



## COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN: 2011 - 2014

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## **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT STATEMENT ON STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2014**

The Board of Management introductory statement on the College Strategic Plan 2011-2014 has been composed in an environment of significant funding reductions confirmed for 2011-12 with the years following forecast, at best, to be a period of financial austerity for the college sector. This Plan is designed to ensure that Stow College continues to offer high quality learning and teaching to meet the needs of Glasgow and the West of Scotland and to further develop our national and international work and reputation.

On the 26 September 1934, Stow College opened its doors to its first students and so began a long and successful association with the social and economic development of Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

For over 76 years, Stow College has been at the forefront of vocational education and training providing innovative programmes and undertaking pioneering work to meet a range of diverse learning needs. Building on this tradition, the Board of Management at Stow College is pleased to present its Strategic Plan for 2011-2014.

This Strategic Plan builds on previous plans and has been produced from an in depth internal and external analysis and a detailed review of our mission, vision, values and strategic themes, aims and objectives.

The Plan is the result of effective collaboration between Board members, executive officers, staff and students of the college. A range of individuals, organisations and information sources have been consulted at various stages in the preparation of this plan. This we believe ensures the relevance of the plan to our major stakeholders.

The plan is evidence of our continued commitment to meeting the needs and aspirations of the local, regional, national and international communities we serve. In particular, the plan seeks to contribute powerfully and relevantly to the social and economic regeneration and development of Glasgow and the enhancement of the competitiveness of the Scottish economy. This is consistent with the Scottish Government's commitment to a smart, successful and sustainable Scotland.

This plan is distributed to our key stakeholders and other appropriate parties.

Comments on the plan are welcomed by the Board of Management.



R G McGrory  
Chief Executive and Principal



K Ramsay  
Chair  
Board of Management

## INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan for 2011-2014 is produced under guidance from SFC and is intended to roll forward earlier plans prepared and submitted to the Council.

The Strategic Themes, Aims and Objectives of this plan are derived from the college's statements of Mission and Vision which are subject to continual review by the Board of Management of the college.

The college Mission and Vision statements and college Values together with Strategic Themes, Aims and Objectives have been reviewed and where appropriate, modified in an analysis which has included consideration of the following:

- A review of the progress achieved in meeting targets set out in the previous plan;
- On-going environmental analysis conducted by the college;
- Issues and national priorities identified by the Scottish Government, in particular, the advice contained in the Cabinet Secretary's letter of 17 November 2010;
- Issues and priorities noted in the SFC Corporate Plan 2009-12.

In addition, the strategic direction of the college has been developed against a significant reduction in SFC funded activity levels. In 2010/11, the college enrolled approximately 5,000 learners which was significantly less than in previous years. This reduction results from a decision taken by SFC to reduce Stow's SUM activity level from session 2009/10 onwards. This decision has impacted on college funding and decisions on the composition of the college curriculum. In effect, a range of programmes including distance and work based learning have been removed and college provision focussed on the core curriculum. In order to manage the pace of change following the reduction in activity funding for 2009/10, the college and SFC have agreed a Strategic Change Grant to allow the college to reduce its cost base over a period of time. Reducing infrastructure costs is challenging and does place operational constraints on the college, nonetheless significant progress has been made in achieving these reductions.

However, following the Comprehensive Spending Review and the agreement of the Scottish Budget, colleges throughout Scotland were faced with approximately a 10% reduction in grant allocation for 2011-12.

This reduction and forecasts for the period covered by this plan, prompted a review and radical restructuring of the college's departments and functions to provide a more flexible and dynamic structure to take forward the college's strategic ambitions.

With the establishment of the City of Glasgow College following the merger of Glasgow Metropolitan College, Central College and Glasgow College of Nautical Studies, Stow College has reassessed the need for further development of collaborative and cooperative working to ensure best value in its use of public funds. As a result, working initially with Anniesland College, Cardonald College, Langside College and North Glasgow College, Stow has been instrumental in the formation of the Glasgow Colleges' Federation. The work of the Federation which has now been joined by John Wheatley College, is intended to secure both financial and educational benefit for learners and for Glasgow and the West of Scotland through collaborative projects and initiatives. The work of the Glasgow Colleges' Federation will be further developed during the period of this plan.

