organogram (FI) | Paper Posted – RG |
| 15.7 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 10.30 Monday 7th December 2026 at the Cumbernauld Campus and via Teams followed by Christmas Lunch in Taste. | |



Minute NCL Board Meeting –8th June 2026

5pm – Motherwell Campus Boardroom and via Teams

Present: Ronnie Smith, Ruth Allison, David Alves, Paula Blackadder, Keith Fulton, Yvonne Finlayson, Moira Jarvie, Delphi Parker, Barbara Philliben, Catherine Pollock, Alastair Rennie and Joanne Rosie.

On-line: Kellyann McGraith

In attendance: Ronnie Gilmour, Jennifer Lowe, Lynn MacKenzie, Nicola Mulholland, Elaine Turkington, Elliot Scott, Diane McGill, Penny Neish, Elizabeth Arogbafa.

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

2. Apologies for Absence: There were apologies from Elaine Loudon, Christopher Moore, Chelsea McCue and Lisa Reid.

3. Declarations of Interest: Ronnie Smith declared an interest as a Director of AMCOL, the Chair of the Hamilton Town Centre Board and as Chair of Fusion Assets Ltd. Moira Jarvie as a member of the Cumbernauld Nursery Group and Jennifer Lowe as the Chair of the Cumbernauld Nursery Group.

4. NCL Board Minutes

4.1 Minute of the 16th March 2026: The Board minute was approved. Moira Jarvie asked for thanks to be recorded for the contribution made by Iain Clark the Chief Resources Officer who had now left NCL.

4.2 The Board also approved the minute from the special meeting of the Board on the 30th April 2026.

5. NCL Committee Minutes

5.1 Chairs Committee 27th March 2026: Keith Fulton informed the Board that he had nothing to add to the confidential draft minute concerning the dental training contract with HEZE. The Board noted the minute and that there would be further reports to the Committees and the Board on the HEZE contract in due course.

5.2 ARC 11th May 2026: Yvonne Finlayson noted the report on the HEZE contract to the ARC and the actions that had been agreed. She also thanked Alastair Rennie for agreeing to be the Vice – Chair of the ARC.

5.3 RGP Committee 18th May 2026: Keith Fulton highlighted the report on the Cumbernauld Nursery at Item 6 and the very good progress that had been made at the nursery and the Board also noted and commended that progress.

5.4 Finance Committee 18th May 2026: Paula Blackadder noted the cash flow, mid-year return, the process for Strategy 2030 monitoring and the positive report from the Cumbernauld Nursery.

5.5 CSAO 19th May 2026: Barbara Philliben noted issues from the HMI report and the immediate actions take to address those issues and that further reports would come to the Committee. Keith

Fulton asked about Item 9.3 about the role of SDS in relation to college referrals. Jennifer Lowe said that they were working in collaboration with SDS on improving the access to non-university provision and she noted that there was still an appetite for modern apprenticeships and not just channeling young people to university.

6. NCL Student Association Report

6.1 This was Delphi Parker's last meeting and she highlighted the following:

- Promoting voting in the Scottish Parliamentary Elections and the work she had undertaken on this with the national NUS campaign with students
- The new student association space at the Motherwell Campus
- Carbon zero period products
- Handover to the next Student President

6.2 Ronnie Smith thanked her for her contribution to the Board and wished her well as she left to take up her course at the University of Dundee.

7. NCL Finances Update

7.1 NCL Cash Flow: As noted at the Finance Committee, the cash flow continues to be managed through advance payments from the SFC which are then returned and transfers to and from the AMCOL accounts. There is a balance in this to try to bring in the optimum cash position and the cash flow is front loaded for the first part of the year at 64%. There is currently a £1.4 million balance mainly due to capital funds which will not be spent until August 2026. The receipts from the sale of land at the former Coatbridge nursery will be delayed until August 2026 and urgent capital works will be carried out over the summer. A request will have to be made to AMCOL in mid- July for a short- term loan of £2 million and the Board was asked to note this approach. There are two other SFC funds on which the SFC is due to give sector updates – RISE funding ((Raising income through skills and employment) and child poverty funding and this will result in additional funds allocated for activity in this area.

7.2 NCL Financial Update 25/26: The SFC have an on-going scrutiny and the SFC £4.5 million loan is also still in place and there will be discussion in the SFC Finance Committee about renewal of the loan and how this is to be managed/paid off. The UOP to date reflects a surplus of £1,100k, representing a favourable variance of £1,680k, as expected following the implementation of mitigating actions. This is mainly due to additional income from the Galliford Try settlement plus significant underspend on operating expenses. Income is £396k (1.2%) favourable to budget and expenditure is £785k (2.3%) favourable to budget. The College is currently on track to deliver a break- even budget as set out in the mid-year return.

7.3 Forward Plan: The NCL Forward Plan has been submitted to the SFC. The feedback has been that this is a strong document but they have raised over a hundred and twenty queries which have been categorised by the college in order to structure its response. There are requests for more detail and clarity on technical points and there are a small number of material points e.g. assumptions of 10% on energy costs and projected income from the public health sector strand. There is nothing to indicate that there is anything missing or that there is anything wrong with the overall thrust of the document.

7.4.1 FFR Update: A draft FFR is currently being prepared and will be submitted to the SFC at the end of June 2026 and will be brought to the Board at its meeting on 5th October 2026 for approval.



The budget will take the approved VS scheme, which is just starting, into account. In alignment with Strategy 2030, the College endeavours to produce a balanced budget and manage its cash resources appropriately to arrive at medium-term financial sustainability.

7.4.2 The SFC have indicated that the High Priority Maintenance Fund will be c. £10 million this year – up from £2.5 million. However, there are changes in the rules about CDEL and RDEL which will affect moving capital into revenue. The SFC is currently re-doing the baseline survey of the college sector estate. The SFC is aware of the NCL £4 million cladding issue at the Motherwell Campus and having the Atkins report gives a strong external evaluation of the issues which can be used in the baseline review. In the meantime the College will have to continue with the protective netting and keeping the building safe for staff and students. The other projects needing to be funded from the High Priority Maintenance Funds have also been set out.

8. Strategy 2030 Update: Strategy 2030 Update:

8.1 Elliot Scott presented his report to the Committee which sets out that reporting to the Board Committees will be structured through the 2030 strategy pillars. The pillars that are relevant to each committee have been mapped and the Committees will receive reports slanted towards the relevant pillar. He set out the next steps as follows:

- **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.

9. Chair's Report

9.1 Nomination Vice Chairs of Committees: Ronnie Smith informed the Board that there had been discussion with Committee chairs and with Committee members about establishing Committee Vice Chairs. The appointment of the following Board Members as Vice Committee Chairs was recommended: ARC: Alastair Rennie, Finance Committee: Catherine Pollock, CSAO: Joanne Rosie and



RGP: David Alves. Elaine Loudon would also move from the Finance Committee to the CSAO Committee to make more use of her skills and knowledge.

Decision: The Board approved the recommendation.

9.2 Chair's Overview: There was ongoing discussion about the names of the CSAO and RGP Committees and there will be a further update at the next Board meeting.

9.3 National Committees: There would be Colleges Scotland meetings next month and a report to the next meeting of the Board.

9.4 Board Recruitment: Board Recruitment was underway and there would be interviews later this month.

10. Update from College Employers Scotland:

10.1 The following was highlighted from the College Registrar's report.

- There is a focus on the EIS/FELA negotiations
- **Job Evaluation:** 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. The SFC now want a lessons' learned from this following an eventual resolution.

10.2 Ronnie Smith said that this was a long time for staff to wait for a resolution – this started in 2018. He noted that as a result of the JEPB's conclusions, inevitably some people's salary points would go up and some people may go down. This could have major future financial implications.

11. NCL Risk Register: Ronnie Gilmour updated the Committee as follows:

- **There are a total of 27 Strategic Risks** (up from 22) logged as at College Risk Management Group (CRMG) on 1st May, 2026
- **Risk Movements:** 4 residual risks have changed. Risk B has reduced, whilst Risks G, H & T have increased. 5 new risks have been introduced to the register to reflect the risks identified as part of NCLs Forward Plan 2026.
- **One risk is above the committee's threshold level and therefore is subject to Control Action Planning.** Risk A - The college may not have sufficient liquid funds to meet short-term or medium-term cash commitments.

12. The Self- Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) : Jennifer Lowe updated the Board to say that documents had been submitted to the SFC in December and the feedback had been positive. The students had participated well. There had been a visit on the 12th May from the SFC and there had been a good discussion following a structured agenda and this included the external review that



would take place next year. The Dean of Quality is making good progress in preparation for this review.

13. Principal's Update: The Board was updated as follows:

Herald Awards

- A student from New College Lanarkshire who underwent pioneering brain surgery and then went on to campaign successfully for a life-changing drug to be approved in Scotland has been named Outstanding College Student at The Herald Education Awards 2026. Brooke MacFadyen, 26, from Coatbridge, was diagnosed with a grade II brain tumour before enrolling on an Access to Teaching course at NCL.
- Outstanding Business Engagement in colleges: this award was won by the NCL partnership with the Scottish Institute for Dental Education.
- Finalist in the partnership award for the work in the Brain Health Scotland Centre for Health and Social Care.
- Outstanding Community Contribution Finalist for the Walking Football Social Medicine project in partnership with the Motherwell FC trust.

Other Awards and Activity

- Kim Beveridge of New College Lanarkshire has been named a Silver award winner of the FE Lecturer of the Year category in the prestigious Pearson National Teaching Awards.
- Better than 52 campaign – there had been two very well received symposia
- There is a new module on women's health and a module on erectile dysfunction for men.
- An NCL Fellowship had been conferred on Michelle McManus.

14. Board Evaluation

14.1 SFC Reflections on the RSB: It was felt that this report was not factual in certain areas and did not address the key issue of a reluctant partner that had direct access to the SFC.

Decision: *Ronnie Smith will write to the SFC.*

14.2 NCL Self Evaluation:

Decision: *The Board approved the report.*

14.3 SIM Review of the Board Chair: Keith Fulton said that he had received 11 out of 16 possible responses which was disappointing. In summary however, the review continued to show that there was strong support for the Chair in his leadership and 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.

Decision: *The Board noted the report from the SIM*



15. Board Business

15.1 NCL Spring Newsletter: The Board noted the newsletter.

15 .2 Register of Interest Updates: There were no updates.

15.3 Approval of Publication of Papers from the Board: The Board approved the publication of the agenda, the minutes, Item 8, Item 10, Item 14.2 and 15.1.

16. AOB:

16.1 Lynn MacKenzie raised the need to tender for taxi services for certain students. The Board received a paper outlining the options for the tender process and the process itself. On the basis of the tender process underway approval is being sought for a contract for an initial 2-year contract with the option of 2x12 month extensions with an overall contract value of £1,844,625. All costs are exclusive of VAT.

Decision: The Board agreed to approve the tender process within the parameters set out. David Alves would sit on the procurement panel.

