

CURRICULUM STRATEGY

(2018-2023)



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VISION

We will provide a curriculum that maximises the potential of every individual. We will do this by being agile and innovative in our delivery models and ensure our knowledge and skills reflect current and future industry practice.

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INTRODUCTION

Borders College is a highly ambitious institution and aims to deliver high quality education, training and skills in response to the needs of the Scottish Borders Region and of Scotland. Our aim is to provide individuals and businesses with access to learning and development that will support their individual progress and improve their economic prosperity.

This strategy has been developed to recognise the future context and will consider both local and national economic and skills requirements. These are not exhaustive and the curriculum offer will adapt and reflect emerging priorities over the 5 year period.

As the sole Further Education Institution within the Borders, it's a vital resource which provides a wide-ranging curriculum with learning opportunities from access/foundation level to higher education level.





RATIONALE

Borders College has a Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 which states that our Strategic Purpose is to deliver success for all learners. This will be achieved through preparing students with the skills to be successful in the future workforce. We aim to provide learners with qualification outcomes and provide them with skills to enable them to sustain positive destinations. It is important that our Curriculum Strategy for the next 5 years enables us to achieve this Strategic Purpose.

Our 5 Strategic Goals are to

- 1) respond to the needs of our region,
- 2) deliver successful outcomes for all learners,
- 3) provide a high quality college experience,
- 4) grow our business and
- 5) build sustainability.

This Curriculum Strategy document will provide the framework to ensure we meet the strategic goals of responding to the needs of our region and to enable us to grow our business.

CURRICULUM STRATEGY DRIVERS

There are a number of strategic drivers that impact on the curriculum and they have long term implications for our organisation. The following is a short summary of each of these strategic drivers.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 1

Fourth Industrial Revolution

We are currently in a fourth industrial revolution driven by technology. The evidence from our current experience of rapidly changing technology indicates that we will continue to be in an ever changing environment. Scotland's workforce needs new skills to enable them to thrive in this environment of constant change. New technology will enable more remote working, leading to a global marketplace.

Our ambition is that by 2023, 30% of our learning approach will be online. This means that learning will be conducted through digital approaches, mainly through our Moodle platform. This may be a whole qualification supported only by tutorial, a module as part of a qualification, a number of lessons within a module or assessment. The sector, level, qualification and student will determine what the most suitable approach is.

This will mean lessons are online and structured into a learning path with learning objectives. Online assessments will be deeper and more complex including project work. Staff and students will utilise online collaborative tools. Students will be able to progress at their own pace against defined learning objectives. Staff and student timetables will be adapted to ensure greater flexibility and efficiency of resources will be maximised.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 2

Access to Higher Education

A key priority for Scottish Government is to provide access to University for people of all ages from the widest range of backgrounds. We must ensure learners can progress smoothly through their Learner Journey from the senior phase at school to employment and/or higher education in university and/or apprenticeships. We will expand our provision at SCQF Level 6 and above and will continue to develop good articulation routes.

We will introduce new apprenticeship routes including Graduate Apprenticeships through partnership working with Universities and expand our Modern Apprenticeship provision.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 3

National Policy

The **Scottish Government** wants to improve life changes for young people, support economic growth and increase the number of jobs. There are a number of priorities within Education and Training which provide a strategic direction for our College curriculum. These priorities will also be reflected in the **Scottish Funding Council** Outcome Agreement Guidance documentation. In



particular, the College will strive to address Gender Imbalance within subject areas. The specific outcomes will be more women studying construction, technology and engineering based subjects and more men studying health, education and service industry based subjects.

The **Skills Investment Plans** developed by Skills Development Scotland provide information relating to the skills, challenges and opportunities across Scotland's key sectors.

Regional Policy

The **Regional Skills Assessment Insight Reports** have been developed by Skills



Development Scotland for the Scottish Borders and the South of Scotland. These are updated regularly and provide valuable information relating to the employment and skills needs of the Borders Region. The economy is starting to grow with employment levels improving. The Borders has an ageing population which will create an increased demand for employment within the Care sector.

It is predicted that the greatest employment increases will be within Health and Social Work, Professional services and ICT. There will also be growth within Construction, Retail and Motor Vehicle Repairs. An area of modest growth will be Arts and Recreation.