Against this backdrop the college has a number of key priorities and areas of focus:

- commitment to improving and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching for all our learners;
- commitment to implementation of the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence;
- commitment to embed education for sustainable development into the curriculum and culture of the college;
- commitment to widening access and inclusion. The college is one of the biggest providers of SWAP programmes in Scotland;
- involvement in a range of collaborative initiatives and projects including MCMC, 16+ Learning Choices and with a range of schools in Glasgow and further afield;
- expanding articulation and progression routes with HEIs through both bilateral agreements and involvement in regional articulation hubs;
- further development of our international work;
- commitment to supporting success in key growth areas of Glasgow's and Scotland's economy;

A major programme of works was undertaken over the period of the last plan establishing new modular buildings and refurbishing significant areas of the college estate. Further capital works were undertaken substantially improving both the City and Stow West campuses.

These works enabled additional learning and teaching accommodation and learner facilities to be developed in the City Campus and the provision of new modular accommodation at the Stow West Campus.

Accompanying these developments was a major programme to update and improve our ICT infrastructure and resources. Collectively, these developments will improve and enhance the learning and teaching environments for our learners and staff in the period ahead.

A major influence on the development of this plan is the college's commitment to the key aims set out in the SFC Corporate Plan 2009-2012, and the strategic policy priorities in the Cabinet Secretary's letter to the SFC of 17 November 2010.

These overarching strategic priorities have been addressed in the SFC Corporate Plan 2009-12 through five strategic themes:

- Governance and Leadership
- Quality and Enhancement
- Global Engagement
- Sustainable Development
- Equality and Diversity

The five strategic themes are supported by seven key outcomes:

- Employability and Skills
- Access, Inclusion and Progression
- Knowledge Exchange
- Specialism and Diversity
- Collaboration
- World-Class Research
- Effective Colleges and Universities

All of the above are important to the work of the college although some would clearly be of a higher priority than others and this is reflected in our focus throughout this plan. The Strategic Plan for 2011-2014 has therefore identified approaches, priorities and targets setting out the college intentions in respect of these strategic priorities.

A third major issue influencing this plan is the college involvement in community learning and development.

Stow College is actively involved in the Community Planning Partnership process and aspires to make a difference to individuals and communities to help them tackle real issues through community action, community based learning and community planning. To this end, the college will focus its contribution towards the three national priorities which have been set out for community learning and development:

- Achievement through learning for adults;
- Achievement through learning for young people;
- Achievement through building community capacity.

A fourth major influence shaping this plan is the college's continuing commitment to promoting all aspects of equal opportunities. In particular we will:

- Aim to promote race equality in our operations to celebrate the diversity of our staff and student population and to prevent race discrimination;
- Ensure that people with disabilities, including learning difficulties, are treated fairly and that all reasonable adjustments to provision are made;

- Adopt policies and procedures which support and encourage positive attitudes and approaches to all areas of equality, diversity and inclusion.

This plan follows a structure which is intended to present in a consistent, coherent and concise manner the strategic direction the college will pursue over the period 2011-2014.

The Mission, Vision and Corporate Values, set out in Section 1 are followed by the Key Strategic Themes, Aims and Objectives in Section 2.

Section 3 outlines the college strategy for managing risk with Section 4 establishing the context within which the college operates and the environmental factors influencing the strategic decisions taken.

The college's approach to improving and enhancing quality through the adoption of the European Excellence Model is noted in Section 5 while Section 6 provides a review of progress made since the submission of our last plan.

Finally, Section 7 forecasts the medium-term view of the college's strategic direction during and beyond the period covered by this plan.