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.**

Public Service Reform Initiatives FY 2026-27



Public Service Reform initiatives FY 2026-27

Issue Date:	23 July 2026
Deadline:	21 August 2026
Reference:	SFC/GD/16/2026
Summary:	Guidance and invitation to submit applications for funding of the Public Service Reform initiatives FY 2026-27.
FAO:	Principals/Directors, Finance Directors and Board Secretaries of Scotland's universities and colleges.
Further Information:	EMAIL: PSR@sfc.ac.uk

Table of Contents

Public Service Reform Initiatives FY 2026-27	3
Operation	4
Criteria	4
Application	5
Submission deadlines.....	5
Support and engagement	6
Funding decisions	6
Data protection	6
Further information	7
Annex A: SFC's approach.....	8
More flexibility through modular learning and micro-credentials	8
Shared services, centralised services and new operating models.....	9
Income growth and income resilience	9
Student unique identifier / student records system	10
Annex B: Public Service Reform Initiatives – outline proposal.....	12
Annex C: Public Service Reform Initiatives funding – full proposal	13
Key information	13
Costs.....	15
Annex D: Public Service Reform initiatives funding FY 2026-27 process and timeline.....	17

Public Service Reform Initiatives FY 2026-27

1. Scotland's colleges and universities are facing significant financial pressure at a time when learners and employers are asking more of the system, and Ministers are clear on the need for sustained economic growth. In response, SFC is focused on delivering a programme of stabilisation and transformation across the tertiary system from 2026-27 onwards, reflecting Ministers' ambitions on Public Service Reform and making the most of the 7% uplift to SFC's budget in 2026-27. This provides a unique opportunity to drive meaningful transformation. This investment will support activity aligned to SFC's strategic priorities, and enable institutions to progress shared ambitions through collaborative, regionally responsive approaches, while balancing ambition with affordability.
2. This forms a key part of Scotland's wider Public Service Reform programme, which aims to deliver more efficient, sustainable and joined-up public services. The tertiary system has already begun this journey including through SFC supported programmes, including the College Transformation Framework (CTF), the College Infrastructure Investment Plan (CIIP), the Shared Services Collaboration Fund and the University Transformation Framework (UTF).
3. Alongside this, system-wide change is being explored through the Future Framework for the Sustainability and Success of Scotland's Universities and the College Sector of the Future Workstream. While we support development of that work, we must now seek to support necessary foundational reform opportunities, including providing seed funding to initiate early-stage projects that can build capability and scale into regional or system-wide changes.
4. Our approach aligns with national priorities, including financial sustainability, employability, the Just Transition, and more efficient, collaborative public services, with a strong emphasis on collaboration, regional impact, shared delivery, and improved outcomes.
5. These initiatives support and complement existing programmes of work, and we will ensure strong join-up across these five areas:
 - More flexibility through modular learning and micro-credentials.
 - Shared services, centralised services and new operating models.
 - Income growth and income resilience.
 - Benchmarking and other cost efficiencies.
 - Student records system / unique student identifier.

Operation

6. SFC's approach throughout this work will be collaborative and ambitious – actively seeking input from stakeholders across the tertiary system and offering robust challenge to maximise the pace and scale of opportunities. SFC plans a variety of approaches to delivering these initiatives. In some cases, we will work with identified sector groupings to specify and procure expertise to take forward an agreed plan.
7. We also want institutions, or groups of institutions, to bring forward their own proposals based on their expertise, strengths and local needs.
8. Alongside this, we will actively convene the sector to explore ideas and shape projects and enable shared thinking across regions and institutions. Collaboration is a core expectation, with a strong emphasis on regional approaches and shared solutions to maximise impact and efficiency.
9. Our funding envelope for this work encompasses both the college and university budgets, including a small amount of capital funding, and therefore projects can address any part of SFC's remit. Projects will be funded from the relevant budget, but we also invite proposals that take a tertiary approach to deliver system benefit.
10. Our approach is focused on outcomes rather than inputs. We are open to innovation and managed risk where this supports more impactful and faster transformation, and we will draw on expertise from across the tertiary system, the Scottish Funding Council, the Scottish Government and wider UK and international experience.
11. Funding will be allocated via two routes – proposal submission; and commissioned activity, developed in collaboration, including through engagement with Universities Scotland and Colleges Scotland.
12. In three areas we will be inviting applications: diversifying income; modular learning and micro-credentials; and creating shared service models. We may also consider commissioning work in each of these areas.
13. We envisage that the remaining two – (i) developing systems to benchmark costs and identify areas for efficiency and (ii) improving student data systems through a unique learner identifier – will be progressed primarily through commissioned activity. Further information is provided in Annex A.

Criteria

14. Proposals should demonstrate how funding will drive transformation and innovation, support long-term sector stability, and actively advance the ambitions of public service reform. Proposals may include seed-funded activity that initiates or tests new approaches, provided it clearly contributes to long-term sector stability.
15. The focus of this exercise is on understanding the scale and nature of opportunities for transformation across the tertiary system, over the next three years. We aim to fund a

small number of initiatives in 2026-27, however equally this exercise will inform the strategic planning underway by SFC, feeding into Scottish Government's Public Service Reform agenda. While proposals over £1m in 2026-27 may be considered, we recommend you contact SFC before submitting a proposal of this scale.

16. The following broad criteria apply:

- Proposals are open to all institutions individually and collectively. Universities will be able to access university-specific funding, and colleges will be able to access college-specific funding. We also invite proposals that take a tertiary approach to deliver system benefit.
- Proposals should be consistent with strategies set out by SFC and the Scottish Government and should clearly demonstrate the economic benefit for Scotland.
- Projects should address at least one of the three SFC priorities of diversifying income; modular learning and micro-credentials; and creating shared service models.
- Proposals which demonstrate collaboration, enabling progress, regional delivery, or system-wide benefit, and support delivery of public service reform will be given priority. This collaboration could be with other colleges or universities, or to deliver benefit or enable reform with other public sector organisations. While we will consider exceptions, our expectation is that proposals in general will include at least three tertiary institutions or public sector partners.
- Institutions must demonstrate accountability for the use of public funds, ensuring all proposals align with clear transformation objectives, measurable outcomes, and the wider ambitions of public service reform.
- Proposals and actions should be transparent, allowing for effective oversight, monitoring and adjustment where necessary.
- Projects should clearly set out what can be delivered by 31 March 2027. Proposals may also set out a longer-term vision, including activity and indicative funding requirements beyond this date.
- An institution should submit one main proposal but may also be named in other bids where there are elements of collaboration (and each institution may be referenced in a maximum of three proposals).

Application

Submission deadlines

17. We invite expressions of interest using the outline proposal template at Annex B to be submitted **by 5pm 21 August 2026**. SFC will provide feedback on these by 7 September, release initial seed funding where appropriate, and agree timing for a full

proposal or business case as appropriate. We recognise the pressures that institutions face in developing and agreeing their submissions over the summer period. We are providing a full proposal template now (Annex C) so that applicants can understand the information we will need in due course.

18. Outline proposal and full proposal templates are available at Annex B. Please email proposals to PSR@sfc.ac.uk.

Support and engagement

19. SFC welcomes early discussion around outline proposals. Please contact PSR@sfc.ac.uk if you would like to arrange this.
20. As noted in paragraph 8, SFC will host a webinar and other discussions in August, where stakeholders can explore initiatives, ask questions and discuss their applications with SFC. Details of these sessions will be provided in due course. These sessions are intended to support high-quality, collaborative proposals.
21. Proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis and, where appropriate, a meeting may be arranged to discuss individual proposals in more detail. SFC will need to consider the regional and national impact as part of the evaluation process, including how proposals enable progress and collaborative delivery.

Funding decisions

22. We will review the initial expressions of interest by 7 September 2026 and communicate our decision. This may include requests to work with other parties to develop a full proposal where the scope of projects overlap. Where proposals cover activity already underway, we will look to convene and shape these further.
23. Where appropriate, seed funding may be released to support the full development of proposals. SFC's Board will be presented with an overview of the project portfolio in late September, with final funding decisions expected in October 2026.
24. We may not be able to support all proposals. However, we will hold all proposals received and re-engage with the sector should additional funds become available.
25. We will provide details on all the activities being funded under the five PSR Initiatives in due course.

Data protection

26. Aside from contact details, no personal data should be included as part of your applications and care should be taken to ensure that the identities of individuals are not inadvertently disclosed. For more information about how SFC uses personal data please see our [Privacy Notice](#).

Further information

27. If you would like any further information, please contact PSR@sfc.ac.uk.

Francesca Osowska
Chief Executive

Annex A: SFC's approach

1. Here we provide more detail of initial conversations that have taken place on the range of approaches we will use to deliver the five initiatives, enabling a range of different delivery options, partnerships, and methods.

More flexibility through modular learning and micro-credentials

2. This initiative focuses on the theme of “better meeting learner and employer demand, while supporting coherent place-based provision” and will consider how a step change in delivery of teaching could support:
 - Upskilling.
 - Reskilling.
 - Attracting people into training and education.
 - More efficient and effective use of funding (including enabling training more people).
3. It will also consider what is needed to enable this step change:
 - Supporting people into training and employment (e.g. toolkits for institutions), including just transition pathways for future skills needs.
 - Micro-credential framework finalisation, building on the draft framework from the sector-led Micro-Credentials Network to accelerate reskilling and training, including:
 - Stackability of micro-credentials.
 - Inter-institutional recognition of qualifications (portability).
 - Recognition of prior learning.
 - Recognition of prior experience.
 - Removal of barriers to delivering short courses and micro-credentials, including funding model, employer contribution.
 - Funding of learning and teaching differently using a micro-credential approach, including identifying the building blocks that would enable this step.

4. We will adopt a triple track approach to delivering this initiative:

- Commissioning consultancy support to work with members of the Micro-Credentials Network and with colleges and universities to take forward and complete the Micro-Credentials Framework.
- Following up with institutions directly who we know are interested in developing a more significant role for micro-credentials through their ongoing engagement with Outcome Managers and through recent University Transformation Framework, College Transformation Framework, or Shared Services Collaboration proposals. We will contact these institutions directly to discuss next steps.
- Requesting proposals from any institutions or other organisations to support the areas of work outlined above. We will be particularly interested in collaborative proposals in this space that enable new approaches to be adopted across the sector and can inform our funding models and related activities. This will support finalisation and implementation of the Micro-Credentials Framework.

Shared services, centralised services and new operating models

5. This initiative focuses on the theme of “improving the financial sustainability of the tertiary system as a whole” and we will adopt a triple track approach to delivering this initiative:
 - We will engage with the Scottish Universities and Colleges Shared Efficiency and Effectiveness Delivery (SUCSEED) catalyst to support the accelerated implementation of value adding shared services and related initiatives. We will also consider opportunities with CivTech.
 - We will follow up with institutions directly who we know are interested in developing a more significant role in the development of shared services through their ongoing engagement with Outcome Managers and through recent University Transformation Framework or College Transformation Framework proposals. We will contact these institutions directly to discuss next steps.
 - We are requesting proposals from any institutions or other organisations to support the areas of work outlined above. We will be particularly interested in collaborative proposals where five or more regional or academic partners work together to develop new approaches which can then be tested in other contexts and adopted across the sector, informing our funding models and related activities.

Income growth and income resilience

6. This initiative is focused on the theme of “stimulating economic growth”. In this area we aim to:

- Support a small number of sector-wide initiatives to generate economic growth, create jobs, increase employment, and so generate additional tax income to the Scottish Government (which can then be invested in public services including the tertiary system).
 - Support Scottish Government at a critical point in the development of the Public Service Reform programme, to invest in a prevention strategy enabled by education, research and innovation, so reducing demand and therefore costs in other parts of the public sector such as Health, Justice and Social Security. Here we will be commissioning work directly with sector specialists to produce a visualiser or model for investment. We will look to develop this through engagement with a sub-group of SFC Board and external specialists.
 - Support colleges and universities to increase their income resilience by deepening partnerships with local and regional actors to increase skills, enable innovation and grow businesses. This may build on existing City or Regional growth deals, but other thematic partnerships across regions would be welcomed here.
7. SFC will be engaging directly with Universities Scotland and Colleges Scotland to discuss opportunities for sector-wide initiatives.