Manufacturing and Public Administration will see the greatest decline in employment but we will work with our partners in Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Enterprise to ensure those staff have opportunities to develop their transferable skills.

The establishment of the **South of Scotland Economic Partnership** in late 2017 has brought together public and private sector partners to deliver a fresh approach to economic development in the South of Scotland and will help prepare the ground for the establishment of the new **South of Scotland Enterprise Agency**. The College will

play a vital role in the development of a skilled and educated workforce, leading to increased productivity and growth within the economy of the region.

The **Borderlands Partnership** brings together five cross-border local authorities (Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council) to promote the economic growth of the area that straddles the Scotland-England border.

It is important the curriculum reflects both national and regional requirements. College staff will continue to work with employers through a range of mechanisms to ensure our curriculum offer meets the needs of local employers.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 4

STEM Strategy

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - Education and Training Strategy for Scotland was published in October 2017 by the Scottish Government and it sets out actions for partners, including the College sector. The aims of this strategy is to support people to develop their STEM skills and grow STEM literacy.





The College is the lead partner for the Regional STEM Strategy Group and will contribute towards a STEM Strategy for the Borders. This will include specific targets to expand opportunities for school pupils to undertake STEM related subjects within our Schools Academy Programme. We will also continue to develop our curriculum to ensure all learners are developing digital skills. The need for students to develop their Essential and Digital Skills is vital to ensure they are prepared for the employment of the future.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 5

School-Senior Phase

Colleges play a vital role in growing the provision of vocational pathways for those

in the senior phase at school. Although the College has a well-established School-College portfolio of activity, we want to provide equality of access across the Borders Region. We will create learning communities across the Secondary Schools using technology to enable lessons to be delivered remotely with pupils accessing the lesson via video link. This will enable us to increase the number of opportunities for young people within the Senior Phase including Foundation Apprenticeships.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 6

Essential and Digital Skills

There is a significant digital skills gap in Scotland and this is limiting our ability to enable inclusive growth. Our policies on Core and Essential Skills will include the development of digital skills and they will be included within our course design framework.

It has been predicted that 65% of today's school children will eventually be employed in jobs that have yet to be created. This means that we have a responsibility to develop meta-cognitive skills in all our students to enable them to be adaptable, creative and resilient.





STRATEGIC DRIVER 7

Work Placement Standards

The College recognises the need for our students to develop the skills, knowledge, competence and confidence required to progress towards and into sustainable work. Therefore the College curriculum will be designed to incorporate the expectations within the Work Placement Standards produced by Education Scotland.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 8

Enterprise and Innovation

It is important that the College develops and supports a creative and entrepreneurial mindset for Scotland. The College will assign a senior member of staff with specific responsibility to develop Enterprise for staff and students. Opportunities to develop enterprise skills will be included within CPD sessions and within curriculum activities for students.

STRATEGIC DRIVER 9

Borders Economic Strategy 2023

The Economic Strategy for the Borders 2023 highlights the need to increase employment by raising skills levels and to develop our workforce. The average wage is lower than the Scottish average. The College can contribute to improving the economy in the Borders and will provide opportunities for learning to the most deprived areas within our region. We will recruit a greater proportion of our learners from SIMD 10 -40 than would be expected from population distribution alone.



1. Expand the use of technology and e-learning to 30% across all programmes by 2023 to enable a more flexible delivery mode for the learner and to transform teaching and assessment techniques.
2. Expand Higher Education provision, including an apprenticeship option and strengthen articulation routes to university.
3. Continue to review and expand provision within priority areas for the Borders Region.
4. Expand STEM provision to meet the needs of the National STEM Strategy and our local needs particularly within Computing and Digital Skills.
5. Expand vocational pathways for those within the School Senior Phase including an apprenticeship option.
6. All full time programmes to include the development of essential skills including Core Skills, Digital skills and Meta-cognitive skills ensuring these skills have equal priority to the development of vocational skills.
7. All full time programmes to include Work Experience ranging from Inspirational activities to Work Placement as identified within the Work Experience Standards for Colleges.
8. Embed Enterprise and Innovation across all curriculum areas to enable both staff and students to become more creative and innovative.
9. Expand the curriculum offer to those in employment who require up-skilling and for those furthest from the employment market.



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