# SECTION 1

## MISSION AND VISION AND VALUES

The college mission and vision statements have been reviewed by Board of Management and confirmed as follows:

### OUR MISSION

*Provide user driven services to satisfy the lifelong learning needs of all our customers and communities.*

### OUR VISION

*A centre of world-class learning excellence measured against international standards providing innovative and diverse solutions.*

These Mission and Vision statements are supported by the college framework of Corporate Values stated overleaf.

## VALUES

- 1 Recognise, embrace and respond to individual needs and views.
- 2 Facilitate a culture of trust and honesty, based on open communication.
- 3 Commitment to lifelong learning, innovation and the achievement of excellence through widening access and promoting equality and diversity.
- 4 Use resources efficiently and effectively to ensure best value and sustainability through good governance.
- 5 Grow and develop relationships with stakeholders and partners.
- 6 Encourage in the individual, confidence, success and citizenship.

## SECTION 2

### KEY STRATEGIC THEMES

The Key Strategic Themes set out in this section have been developed from the Mission and Vision statements and draw on a number of specific strategies including learning and teaching, estates, ICT and staff development. The plan is therefore intended to present in an integrated and holistic way the strategic direction of the college. Ideally, this plan should be read in conjunction with the College Operational Plan and the college's Financial Forecast.

#### **THE COLLEGE KEY STRATEGIC THEMES ARE:**

1. Learning and Teaching
2. People and Performance
3. Collaboration and Partnership
4. Governance and Leadership

Each of the Key Strategic Themes has a specific aim and set of objectives and these are set out on the following pages.

## SECTION 2

**THEME 1:           LEARNING AND TEACHING**

**AIM 1:             TO DELIVER EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING AND  
TEACHING**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 1.1 To seek out, develop and deliver accessible vocational education and training for lifelong learning and sustainable economic growth.
- 1.2 To provide flexible and learner centred learning provision leading to progression, achievement and attainment of recognised vocational opportunities which are relevant to lives and careers.
- 1.3 To expand the use of learning technologies across the curriculum to support and enhance learning and improve accessibility for learners.
- 1.4 To provide access to lifelong learning for all and in particular those from under represented and disadvantaged groups facing barriers to inclusion.
- 1.5 To continuously enhance the quality of the student learning experience through effective self evaluation leading to improvement activities which are appropriate, specific and measurable.

***“A passion for excellence underpins Scottish education at all stages”.***

*Mike Russell  
Cabinet Secretary for Education  
And Lifelong Learning  
Holyrood Education Conference  
February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010*

## SECTION 2

**THEME 2: PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE**

**AIM 2: TO ENSURE THE COLLEGE ATTRACTS, MAINTAINS AND DEVELOPS A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE TO DELIVER EXCELLENCE IN ALL AREAS OF THE COLLEGE'S OPERATIONS.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 2.1 To ensure continued compliance with legislative requirements and best practice in all areas of employee relations.
- 2.2 To continually improve systems and procedures for the effective recruitment, selection and induction of staff.
- 2.3 To continuously improve systems and procedures for continuous professional development of all staff.
- 2.4 To monitor, review and implement remuneration packages to meet individual and organisational requirements.
- 2.5 To encourage partnership working, both internal and external, to ensure the continuous improvement of health, safety and welfare at work.
- 2.6 To continue to foster and develop a culture of engaged motivated staff delivering and supporting excellence in learning and teaching.

***“The leadership is strong in setting the direction of the college and they are role models of excellence within the college.”***

*Quality Scotland  
Scottish Awards for Business Excellence  
2008-09*

## SECTION 2

**THEME 3: COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP**

**AIM 3: TO DEVELOP EXCELLENCE IN COLLABORATIVE AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES AND PRIORITIES.**

### OBJECTIVES:

- 3.1 To work with schools, LEAs and other agencies to plan and deliver opportunities and support for young people in particular in relation to the Curriculum for Excellence framework.
- 3.2 To work in collaboration with SDS and other agencies to meet the needs of employers for corporate training and development to promote sustainable economic growth.
- 3.3 To work with a range of partners including HEIs to identify and develop opportunities in educational provision and training and consultancy work leading to diverse learning solutions and the promotion of knowledge exchange.
- 3.4 To work in collaboration with other colleges, universities and other agencies, both within Scotland and internationally, to develop and deliver training and development opportunities to meet individual and corporate needs.
- 3.5 To work collaboratively and in partnership with a range of universities and HEIs to further develop progression and articulation opportunities for our learners.