Benchmarking and other cost efficiencies

8. This initiative focuses on the theme of “improving the financial sustainability of the tertiary system as a whole”.
9. We will work with Colleges Scotland’s Finance and Technical Infrastructure Group to explore further the use of existing benchmarking models which have been utilised within the sector.
10. We will also commission work to understand the cost of provision, including the relative costs of delivery of different subjects. This work will also inform the College Funding Model Review.
11. We will also discuss with Universities and Colleges Scotland how to develop a common approach to assessing efficiency and benchmarking costs.

Student unique identifier / student records system

12. This initiative focuses on the theme of “better meeting learner and employer demand, while supporting coherent place-based provision”.
13. A unique student identifier and / or a common approach to student records would be foundational, enabling work. It would support smoother learner journeys across the

tertiary system including articulation, credit transfer and recognition of prior learning while reducing duplication in how data are held and reported. A change of this nature is necessarily a multi-year undertaking, and our focus in the near-term is therefore on establishing the case for change and the right delivery model ahead of implementation. Done well, this early work will give SFC and the sector a clear, costed basis for any future investment decision.

14. We will commission a third party to undertake a feasibility study setting out the options, costs, benefits and risks of different delivery models, building on the data already held and collected across the system rather than duplicating it. We will invite Colleges Scotland and Universities Scotland to support engagement with institutions to inform this work as well as engaging with wider public bodies including Qualifications Scotland. Subject to the study's findings, we would expect to test a preferred approach through a pilot with one or more institutions.

Annex B: Public Service Reform Initiatives – outline proposal

Project title

Lead institution

Contact name

Contact job title

Contact email

Contact phone number

Project priority area

[Delete as appropriate]

Modular learning and micro-credentials

Shared services, centralised services and new operating models

Income growth and income resilience

Project summary

Please provide the following information:

- A summary of the reform activity and any collaborative partners (such as other institutions).
- Amount of funding required (including estimated payment profile).
- Proposed start and end dates.
- How the activity will be resourced (for example, the number of staff and readiness to begin).
- The desired outcomes and impact on learners, staff, and your institution.
- long-term sustainability of activity – funding sources for continuation of this activity once SFC funding ends (if applicable).

How the activity will be managed and governed – who will be accountable for governance and identification of delivery risks

Annex C: Public Service Reform Initiatives funding – full proposal

Key information

Project title

Lead institution

Contact name

Contact job title

Contact email

Contact phone number

Project priority area

[Delete as appropriate]

Modular learning and micro-credentials

Shared services, centralised services and new operating models

Income growth and income resilience

Project detail

Please provide the following information:

Activity and evidence of need

- A summary of the reform activity and collaborative partners (if relevant).
- The evidence of need for this reform.
- Why is your institution the right one to deliver the reform activity.
- Proposed start and end dates.

Outcomes, impacts, and measuring success

- Major milestones.
- The desired outcomes, impacts, and who benefits.
- How you will measure and evidence the impact of the reform.

Funding and governance

- Amount of funding required (including estimated payment profile).
- Partners and their contribution, funding or in-kind activity (if relevant).
- What the funding buys (staffing, equipment, events etc – please provide a breakdown in the finance section).
- Would SFC's funding help to leverage additional investment?
- Who is accountable for overseeing the activity and the appropriate use of public funds (e.g. Vice-Principal, Department Head, Committee etc)?

Legislative and public sector duty requirements

You should provide evidence of your compliance with the following and attach relevant documentation. Please provide an explanation where you have been unable to attach supporting documentation or why it is not applicable.

We anticipate that institutions / organisations have their own templates, however, SFC can provide its own templates for DPIA, EQIA, and ICIA to you to use if required. The Climate Emergency Impact Assessment, however, is a must do and the template can be found at the end of the form.

- **Climate Emergency Impact Assessment (CEIA)** – As a public body, SFC is expected to consider how its investments are contributing to, and tackling, the climate emergency. Organisations in receipt of SFC funds are expected to demonstrate an understanding of how their activity will impact climate change. This template must be completed and returned with your proposal form. The CEIA does not replace the [Environmental Impact Assessment](#), which will also be required, where relevant.
- **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)** – A DPIA should be completed for any new piece of work that involves collecting/processing/using personal data.
- **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** – We expect bodies in receipt of SFC funds to ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion are considered and supported. Institutions are required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Scottish Specific Duties (Equality Act 2010), including the requirement for an equality impact assessment for a new or revised policy or practice.
- **Fair Work** – The Scottish Government expects that all public bodies and those in receipt of public funds should be exemplars, and be able to demonstrate practices, of Fair Work. Recipients of public sector grants are required, as a minimum standard, to comply with the following mandatory criteria:
 - Pay at least the Real Living Wage.
 - Provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, i.e. collectively (e.g. through trade union recognition) and individually (e.g. through staff surveys).
 Recipients of public sector grants are expected to commit to working towards the remaining five desirable [Fair Work First criteria](#), i.e. investment in workforce development; no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts; address workplace inequalities; offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment; and oppose the use of fire and rehire practice. From April 2027, all SFC funded institutions are expected to meet all Fair Work First criteria. Where an institution feels it needs more time to transition towards meeting the criteria in full, we would expect the institution to outline the reasons behind this and the steps it is taking to meet expectations. We expect recipients of SFC funds to have a statement on Fair Work practices; the best practice is that institutions should make every endeavour to do this in agreement with their workforce, such as the relevant trade union where one is present, or workers' representative(s) where there is no union present. You should provide a statement verifying your Fair Work First commitment.

- [Island Communities Impact Assessment](#) (ICIA) – An ICIA should be completed when developing, revising, and delivering any policy, strategy, service, or legislation that could have an effect on island communities.
- [UK subsidy controls](#) – A subsidy is the use of state funding or resources (granted by public bodies such as SFC) to support businesses. The use of a subsidy (state funding) is unlawful if it involves the use of public funding that is selective and gives businesses an unfair advantage that could potentially distort competition and trade. The use of state funding must be compliant with the [Subsidy Control Act 2022](#)

Costs

Please provide a detailed breakdown of income and expenditure for the activity. Further information can be sent as an Excel spreadsheet.

Financial summary	FY 2026-27
Income [Add/delete rows as required]	
SFC funding	£
Institution/organisation funding	£
Partner/other funding	£
Total	£
Expenditure [example categories provided below, add/delete rows as required]	
Staff costs including number of FTEs	£
Training and development	£
Travel and subsistence	£
Administration	£
Marketing	£
Events	£
ICT/Software	£
Total	£

Climate Emergency Impact Assessment

As a public body, SFC is expected to consider how its investments are contributing to, and tackling, the climate emergency. Organisations in receipt of SFC funds are expected to demonstrate an understanding of how their activity will impact climate change.

This Climate Emergency Impact Assessment does not replace the [Environmental Impact Assessment](#), which is required, where relevant.

This template must be completed and returned with your proposal form.

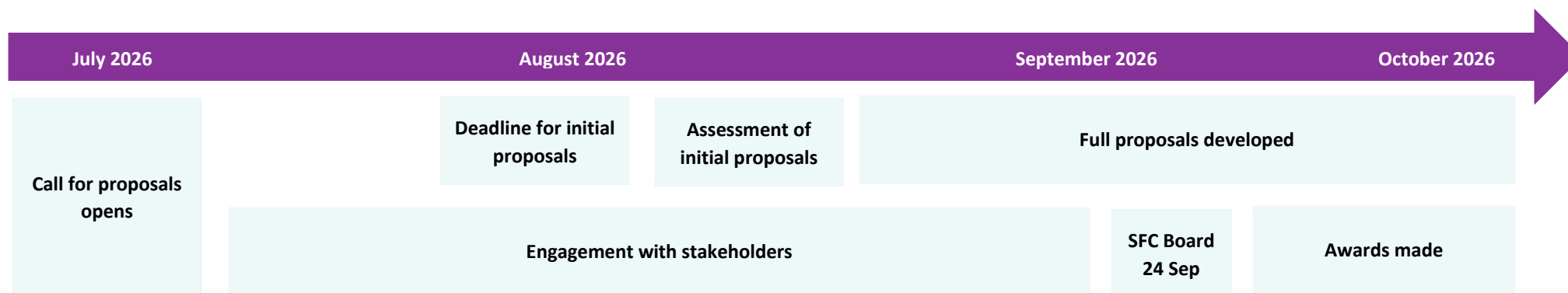
At a high level, please indicate how the activity supports the Scottish Government's ambition to tackle the climate emergency and support Scotland's adaptation to climate change? [200 words max.]

Does the organisation hosting the activity have a climate change, net zero or sustainability strategy or policy? Does the policy include carbon emissions reduction and adaptation to climate change? [100 words max.]

Please include a link to your organisation's climate change, net zero or sustainability strategy or equivalent, and indicate whether it covers emissions reduction and adaptation to climate change.

If the organisation does not have such a strategy, you could indicate a timeline for development.

Annex D: Public Service Reform initiatives funding FY 2026-27 process and timeline



Month	Action
July 2026	Call for proposals opens
July-August 2026	Engagement with stakeholders – SFC facilitates discussions and hosts webinars to explore project ideas.
21 August 2026	Deadline for expressions of interest
24 August to 4 September 2026	Assessment of initial proposals, with further discussions as required
7 September 2026	Initial proposals notified
September-October 2026	Full proposals developed
24 September 2026	SFC Board endorses portfolio
October 2026	Awards made



Resources and General Purposes Committee – September 2026

Item 7 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

The Professional Services Review can now be considered as having been successfully completed. There are one or two conversations which remain outstanding regarding the consultation exercise with the External Funding & International team, due to holidays and absence over the summer period. We are confident these will be concluded in the coming weeks.

2. Voluntary Severance

A short extension to the self-funded Voluntary Severance Scheme was approved by the Board and opened to all staff as part of the College's plan to address the deficit for the academic year 2025/26. The Scheme was re-opened on 10th June 2026, with applications being accepted for consideration until 31st July 2026.

To date, the College has been able to accept Voluntary Severance applications from 6 Academic and 6 Professional Services employees. A breakdown of those details and costs is included separately in Appendix 1 at the end of this paper.

3. College Employers Scotland (CES)

3.1 EIS-FELA Pay Agreement

The pay offer made to the EIS-FELA on Thursday 11 June 2026 was taken to a Special Executive of the EIS-FELA on Tuesday 16 June 2026. The EIS-FELA Executive agreed the provisional agreement should be put to a ballot of members, with a recommendation to vote to accept the offer, thereby ratifying the agreement.

Following acceptance of the pay offer by members after the ballot closed on 24 June 2026, Circular LS 01/26 – Lecturing Staff Pay Agreement 2026-29 (attached as Appendix 2) has been issued and implements the 1 September 2026 – 31 August 2029 Pay Agreement.

3.2 Workforce Planning

A meeting also took place to formalise discussions that developed from the recent pay talks relating to Workforce Planning.

The management representatives presented a draft agreement for the EIS-FELA negotiators' consideration on Workforce Planning which included an agreement to draft a Terms of Reference for a working group to be established by September 2026, to consult on matters of national policy and negotiate on any workforce planning resultant from these policies.

This was agreed with no changes. Circular LS 03/26 – Workforce Planning for Lecturing Staff (attached

as [Appendix 3](#)) was duly drafted and issued to implement this Agreement, following the outcome of the EIS-FELA ballot on the Pay Agreement.

3.2 Job Evaluation (JE)

The Joint Secretaries completed a piece of work to explore alternative scheme providers for Job Evaluation to understand if any scheme providers (including that of the current provider ECC-FEDRA) are able to provide the level of satisfactory transparency to move forward. The Joint Secretaries have subsequently provided a written report to the Job Evaluation Project Board (JEPB) with their findings.

In addition, the Joint Secretaries have advised the JEPB that in the absence of confirmation from the Scottish Funding Council on who will be appointed as an independent hearing authority to conduct a Lessons Learned investigation and final report, to ensure confidence in the process going forward, the Joint Secretaries have agreed to postpone any further discussions with alternative scheme providers until they receive confirmation from SFC as to who is going to conduct the review, and the requisite time parameters applicable.