***“....we will support academic or institutional collaboration in different forms.....where the end is to secure accessible, coherent, efficient and effective provision.”***

*SFC Corporate Plan  
2009-12*

## SECTION 2

### THEME 4: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

#### AIM 4: TO DEVELOP EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP THROUGH TRANSPARENT, RESPONSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE APPROACHES AND PRACTICES SECURING EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES.

##### OBJECTIVES:

- 4.1 To manage the risk in the deployment of college resources, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.
- 4.2 To continuously enhance the quality of college operations.
- 4.3 To maintain a secure financial environment through efficient, effective and sustainable use of college resources.
- 4.4 To improve the application of information and knowledge management.
- 4.5 To improve and enhance the college environment, facilities and resources.
- 4.6 To monitor and evaluate all aspects of governance and leadership to ensure continuous improvement in performance.
- 4.7 To manage the effective deployment of college branding in all areas of the college's operations.
- 4.8 To promote and embed a culture of equality diversity and inclusion in all areas of college activity.

***“We believe fundamentally that autonomous and accountable colleges and universities are more likely to deliver strong outcomes - using their resources effectively - if they have effective governance and leadership.”***

*SFC Corporate Plan  
2009-12*

## SECTION 3

### RISK ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

#### Strategic Risks

The College has a risk management strategy in place which deals with the day to day operational risks of College business. There are a number of key strategic risks that the College faces in the current operating environment and these are:

#### 1. Delivering the Recovery Plan 2009-2014

The College agreed a five year strategic change grant with SFC to manage the required reduction in cost base in-line with the reduced WSUMs activity funding for 2009/10.

The key actions to deliver this recovery plan relate to a reduction in staffing through redeployment, retirements and voluntary severance. In addition a number of operational cost savings have been identified.

There is a risk that the required numbers of volunteers do not come forward over the lifetime of the programme. The College has successfully delivered the targets for the first 2 years of the plan and has a financial plan in place for 2011/12. There is a risk in the remaining years that other funding constraints coupled with the requirements of the recovery plan place the College in a short term deficit position. The financial performance is monitored monthly allowing any required corrective action to be taken as early as possible.

#### 2. Funding Constraints in 2011/12

Following the comprehensive spending review and the publication of the Scottish Government budget SFC announced in March 2011 the final grant allocation for 2011/12. This allocation requires the College to reduce its activity levels by approximately 5% and also reduces in cash terms the amount of funding for 2011/12. The Capital allocation for the College has also been reduced by 38% and as a condition of grant is to be used for Estates related expenditure.

Whilst the College is already well positioned having developed a recovery plan and identified options to reduce costs there is a risk that these additional funding cuts and any adverse factors during 2011/12 might place the College in a short term deficit position.

### 3. Uncertainty on Funding in 2012/13 and beyond

The Scottish Government generally set out its expenditure plans as part of a 3 year programme. This provides an indication to the College of funding levels for the 3 year period. No funding indications have been provided for 2012/13 other than indications that funding is likely to be reduced further in the short term. In addition the funding model and methodology are to be reviewed.

There is a risk that any changes to the funding model for the sector may have an adverse impact at individual College level. Future reductions in funding levels if not aligned to reductions in activity will require significant change.

#### **Risk Management**

A risk register is maintained as part of the Board of Management's corporate governance arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing the College's significant risks. Risk management should be embedded within the day to day operational management processes of the organisation. Risk is also considered as part of the operational planning cycle.

Risk is identified as an opportunity or a threat.