3.3 National Grievance Policy and Procedure

The National Grievance Policy and Model Procedure (for Lecturing Staff only) was agreed by the EIS-FELA Executive with an implementation date of 1 August 2026. Circular LS02/26 has been issued to all colleges.

Discussions continue with the Professional Services trade unions to finalise and publish a similar policy and procedure for the rest of the College staff population.

4. Joint Negotiating Committee Update

4.1 JNC Academic

A JNC Academic meeting took place on 27th May 2026. Discussion topics included:

- Travel and teaching cover across campuses
- Professional Services Review (as it impacts on Academic depts)
- Permanisation process and progress through payscales
- TQFE entry requirements
- TU representation for members in formal / informal settings
- Transparency of vacancies for promotion opportunities
- Publication of JNC minutes

The next meeting of the JNC Academic is scheduled to take place on 23rd September 2026.

4.2 JNC Professional Services

A JNC Professional Services meeting took place on 11th June 2026. Discussion topics included:

- Professional Services Review
- Strategy and Academic Partnership Office
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure (Instances where there may be a need to have flexibility of process)

- Family Friendly Policies, specifically discussion on parental bereavement leave.
- Job Evaluation update provided by UNISON
- Appointment of new UNISON steward for NCL
- Digital Strategy

The next meeting of the JNC Professional Services is scheduled to take place on 8th October 2026.

5. Policies and Procedures

- A Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure is awaiting sign off from local EIS-FELA representatives prior to publishing. Feedback anticipated at next JNC Academic in September.
- A draft Staff Code of Conduct has been provided to the Staff Sub Committee for feedback, prior to consultation with the trade unions.
- A draft PVG and Disclosure Policy – Criminal Records Checks has been provided to the Staff Sub Committee for feedback.

6. Employment Tribunal Update

- Of the eight sisted employment tribunal claims regarding holiday pay and overtime, five claimants have now accepted settlement offers, subject to COT3 signing. The remaining three claimants have been offered settlement amounts, calculated on the Collective Agreement formula, and lawyers for both the College and the claimants continue to actively work towards settlement of their cases. The claimants' lawyers have requested a further 4 week sist at the Employment Tribunal to enable this to happen.
- A claim for constructive unfair dismissal was originally due to be heard by the Employment Tribunal in May. This hearing has since been rescheduled for the first week in September.
- A claim for unfair dismissal/wrongful dismissal/disability discrimination/discrimination arising from disability/alleged failure to make reasonable adjustments has yet to be allocated a tribunal hearing date following the Tribunal Service's cancellation of the Preliminary Hearing scheduled for May.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

7.1 Staff Equalities Monitoring Survey

NCL has launched this year's Staff Equalities Monitoring Survey, with the aim of increasing participation and strengthening the quality of the data collected. This data is important in helping NCL to identify inequalities, understand areas of under representation and inform targeted actions, and support our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by enabling us to better understand and address equality impacts across our workforce.

7.2 EHRC Code of Practice

The recently published EHRC Code of Practice for Services, Public Functions and Associations came into force on 5 August 2026 and provides statutory guidance on the application of the Equality Act 2010. NCL is reviewing the implications of the Code, including its guidance relating to the provision of single-sex and other toilet facilities. An audit has been undertaken of our current provision. Recommendations arising from the audit are being considered through the EDI Committee, with the Committee being invited to provide feedback before presenting to Executive Board for final approval. Equality Impact Assessments will also be undertaken to ensure that potential impacts on affected groups are identified and appropriately

considered. NCL will maintain an ongoing review of our approach, ensuring that policies and practices remain aligned with current guidance and legal requirements.

8. Safeguarding Report

One of the governance recommendations arising from the Safeguarding Audit carried out by WBG was that there should be a regular reporting cycle to the Board of Management as this does not currently exist. In our response, we committed to doing this annually, with the first report being in this Board reporting cycle at the start of the academic year 26/27. Timing it in this way enables a look back over the last year and informs safeguarding priorities for the year ahead.

The Safeguarding Board is scheduled to meet 3 times per annum and is made up from a cross section of the College community, including student representation. We have recently expanded our wider Safeguarding Team, with the aim of eventually having experienced safeguarders available to provide guidance and assistance, as required, in every department and on every campus.

At NCL, we consider that every College employee is a safeguarder, and training is provided annually to all in the form of a detailed module in the All Staff Essentials programme. As well as explaining what scenarios might qualify as safeguarding concerns, the module reminds our staff about the steps they should take with the individual(s) at risk and how to properly document and report a safeguarding concern by using the College's bespoke online Safeguarding Interactive Decision Tool.

The Staff Development Academy has been developing a comprehensive development plan for the newly expanded Safeguarding Team, Safeguarding Board and Executive Board members. This will include updated Prevent training, appropriate to roleholder, as mandated by section 27 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which is a duty applied to specific authorities including education to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Level 1 Prevent training will also be introduced to all staff during this academic year.

Another priority for the coming academic year is to improve the reporting capability of the Safeguarding Interactive Decision Tool, both in making it a more intuitive process for staff documenting safeguarding incidents and actions, and also for the provision of more meaningful statistical analysis.

For the purposes of this initial reporting cycle to the Board of Management, we have presented safeguarding statistics for academic year 25/26 in [Appendix 4](#). These are taken from the current Safeguarding Interactive Decision Tool. As this is our first year of reporting, there is no previous comparable data. The data provided is very basic and it would be challenging to interrogate or overlay further, without a disproportionate amount of time spent on manual intervention to understand the safeguarding categories attributable to the incidents reported. Unfortunately, as the Tool is set up currently, it is the qualitative nature of the data that is lacking, which is a key reason why we will be focusing on upgrading the reporting capability of the Tool in the coming months.

Elaine Turkington

College Registrar

August 2026

THE CLAN

Prepared by Daniel Byron
May – August 2026

MAY 2026

• COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Students' First Aid Skills Put to the Test

First three-department collaboration in emergency training.

Health and Social Care students were thrown into the deep end when they responded to a simulated car accident. The scenario brought together three departments: injured roles played by BA Acting students, with wounds created by Theatrical Make-Up students. First time NCL staged the event with involvement from three separate departments.



• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Arrivederci! NCL Student Wins Italy Trip

Chelsea Brown, left, secures place at prestigious London culinary final. Chelsea Brown competed against students from Edinburgh College, Cardiff College and Blackpool College at the SMEG London Flagship store. She finished joint runner-up, receiving an all-expenses trip to Italy as her prize. The Italian Salumi UK Contest is a UK-wide initiative now in its second year.



"I'm a lot more capable than I thought. To hear them say nice things about it and have it win was really encouraging."

• COMMUNITY & ARTS

Art with a Sustainable Purpose

NCL Art Club opens exhibition at University of Glasgow exploring sustainability. NCL Art Club members opened Art with Purpose at the University of Glasgow's St Andrews Building. The project explored how collecting practices connect to sustainability and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, developed in collaboration with the Waste Stories project and CR&DALL.



● NCL FOUNDATION

Students Go the Extra Mile

Students raise over £4,000 across four separate fundraising initiatives. Students from across NCL raised over £4,000 for charity. Animal Care students donated £2,831 to Scottish SPCA; ML One & Taste raised £1,000 for Social Bite; Access & Progression students raised £100 for College Food Bank; ILS 2B students raised £170 for Beatson Cancer Charity.

£4,000+ raised for charity

● SPORTS

NCL Seal Cup Glory in Tournament Debut

Women's football team wins Rose Reilly Cup on their first time playing together. New College Lanarkshire's women's football team won the Rose Reilly #BeAwesome Cup, beating Ayrshire College 3-0 in the final. The squad had never played together before in the tournament and conceded just one goal all day.



● STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Students Rice for the Prize

Young Risotto Chef competition secures internship and Hampden menu spot. NCL hosted the Lanarkshire Heat of the Young Risotto Chef of the Year. Miles Welsh secured an internship with hospitality group Buzzworks. Ryan Ritchie's dish has a chance to feature on the menu at the Scottish Cup Final at Hampden Park.



● TECHNOLOGY

Students Get Byte of the Action with DataVita

Students briefed on Scotland's AI Growth Zone and 3,400 incoming jobs. Danny Quinn, Managing Director of DataVita, visited NCL to speak with students about Scotland's first AI Growth Zone. North Lanarkshire was designated an AI Growth Zone in January 2026, unlocking £8.2 billion in private sector investment.



JUNE 2026

● STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Sophie Mays Strikes Gold

WorldSkills Hairdressing North East regional heat winner heads to nationals. Sophie Mays, a Level 3 student at NCL's Graduate Academy of Beauty, Aesthetics and Hair Design, won the WorldSkills Hairdressing North East regional heat and now has her sights set on the national finals.



● STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

From Steelworks to Skyline

HND students tackle real-world Ravenscraig regeneration design challenge. HND Computer Aided Architectural Design & Technology students created a master plan for Plot E7 at Ravenscraig. Industry professionals from Ravenscraig Limited and Keppie Design reviewed concepts and provided feedback.

Real-world brief with industry mentorship

● COMMUNITY & INCLUSION

Project SEARCH Superstars

Graduation event celebrates young people's success in structured employment pathway. A special graduation event celebrated the success of young people from DFN Project SEARCH. The programme is a structured pathway into employment for young people with learning disabilities and autism.

Pathway into meaningful employment

● SAFETY

First in the UK

NCL becomes first college to receive life-saving anti-choking devices. New College Lanarkshire has become the first college in the country to receive LifeVac anti-choking devices. Three units installed across all campuses. The devices have saved 3,300 lives across Europe.

3,300 lives saved

● AWARDS

Kim Beveridge Wins

Pearson National Teaching Award Silver recognition. NCL Film & TV Lecturer Kim Beveridge has been named a Silver award winner in the FE Lecturer of the Year category. She is only the second lecturer from a Scottish college to receive this accolade – after Neil McMullen!



● AWARDS

Double Up!

NCL scoops two gongs at Herald Education Awards. New College Lanarkshire won two categories: Brooke MacFadyen named Outstanding Contribution from a College Student, and the Dental team recognised for Outstanding Business Engagement.

Two Herald Awards

● FELLOWSHIP

'I'll Never Forget Today'

Michelle McManus receives NCL Fellowship, highest honour. New College Lanarkshire awarded a Fellowship to Michelle McManus for her services to the Creative Industries and Charity. The singer and broadcaster spoke warmly of her first encounter with NCL through Pamper Days for survivors of violence against women and girls.



● HONOURS

Arise, Connie!

Staff member awarded MBE honour for Covid support work. Connie McCready, Student Funding Assistant at NCL, has been awarded an MBE for her work supporting families bereaved during Covid-19. She founded Covid-19 Families Scotland and is one of Scotland's most prominent voices for those impacted.

MBE for services to bereaved families

● INTERNATIONAL
Away Days

30 students on European placements

30 NCL students on Turing Scheme placements across Europe. NCL students returned from international placements in Madrid and northern Italy. Ten Supported Learning students spent a week in Madrid. Twenty Football Performance students travelled to Borgo Valsugana for two weeks of training, matches and coaching.



● STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
NCL Students Go Full Mad Men

Advertising pitch final sees student agencies compete in high-stakes competition. HND Marketing, Public Relations and Advertising students competed in a professional-style pitch final for fictitious company Ana's Attic. PRISM agency beat Limitless Reach by two votes to one.



● INDUSTRY LEARNING
Students Draw Industry Praise

CAD Showcase sees students secure jobs on the night. Employers, recruiters, and sector partners turned out to see Draughting & Design and Architectural Technology students present end-of-year projects, with several securing jobs on the night.

Employers hiring on the night

JULY 2026

● COMMUNITY & ARTS
Glasgow Goes Barking Mad

Student art on Scotties in the City trail supporting Maggie's cancer charity. NCL Art Lecturer Heather Clarke led Connect to the Arts students in painting a 50kg Scottie Dog sculpture for Scotties in the City trail, in support of Maggie's cancer charity. Sculptures placed at iconic locations including Riverside Museum and Science Centre.

Supporting Maggie's across Glasgow

● STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
[NCL See WorldSkills Success](#)

14 students at national finals

Fourteen students named finalists competing at WorldSkills UK National Finals. Fourteen students from New College Lanarkshire have been named as finalists competing at the WorldSkills UK National Finals in Wales. Maria Varzari returns for a second nationals appearance. Sophie Mays secured Top 8 for Hairdressing.



[AUGUST 2026](#)

● STAFF RECOGNITION

[Ann Baxter Awards](#)

Three staff honoured as new academic year kicks off across all campuses. Three staff members awarded the Ann Baxter Award, recognising those who go the extra mile. Amanda MacDonald turned maths anxiety into something manageable. Bobby Wallace provides trusted support when students face problems. Sandra Ord built students' confidence as working artists.





Scheduled Board and Committee Dates 2027

The NCL Board

Board Strategic Planning Meetings

TBC

Motherwell Campus / Teams

Board Meetings

Monday 15th March 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/ Teams

Monday 7th June 2027

Motherwell Campus/ Teams

Monday 4th October 2027

Coatbridge Campus/Teams

Monday 6th December 2027

Motherwell Campus/Teams

Students and Curriculum Committee

Monday 15th February 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/Teams

Monday 10th May 2027

Motherwell Campus/Teams

Monday 30th August 2027

Coatbridge Campus/Teams

Monday 8th November 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/Teams

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

Monday 15th February 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/Teams

Monday 10th May 2027

Motherwell Campus/Teams

Monday 30th August 2027

Coatbridge Campus/Teams

Monday 29th November 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/Teams

Resources and General Purposes (RGP)

Monday 22nd February 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/Teams

Monday 17th May 2027

Motherwell Campus/Teams

Monday 6th September 2027

Coatbridge Campus/Teams

Monday 15th November 2027

Cumbernauld Campus/Teams



Finance Committee

Monday 22nd February 2027	Cumbernauld Campus/Teams
Monday 17th May 2027	Motherwell Campus/Teams
Monday 6th September 2027	Coatbridge Campus/Teams
Monday 15th November 2027	Cumbernauld Campus/Teams
Monday 29th November 2027	Cumbernauld Campus/Teams

Notes:

1. The Board and committees will be rotate around each campus and there will be an option to attend on-line via Teams.
2. The Board meetings will be at 5.00 pm apart from **the December meeting which will be at 10.30 am with Christmas Lunch to follow.**
3. The Students and Curriculum Committee will be at 12.30 pm.
4. The Audit Committee will be at 4pm after the Student and Curriculum Committee except for the November meeting where it will meet at 4pm followed by a joint meeting with the Finance Committee at 6 pm to consider the Annual Accounts and Financial Statements.
5. The RPG will be held at 3.00 pm followed by the Finance Committee.
6. The Finance Committee will be at 5.30pm. The meeting of the Finance Committee at 6 pm on the 29th November 2027 is a special meeting to consider the annual accounts and to make a recommendation to the Board at its meeting on the 6th December 2027.
7. There will be ad hoc meetings of the Chairs' Committee, the Remuneration Committee and the Nominations Committee to be announced during the year.
8. There may be additional special meetings of the Board and its committees if required.



Item 15.5

Events

Across October and November, there are a number of strategically important events taking place at the College, details below:

Building Bright Minds: On Friday 9th October, the College will launch the 'Building Bright Minds programme' at its Cumbernauld Campus nursery. The module, designed for nursery practitioners, focuses on how they can support the brain health of young children – another significant step as we privilege brain health.

Undergraduate School space: On Friday 23rd October, the College will formally launch its Undergraduate School space at UWS's Lanarkshire Campus. This marks an important step in our deepening relationship with UWS and re-establishes an NCL presence in South Lanarkshire.

Better than 52: On Friday 30th October, the Better Than 52 series will continue with an Autism and Neurodivergence Health Symposium, held in partnership with Autism Scotland at our Coatbridge Campus. The symposium will explore how we can create a more inclusive, equitable and accessible Scotland.

Awards Ceremonies: The class of 2026 graduation ceremonies will take place on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th November, celebrating the achievements of students across the College.

On Friday 18th September, we formally launched the Scottish Institute for Dental Nursing Education at our Coatbridge Campus. On the day we welcomed the Chief Dental Officer Gillian Leslie, Minister for Community Care Alison Thewliss, Lord Lieutenant of Lanarkshire Lady Susan Haughey and local politicians.



INTEGRITY IN PUBLIC LIFE

ADVICE FOR MEMBERS OF COLLEGE SECTOR BOARDS

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Standards Commission	2
3.	Compliance with the Code	2
4.	Understanding Role & Responsibilities	3
5.	Identifying Potential Conflicts of Interest and Making Declarations of Interest	5
6.	Culture of Respect	8
7.	Collective Responsibility	11
8.	Confidentiality	12
9.	Sources of Information	13

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Advice Note, issued by the Standards Commission, aims to provide members of college sector boards with an overview of their responsibilities under the ethical standards framework. It seeks, in particular, to assist such members in recognising and dealing with potential conflicts of interest. This is to help minimise the risk of the impact of any such a conflict on effective governance and to help members ensure they comply with their board's Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 Members have a personal responsibility to observe the rules in their college sector board's Code of Conduct, which is based on a [Model Code of Conduct](#) issued by the Scottish Ministers, with the approval of the Scottish Parliament. This Advice Note is intended to assist board members in interpreting and complying with the provisions in their Code of Conduct. The Advice Note should, therefore, be read in conjunction with that Code. The Standards Commission's [Guidance on the Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies](#) and its [Advice Notes](#) also provide advice on how provisions in the Code should be interpreted.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all board members use their knowledge and experience to act in their public body's best interests, while adhering to the same, high standards of behaviour. This includes in respect of the matters outlined below.
- 1.4 The Code applies whenever you are acting, or could reasonably be seen as acting, as a member of a college board. This is explained in more detail under Section 3 of this Advice Note.
- 1.5 This Advice Note concentrates on the provisions of the Code that may be the most relevant to members of college sector boards and can cause the most issues in terms of interpretation and

compliance. Some examples have been included, to assist members in relating the provisions to scenarios they may face or situations in which they may find themselves.

2. Standards Commission

2.1 The role of the Standards Commission is to:

- encourage high ethical standards in public life. This includes promoting and enforcing the Codes of Conduct and issuing guidance to councils and devolved public bodies; and by providing training and answering queries on how their provisions should be interpreted. The Standards Commission's Guidance on the Model Code can be found at:
<https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/guidance/guidance-notes>
The Standards Commission's Advice Notes and other training material (including videos, presentations and e-Learning modules on the Code) can be found at:
<https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/education-and-resources>
- adjudicate on alleged breaches of the Codes of Conduct, and where a breach is found, to determine the sanction to be applied.

2.2 Complaints about potential breaches of the Codes of Conduct by councillors and members of devolved public bodies are investigated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC). Following the completion of an investigation, the ESC will submit a report to the Standards Commission.

2.3 The Standards Commission will review the ESC's report and determine whether to:

- direct the ESC to carry out further investigations;
- hold a Hearing; or
- do neither.

2.4 The Standards Commission holds Hearings to determine whether there has been a breach of their respective Codes of Conduct by the councillor or member. If, having considered the evidence led and submissions made at the Hearing, the Standards Commission's Hearing Panel concludes, on the balance of probabilities, that a breach of the Code occurred, it will then determine the sanction to be applied. The sanctions available to the Standards Commission are censure, suspension and disqualification.

2.5 In the case of a member of a college sector board (a) who is also an employee; or (b) who is an *ex officio* member (such as the college principal), on receipt of a report from the ESC, the Standards Commission shall send the report to the public body in terms of Section 24 of the 2000 Act.

3. Compliance with the Code

3.1 All public bodies (including college sector public bodies) listed at Schedule 3 of the 2000 Act should ensure that appropriate training on the ethical standards framework, the Model Code of Conduct, and the guidance issued by the Standards Commission is provided to its board members. This includes ensuring training is provided as part of a member's induction and on a regular basis thereafter.

3.2 It is, however, a member's personal responsibility to ensure that they comply with the provisions in the Code. Members are also expected to contribute to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by ensuring they lead by example. Members should adhere to the key principles of public life (which are outlined in Section 2 of the Code) and should encourage their colleagues to do so. Members should note that a breach of the Code can have an impact not just on them as individuals but also on the reputation of, and public confidence in, their public body.

- 3.3 Members can seek advice on the Code, or any other aspect of the ethical standards framework, from the Standards Commission at any time. The public body's Chair and its Standards Officer can also provide advice and support to members on the interpretation and application of their Code. The Standards Commission's Advice Note on the Role of a Standards Officer provides information on a Standards Officer's role and responsibilities, within the ethical standards framework, and the duties they may be expected to discharge. These can include ensuring that appropriate training is given to board members on the ethical standards framework, the public body's Code of Conduct and the Standards Commission's Guidance.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the Code of Conduct applies in all situations, and at all times, where members are acting as a board member of the college sector public body, have referred to themselves as a member or could objectively be considered to be acting as a member. This can include when they are using social media. In determining whether the Code applies, the Standards Commission will consider whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably consider that the individual was acting as a member of the board at the time of the events in question.

An example of where the Code might apply could be where a member has posted disrespectful comments about the Minister responsible for further education. Even if the member's social media account was marked as personal and they had not referred to their board role in the biography section, they still could be objectively considered to be acting in their capacity as a member if, for example, the account contained posts relating to the college or board business, or even general further education related issues.

A further example of where the Code might apply could be where a member, when presenting at an external event, made reference to their role on the board and publicly criticised the college principal's performance.

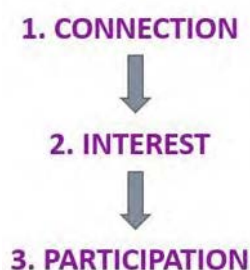
4. Understanding Role & Responsibilities

- 4.1 College sector boards comprise of individuals who are appointed, elected or nominated to the board in different ways, including members who are elected or nominated to the board by virtue of them being a member of staff, a student or a member of a trade union. In addition, college principals are *ex officio* members of their boards (i.e. members by virtue of their position as principal).
- 4.2 Members should recognise that the reason that college sector boards are comprised of individuals with different backgrounds, knowledge and experiences is to ensure diversity of thought and to ensure that input from, and the perspectives of, all key stakeholders are considered in any decision-making.
- 4.3 Members should ensure that they understand, respect and take account of differences in each other's backgrounds, knowledge and experiences, so these do not become a barrier to progress and to the effectiveness of the board itself. Doing so also helps make sure matters are discussed in a respectful and constructive manner that, in turn, helps the public body to work effectively.
- 4.4 Members should be clear, nevertheless, that as members of college sector boards, they are required to act in the best interests of the public body, as opposed to the interests of any individual constituency from which they have been appointed, nominated or elected. Such members need to be aware of their obligations to the board and reconcile these with their obligations to their constituency. While such members can raise matters from the perspective of their constituency, they should not promote the interests of, or lobby on behalf of, the constituency when sitting as a member of a college sector board. They are not expected to report back to their constituencies the work and discussions of the board, unless specifically authorised to do so by the public body.

- 4.5 Members are responsible for overseeing their public body and scrutinising performance to ensure that they are being properly run, with all funds being used appropriately and in accordance with 'best value' principles. Staff, student and trade union board members can inform the board about their constituency's view, policies and priorities and can highlight the potential impact of any decisions. However, their role on the board is not to act as a delegate or to be an advocate for any particular group or constituency. Instead, they are required to act in the best interests of the public body overall when contributing to discussions and when making decisions.
- 4.6 It is important to note that the duty to act in the best interests of the public body does not prevent a member from bringing forward relevant experiences or perspectives from any constituency from which they have been appointed, nominated or elected. Such input is appropriate, provided that decisions are ultimately made independently and on the basis of all relevant information and evidence.
- 4.7 In order to maintain public confidence, it is essential that members not only make decisions, but are seen to be making decisions, both in the best interests of the public body and based on the information provided by employees and matters discussed during any discussion at the board meeting in question. Members should not make or be seen to be making decisions based solely on the interests of any constituency (including any organisation, body or group of which they might be or reasonably be considered as representing).
- 4.8 There is an important distinction between a member gathering views to inform their perspective and independent judgment (which is appropriate) and seeking instructions from an outside constituency or body about how to vote (which is not allowed).
- 4.9 This does not mean members are required to support every proposal or should avoid challenging recommendations made. Challenging decisions with evidence, asking questions for purpose of scrutiny, and highlighting the potential impact on constituents and service users is an important part of acting in the best interests of the public body, because they help the board make better and informed decisions. It should also be noted that it may be that members reach different conclusions about what constitutes the best interests of the public body and best value, while still exercising independent judgement.
- 4.10 The requirement to act in the interests of the public body and to maintain their independence as a board member means members could be required to make decisions that could potentially be inconsistent with, or diverge from, the priorities or potential aims of any constituency from which they have been appointed. This requirement applies both within the boardroom and outside it. No outside body, organisation, or group is entitled to direct how members vote or to hold them accountable for their voting decisions. If members experience pressure of this kind, they should seek support from the Standards Officer or the Chair.
- 4.11 It is important for boards to ensure good governance and accountability in respect of both finance and performance. It is essential, therefore, that members have clear understanding of the strategic aims, roles and responsibilities of the public body of which they are a member, and the requirement to act in its best interests when serving as a member of its board at any given time.
- 4.12 As some members are on the board by virtue of their nomination, election or appointment in another role, the potential for conflicts of interest and associated risks to effective governance and scrutiny can arise. Members may also have personal interests which can cause conflicts. More information on how to identify and manage such conflicts is outlined in the section below.

5. Identifying Potential Conflicts of Interest and Making Declarations of Interest

- 5.1 **What conflicts of interest are:** Conflicts of interest are not about wrongdoing. They arise when a member, or any person or body with whom they are associated, has a connection to a matter the public body is considering and that connection could reasonably be seen as having the potential to affect their judgement. The key is to identify any potential conflict of interest as early as possible and to manage them openly and appropriately. Following the **three-stage test** outlined in the Code, as described below, helps members do so.
- 5.2 The public must have confidence that members are taking decisions in the public interest and not for any other reason. It is essential, therefore, that members are transparent about any interests which could influence, or could be considered as being likely to influence, their discussion and decision-making as a member of the college sector board. A failure to identify and manage appropriately any conflict of interest that arises will be a breach of the Code. It can also have a detrimental impact on the public body's governance and scrutiny arrangements, as well as its reputation.
- 5.3 In most cases the duty under the Code to act in the public interest will align with a member's duty to act in the best interests of the public body. Where there is a conflict, however, members should assess whether they are required to declare an interest and whether they should withdraw from the discussion and decision-making.
- 5.4 Members must ensure that they can identify potential conflicts of interest. These will include not just the potential for competing interests between the public body and any constituency from which the member has been appointed, but also between them and any other individual, body, group, organisation to which they have a connection.
- 5.5 Members should ensure they are familiar with the three-stage test for identifying and declaring interests under the Code.



- 5.6 **Stage 1 – CONNECTION:** For each particular matter members are being asked to consider as a board member, the member must first decide whether they have a connection to that matter. A connection is any link between the matter being considered and the member, or a person or body with whom they are associated. A connection also includes anything that has been recorded on the member's register of interests.
- 5.7 It should be noted that a subject that may apply to a large proportion of the general public would not generally be considered to give rise to a connection for the purposes of the Code. Examples would be being a taxpayer or being in receipt of a state pension or universal credit.
- 5.8 The Code also does not restrict the ability of a public body to benefit from the knowledge and experience of its members. Having knowledge or experience of a matter that is to be considered by a public body is not necessarily a connection.

For example, a board member's knowledge and experience as an IT specialist would not be considered a connection, if an item to be considered by the board was the introduction of a new college wide IT system.

- 5.9 If a member has identified that they have a connection to a matter to be considered by their board, they must move on to stage two.
- 5.10 **Stage 2 – INTEREST:** In considering whether to declare an interest in any item to be considered by the board, members must consider the objective test at paragraph 5.5 of the Code. The objective test is whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts (being the matter to be discussed and the nature of the connection) would reasonably regard the connection to the particular matter as being so significant as to be likely to influence the member's discussion or decision-making.
- 5.11 It should be noted that having a view in advance on a matter to be considered at a meeting (and discussing such a view with colleagues, employees or service users) would not in itself create a personal conflict. Members are entitled to express views and opinions and doing so before a meeting would not in itself create a declarable interest.
- 5.12 If the objective test is met and they have a declarable interest, the member must move on to stage three.
- 5.13 **Stage 3 – PARTICIPATION:** Members must declare any relevant interest and withdraw from the room while the item is being considered, discussed, and voted upon. It is not sufficient for the member to retire to the back of the room or any public gallery. If the meeting is being held online, members should retire to a separate breakout room or leave and re-join after the discussion on the matter has concluded. It is not sufficient for the member to turn off their camera and / or microphone for the duration of the matter. The requirement to leave the room (whether in-person or online) is to avoid giving rise to any perception that the member remains in a position to influence the outcome of the deliberations on the item.
- 5.14 Members should consider making a transparency statement if they have a connection to a particular matter to be discussed but, having applied the objective test, they do not consider it would amount to a declarable interest. This can be helpful if they are concerned that members of the public may not be aware of the relevant facts. In such cases, the member should use the following wording: "I have a connection to this item by reason of... However, having applied the objective test I do not consider that I have an interest to declare. This is because..."
- 5.15 Members appointed, nominated or elected from a particular constituency must be mindful that the requirement for them to act in the interests of the board while carrying out their duties as a member of it may require them to make decisions that could potentially be inconsistent with, or diverge from, the priorities or stated aims of their constituency.

An example of a connection could be where the board is being asked to approve the overall annual budget. A staff board member is likely to have a connection, given their salary will be paid from the overall budget. It is unlikely, however, someone with knowledge of the relevant facts (being the overall scope of matter being discussed) would reasonably regard the connection to the particular matter as being so significant as to be likely to influence the member's discussion or decision-making. That is because a specific individual's salary would be so insignificant in terms of the overall budget and, therefore, would be unlikely to have any influence on how the member considered the matter.

It is likely that staff and trade union board members could also have a connection if the board was being asked to agree a voluntary severance proposal as, again, any such decision could affect them personally. Any such members would be required, therefore, to apply the objective

test to decide whether their connection could amount to a declarable interest. In doing so, a 'relevant fact' may be the specific matter the board is being asked to determine. If, for example, it was simply being asked to agree that a voluntary severance scheme should be introduced, then the members concerned may consider that their connection would not be reasonably considered to be so significant as to be likely to influence their discussion or decision-making. If, however, the board was to consider the terms for voluntary severance, such as who would be eligible and how many weeks' salary would be offered, and a member was potentially eligible to apply, then they may consider that their connection would reasonably be considered as sufficiently significant as to be likely to influence their discussion or decision-making. This could be the case even if the scheme was to apply to large proportion of the college's staff.

Another example of a connection could be if the board was being asked to consider a restructuring proposal being presented by the Executive Team. Staff, student and trade union members would be likely to have a connection, as any decision may have implications for them personally (for example, it may involve changes to the department in which they work or study). The members would be required, therefore, to apply the objective test to decide whether their connection to the particular matter being considered by the board could amount to a declarable interest. It should be noted that the test is not whether the member feels they can make any decision objectively and on its merits; the test is one of how others may perceive their ability to do so. If the objective test is met, the member concerned would have to declare the interest and leave the room. They would not be allowed to take part in the discussions or any voting on the matter.

An example of where a member might have a personal connection that could, in turn, amount to a declarable interest could be where their partner was due to enrol as a student and, as a member of the college's Finance and Resources Committee, they were being asked to consider the annual Tuition Fee Schedule.

A further example of a declarable interest could be where a board was being asked to appoint a new non-executive member, and a member was friends with the nominated candidate. If, however, the member was not friends with the candidate, but merely knew them from working for the same organisation several years ago, it may be that the objective test would not be met. In that scenario, the member could choose to make a transparency statement explaining why they did not consider the objective test was met. Such a statement could be helpful for reasons of transparency and also to prevent a potential complaint being made if the member was concerned that others present or members of the public might not have knowledge of the relevant facts (being that they had only known the nominated candidate on a professional basis and had not had contact with them for some time).

- 5.16 In terms of being a member of an outside body, the Code states that members may also have a connection where they have a personal conflict, by reason of either their actions or their legal obligations.

An example of where a member may have a personal conflict, and therefore a declarable interest, by reason of their actions could be if the member, having previously made critical comments in the press about the Scottish Funding Council's evaluation framework, was due to take part in a decision to seek additional funding for a capital project.

An example of where a member may have a personal conflict as a result of legal obligations would include where they are a charity trustee, and the board is being asked to make a decision on whether the college should partner with the charity. Even if it appears, on the face of it, that such a partnership may benefit both organisations, the member's obligation, under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, to act in the best interests of the charity may conflict with their role as a member and the requirement for them to act in the best interests of the college.

- 5.17 Members should not rely on or expect employees or colleagues to remind them to make declarations even if they think (or know) that others present are aware of their interests, including that they are an elected or nominated member from a particular constituency. It is solely a member's own personal responsibility to make declarations of interest as required. If a member is in any doubt at a meeting, or when reviewing the agenda and papers before a meeting, they should ask for help from the Chair, Standards Officer or governance professional. It should be noted that the Code requires members to disclose or declare their personal interests both in formal and informal dealings with employees and other members and not just in formal board or committee meetings.
- 5.18 If the Chair or other board members consider that a fellow member has a declarable interest that has not been declared, they should consider raising the matter with the fellow member and advise them that they are concerned the member may be in breach of the Code. If the individual then refuses to declare the interest and leave the room, and the Chair is concerned about the potential impact of them participating, in terms of the propriety of the decision or the potential risk to the reputation of the board or college, they may wish to seek advice from the Standards Officer about whether the matter should be continued and / or for their advice to be recorded. It should be noted that a failure to listen and adhere to advice could be an aggravating factor, should a formal complaint be made, and a breach of the Code subsequently be found by the Standards Commission.
- 5.19 Members should consider whether agendas for meetings raise any issues of declaration of interest and, if so, they should make their declaration of interest as early as possible at a meeting where that interest arises. If a member only identifies the need for a declaration of interest to be made when the discussion on a particular matter is underway, they should declare the interest as soon as they realise it is necessary.
- 5.20 Members should begin their statement with the words "I declare an interest" and identify the item or items of business to which it relates. Members do not need to give a detailed description of the interest, but their statement must contain sufficient information to enable those present to understand the nature of it.

6. Culture of Respect

Respect, Bullying and Harassment

- 6.1 The Code makes it clear that the requirement for members to treat everyone with courtesy and respect includes in person, in writing, at meetings and when they are online. The conduct expected of members online is no different to the conduct they should employ in other methods of communication, such as face-to-face meetings and letters.
- 6.2 In dealing with colleagues, employees and members of the public, members should always consider both what they are expressing and the way they are expressing it. Members should also consider how their conduct could be perceived. Members should be able to undertake a scrutiny role and make contributions to discussions and debates in a constructive, respectful, courteous, and appropriate manner without resorting to personal attacks, being offensive, abusive or unduly disruptive.
- 6.3 Before commenting or posting on social media, members should consider very carefully whether the Code would apply and, if so, they should understand the immediate and permanent nature of any comment or post they are about to make. Members should bear in mind the potential impact on the reputation of the public body and principle of collective responsibility. Members should also be careful that they are not disclosing any confidential information.

- 6.4 Members should note that ‘liking’, ‘reacting’, ‘tagging’, re-posting and sharing comments or posts, or publishing links to other sites could be seen as supporting the original opinion, comment or information, including information on other accounts or sites. The Standards Commission has produced an Advice Note for Members of Devolved Public Bodies on the Use of Social Media that provides more guidance on factors members should consider when using social media.
- 6.5 Members must treat all individuals with courtesy and respect when carrying out their duties as a board member. Members must not participate in, or condone, acts of harassment, discrimination, victimisation or bullying. This can include, but is not limited to:
- unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct;
 - intimidatory behaviour including verbal abuse or the making of threats;
 - making someone’s working life difficult;
 - disparaging, ridiculing or mocking comments and remarks;
 - deliberately excluding an individual from conversations, work or social activities, in which they have a right or legitimate expectation to participate; and
 - ignoring a fellow member’s contribution to a debate, talking over them or being dismissive of their views.
- Further information can be found in the Standards Commission’s Advice Note for Members on Bullying and Harassment.
- 6.6 As members are in a position of trust and power, others may bring inappropriate behaviour to their attention. Members can assist by becoming familiar with what is meant by harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying and the impact these can have on individuals or groups.
- 6.7 If a member is a witness to any acts of bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation, they should encourage the victim to seek support and assistance, referring, where appropriate, to their organisation’s applicable policies (such as any on safeguarding or wellbeing), and make it clear that they will offer them assistance and provide evidence if they decide to make an informal or formal complaint. Members should challenge inappropriate behaviour as it happens and consider raising the issue with the Chair or submitting a formal complaint to the ESC.
- 6.8 As noted above, the composition of college sector boards allows for different voices and stakeholder input to be considered in decision-making. Members can demonstrate they understand the value of the different perspectives by ensuring that they listen to, and take account of, the views of other members. Members are perfectly entitled to disagree with their colleagues; they are simply required to express any opposing views in a respectful manner. If a member wants to say why they disagree, they should focus on the issue and not the individual.

Relations with employees and distinguishing between strategic and operational matters

- 6.9 Members should be aware of the inherent influence their role brings and ensure that they are demonstrating respect for employees and are encouraging their colleagues to do the same.
- 6.10 Members should also be aware of the role that employees play and ensure they are not compromising this by behaving in a manner that could result in employees feeling threatened or intimidated, which in turn could prevent them from undertaking their duties properly and appropriately. Members must not bring any undue influence to bear on an employee to take a certain action, particularly if it is contrary to the law or the applicable college’s policies and procedures.
- 6.11 Members have a right to high quality information and are entitled to seek further information to enable them to undertake their scrutiny and strategic objective setting roles effectively. Members are entitled to challenge employees and colleagues but must not do so in a personal

or offensive manner. Members should note that the Code states that any issues relating to behaviour, performance or conduct of an employee should be raised in private with the appropriate senior manager. If a member has concerns about the behaviour, performance or conduct of an employee, they may wish to consider discussing these with the Chair in the first instance, with a view to trying to establish if these concerns are shared by any other members and / or if the matter has already been raised with the appropriate senior manager.

- 6.12 As a general rule, the role of members is to scrutinise and hold senior employees to account for the delivery of the public body's services and in meeting its strategic objectives. In doing so, members are required to provide strategic leadership and oversight. This involves setting strategy and policy, scrutinising overall performance against strategic aims, and making major decisions that concern their public body as a whole.
- 6.13 By comparison, operational management is the planning, organising and execution involved in day-to-day activities and service delivery. This is normally the role and responsibility of employees. Members risk losing sight of their strategic role if they become too focused or inappropriately involved, either individually or as a board, on matters that are operational in nature.
- 6.14 As noted above, members have a right to receive good quality information from employees on which to base their decisions and undertake their scrutiny role. This information should be proportionate, balanced, comprehensive and understandable. Members are entitled to ask questions about operational matters at board meetings and to seek assurances from employees that actions have or are to be taken. Members should be careful, however, about the level of detail they are seeking. Members should always question whether the amount and nature of the information they are seeking is necessary and proportionate.
- 6.15 If members do not consider they are receiving the information they require to assure themselves that they are in a position to make informed decisions, they should raise the issue with the Chair.
- 6.16 Members should also be aware that if they are repeatedly raising the same issue or asking repetitive questions about operational matters, it is likely they are being, or will be perceived as being, directive and becoming inappropriately involved. It may be helpful in such a situation for the member in question to ask for a separate discussion with the Chair to see if they can help resolve the matter.
- 6.17 Members may well be approached by service users for assistance (this could be someone they do not have a relationship with but could also potentially be a friend or family member). Members can direct the service user to the appropriate employee or team. They can also raise the enquiry with the relevant employee or team and can seek information on progress or ask questions about how a service has been delivered on behalf of a service user. Members must be careful, however, to avoid straying into operational management by, for example, directing employees to take a certain course of action or prioritise the needs of a specific service user. Members should be mindful that they are in a position of influence and that employees may feel pressured into responding to them as a matter of priority, even if the enquiry is not urgent.
- 6.18 Members should also be aware of the distinction between a request for help and a complaint; and, in the latter case, should recommend that the service user makes use of the public body's formal complaints procedure. Members should be careful if they are approached by employees of the college for help and should decline to get involved in anything which relates to their status as an employee (such as performance or attendance management).

Examples of inappropriate involvement are where a member:

- seeks to become involved in the drafting of an internal process document being put in place to support a wider policy;

- becomes involved in an individual staffing matter;
- tries to direct employees to take a certain action in respect of an individual student (this could be someone who has approached them for assistance or someone with whom they already have a relationship); and / or
- insists on attending an operational meeting with an outside body, or an internal employee working group where members are not normally present.

Further examples of where a member can become inappropriately involved in operational matters include when they try to seek additional information from employees on a particular area of college activity in which they have an interest or where, as an elected or nominated member, they seek information about something that is being planned by management. It should be noted that members do not necessarily have a right to request executive information over and above that which the board, as a collective, requires to see in order to be able to undertake its strategic objective and scrutiny roles, and make informed decisions. Members should ensure that any additional information is sought through the appropriate channel, which will usually be when a matter is being discussed at a board or committee meeting.

- 6.19 Further information and examples of areas where members may inappropriately seek to get involved in operational matters can be found in the Standards Commission's Advice Note for Members on Strategic and Operational Matters.

7. Collective Responsibility

- 7.1 The Code requires members to respect the principle of collective responsibility for decisions taken by the board as a whole, once made. This provision is not intended to inhibit discussions or constructive challenge by members in matters of decision-making and corporate responsibility. Members may be required to take decisions on difficult issues and, when doing so, will often have genuine, and strongly held, differences of opinion. Once issues are thoroughly debated, however, decisions should be taken and the majority vote should prevail. Members should note that continuing with a conflict, when it has become apparent that other members will not change their minds, can waste time and be demotivating and futile.
- 7.2 Members should bear in mind that while issues can and should be debated robustly, stakeholder confidence in the college can be lost, if they then express division outside the boardroom by, for example, talking to the media or officers or posting on social media. This is because confidence and trust can be eroded if a board is perceived as being divided, with its members criticising each other.
- 7.3 If a member fundamentally disagrees with the decision taken by the board, then they have the option of asking for their concerns or dissent to be recorded in the minutes of the board meeting. If a member remains discontented, they may wish to ask the Chair of the board for a meeting to discuss their concerns. Ultimately, though, if a member's concerns are not resolved to their satisfaction and they cannot accept and support the collective decision of the board, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to resign.
- 7.4 It should be noted that even if a board member has their dissent from a decision recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision in question was made, they are still bound by the principle of collective responsibility and any confidentiality requirements. This means that when the decision was made public, the member could confirm publicly that they had dissented, since this would be in the minutes and a matter of public record. The member should not, however, say anything that would bring the college or board into disrepute.

Examples of potential breaches of the collective responsibility provision in the Code could include a member making disparaging remarks about or denouncing a decision made by their college in the media.

Another example of where a potential breach could arise could be a situation where a trade union member of a board, who was also the spokesperson for their trade union, was commenting on a decision that the board had been involved in or had made. If the member was, for example, announcing a vote of no confidence in the college board and its management in respect of the decision or was criticising its impact, the member could potentially be in breach of the Code. That may not be the case, however, if the member was merely commenting on the potential impact of the decision on trade union members and made it clear that they were doing so in their capacity as the trade union spokesperson (and that they were speaking on behalf of it, as an entity, and not as an individual).

A further example could be a situation where a staff member of a board was supporting a colleague at an employment tribunal. While the staff member might question a management decision or procedure taken, on behalf of their colleague, they would still be bound by the principle of collective responsibility and should not, therefore, criticise a decision taken by the board (even if they had dissented from the decision when it was made).

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1 The Code states that members must not disclose confidential information or information that should reasonably be regarded as being of a confidential or private nature. The Code further states that members are only entitled to use confidential information to undertake their duties as a board member. They must not use such information in any way for personal advantage or to discredit their public body (even if they are of the view that the information should be publicly available).
- 8.2 It should be noted that information can become confidential in a number of ways and, while sometimes the confidential nature of the material will be explicit (for example, if a document is marked 'confidential'), in other cases, it will be clear, from the nature of the information or from the circumstances in which it was provided, that it is confidential.
- 8.3 If a member is also a member of an outside organisation, or is an elected or nominated member, they may have access to information that should not be disclosed to the outside organisation or their constituency. This means that if a member is provided with confidential information, such as information disclosed in a closed or private section of a board meeting, or legal advice obtained by the public body (either from employees or external legal advisers), they should not disclose or release it to any other outside organisation or individual without consent. That remains the case even if the information or decision directly concerns, or could impact upon, that outside organisation or individual. If a member is in any doubt about whether information is confidential, they should seek advice from the Standards Officer or Chair before disclosing it.

Examples of confidential information can include, but are not limited to:

- the content of documents marked as confidential or non-disclosable;
- commercial information such as information relating to a contract or a contractor's business;
- personal or sensitive information, such as information relating to an individual's employment or health;
- information which is confidential as a result of a statutory provision;
- information discussed in closed or private sections of meetings;
- legal advice obtained by the public body (either provided by employees or external legal advisers); and
- information received as a result of a relationship where there is an expectation of confidence, such as between a member and a service user.

An example of where a board member might breach the confidentiality requirements of the Code could be where the board has considered a report containing information in respect of a

tendering exercise and subsequent award of a contract, and information about the award of the contract is then disclosed by the member to a third party after the meeting (and before any public announcement about the contract is made).

A further example could be where a staff, student or trade union member of a board discloses confidential information the board has been discussing about a potential restructuring exercise to their staff colleagues before the senior management team and board have agreed the information should be disclosed to employees. The member could be in breach of the Code even if it is their personal view that the information should be made public, or even if the member knows that their staff colleagues have heard rumours about the potential restructure and are expecting feedback.

- 8.4 It is acknowledged, nevertheless, that the fact that there are staff, student and trade union members on boards means there is an expectation of partnership working with those members' constituencies. It is accepted, for example, that a trade union member may be put under pressure by senior trade union colleagues to disclose any knowledge they may have about a decision made by the board that could have major implications for the trade union. Boards are, therefore, encouraged to be as transparent as possible and to only classify information as confidential in cases where there is a very good reason for it not to be disclosed at that time. Boards should, where possible, determine and make clear how long members will be expected to maintain confidentiality in respect of a particular decision or matter, and should be transparent about their reasoning in this regard.

9. Sources of Information

- 9.1 The Standards Commission can provide further advice and support on the Code and how it should be interpreted. The Standards Commission's contact details are:

Email: enquiries@standardscommission.org.uk

Telephone: 0131 346 6666

- 9.2 The Standards Commission has produced Advice Notes for Members on the various topics, including:

- The Use of Social Media
- How to Declare Interests
- The Role of the Standards Officer
- Conduct at Online Meetings
- Bullying and Harassment
- Distinguishing between Strategic and Operational Matters
- Relations Between Members and Employees

The Advice Notes can be found on the Standards Commission's website at:

<https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/education-and-resources/professional-briefings>

- 9.3 Further sources of information that members may find to be of assistance include:

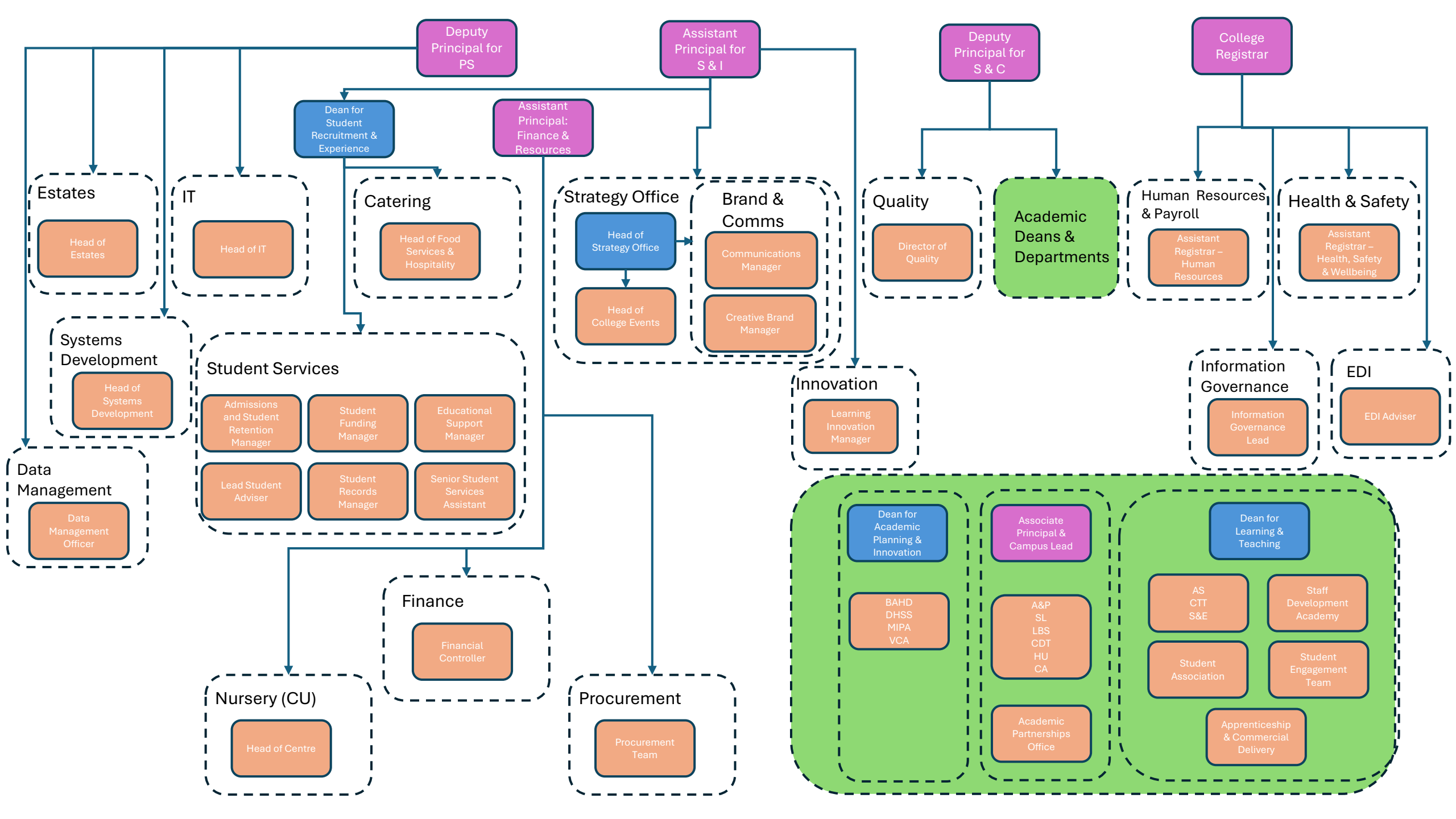
- Scottish Government's "On Board" Guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/board-guide-members-statutory-boards-2/pages/5/>
- The Scottish Government's Governance Hub: <https://governancehub.scot/>
- The College Development Network's Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges and its Guidance for Board Members in the Public Sector: <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/governance-key-documents/>
- Ministerial Guidance for College Sector Board Appointments: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/college-board-appointments-guidance/>

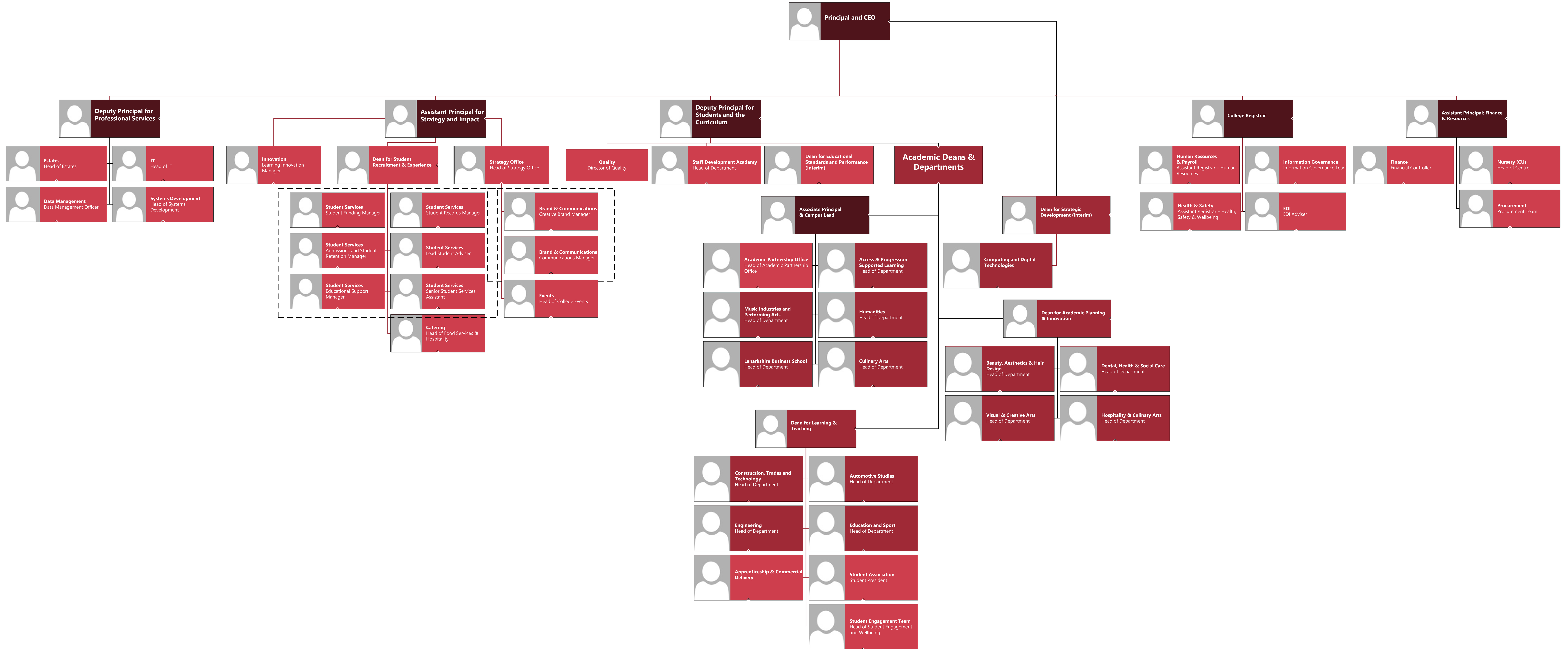
- The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator’s Guidance and Good Practice for Charity Trustees: https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/3621/v10_guidance-and-good-practice-for-charity-trustees.pdf



NCL College Structure

As of July 2026





1. Introduction

Cyber security is continuing as a major threat to all organisations and NCL has to maintain the safety of all digital systems, services and data. The NCL board and ARC supports NCL executive team in governing cyber security, including governance of use and threats from Artificial Intelligence.

2. Cyber Governance Code of Practice

The **Cyber Governance Code of Practice** is the cornerstone of NCSC guidance for boards.

- **Purpose:** Supports boards in governing cyber security risks and fulfilling their duty of care.
- **Scope:** Designed for medium and large organisations in both public and private sectors; smaller organisations may adapt principles based on risk profile.
- **Content:** Outlines critical governance actions, responsibilities, and accountability at board level.
- **Implementation:** Each principle is accompanied by actionable steps to embed cyber governance into organisational processes.
- **Support Tools:** The Code is complemented by **Cyber Governance Training** and the **Cyber Security Toolkit for Boards**, which provide practical guidance and resources for implementation

3. Key Responsibilities for Boards

Boards are expected to:

- **Understand cyber risk posture:** Maintain visibility into organisational vulnerabilities and threat landscape.
- **Approve and oversee measures:** Ensure appropriate policies, controls, and resources are in place.
- **Integrate cyber risk into corporate governance:** Treat cyber risk as a business risk, embedding it into overall risk management frameworks.
- **Ensure preparedness and resilience:** Confirm that the organisation can respond to and recover from cyber incidents effectively.
- **Monitor compliance and accountability:** Align with legal and regulatory requirements, such as the EU NIS2 Directive, which explicitly holds management boards accountable for cyber risk management

4. Practical Implementation

The NCSC provides a structured approach for boards to enhance cyber governance:

1. **Training:** Strengthen understanding of cyber governance principles and their strategic importance.
2. **Toolkit:** Access templates, checklists, and guidance to implement the Code's actions.
3. **Standards Mapping:** Align board-level governance with frameworks like the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) to ensure comprehensive coverage.
4. **Culture and Collaboration:** Promote a culture of cyber resilience across the organisation and establish committees or working groups with representation from key stakeholders.

5. Benefits of Effective Board Governance

By following NCSC guidance, boards can:

- Reduce the likelihood and impact of cyber incidents.
- Protect critical business operations and sensitive data.
- Ensure regulatory compliance and avoid penalties.
- Build organisational resilience and stakeholder trust.

6. Summary

In summary, **NCSC cyber security board governance equips directors with the knowledge, accountability framework, and practical tools to oversee cyber risk strategically**, ensuring that cyber security is embedded into organisational decision-making and risk management processes.

7. Recommendation

That the NCL Board requests that the **Cyber Governance Code of Practice** is implemented as part of the cyber security controls and that this incorporates governance controls for Artificial Intelligence.