#### **Risk Review Process**

The risk register is updated as appropriate when new opportunities or threats arise or where there is a change in the operating environment. A quarterly review is undertaken.

#### **Risk Monitoring**

This is undertaken by the Board of Management Governance & Audit Committee. The Board of Management also receives a report on a quarterly basis which includes an update on any significant changes and actions arising from the quarterly review.

#### **Risk Scoring**

The College uses a 1-5 score to assess impact and a 2-4 score to assess likelihood. These scores are multiplied together to produce an overall score ranging from 2 up to 20. A traffic light system is also used to rate the robustness of the control procedures. This identifies areas that require action to improve controls and mitigate the likelihood score.

The high levels contained within the Risk Register are as set out below:

RISK		I	L	T	CONTROL STATUS
69	<b>Funding is reduced in 2011/12 due to the impact of the comprehensive spending review to a level which requires significant operational adjustment.</b> Leading to a period of operational change and financial readjustment	4	4	16	A
61	<b>Emphasis on short-term planning ignoring the medium/long term:</b> Leading to a failure to meet medium to long term goals	4	4	16	G

RISK		I	L	T	CONTROL STATUS
62	<b>Failure to maintain the financial viability of the College:</b> Leading to difficult corrective action or SFC intervention	4	4	16	G
63	<b>Adverse publicity:</b> Leading to reputational damage	4	4	16	G
19	<b>Government does not provide sufficient financial student support funding leading to College having to use its own funds creating financial risk.</b> Support is constrained leading to student withdrawal	4	4	16	G
54	<b>Change in basis of Scottish Funding Council funding methodology:</b> Leading to changes in funding that require changes in approach / Strategy	4	4	16	A
41	<b>There is a lack of or an inadequate disaster recovery plan for business critical systems:</b> Leading to business interruption, loss of data and potential for uninsured loss	5	3	15	G
38	<b>College IT security is inadequate:</b> Leading to unauthorised systems access and potential data loss or systems downtime	5	3	15	G
39	<b>College data backup process is inadequate:</b> Leading to potential data loss and cost of recreation of data	5	3	15	G

## SECTION 4

### CONTEXT

Marketing is a critical part of the process by which the college's strategy is formulated and carried forward in order to fulfil its Mission, Vision and key priorities.

In Stow College, marketing is interpreted as the means by which college management use a sustained and thorough knowledge of present and future markets to ensure that strategic planning addresses the learning needs of customers cost-effectively.

Marketing requires knowing what customers want and providing it. Marketing means predicting customers' future demands and planning an appropriate curriculum portfolio and college services to meet them. In addition, college marketing needs to strike a balance between being responsive and also actively seeking to stimulate demand, for example, in the areas of widening access and social inclusion.

This contextual analysis section of the college's Strategic Plan comprises three fundamental areas:

- the overall **market place** within which the college operates;
- the organisation of the college's **curriculum portfolio** which illustrates how the college is reacting to the identified current and future training needs of customers within its market place;
- the various **partnerships and collaborations** which underpin and reinforce the college's curriculum portfolio.

These three areas are examined in the following pages.

## THE COLLEGE MARKET PLACE

Two distinct factors significantly impact and influence the market place within which the college operates. The first of these is:

- **The impact of government through initiative and policy.**

*“Scotland’s ability to flourish is dependent on its people and I am committed to ensuring our people - all our people - have the opportunities they need to improve their life chances, their attainment and their employability.”*

*Ministerial Statement  
Mike Russell  
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning  
29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

The Scottish Government in its guidance to SFC in the Cabinet Secretary’s letter of 17 November 2010 identified the government’s priorities for investment in colleges and universities for 2011-12.

The priorities identified for the further education sector are:

- to maintain the volume of activity at the sector’s current target level;
- to protect in cash terms the student support budgets;
- to continue and accelerate the progress the sector has made with the Council’s support on collaboration, mergers and efficiencies, thereby achieving more efficient, effective and coherent provision;
- to focus college activity with school pupils on S3 to S6 pupils in pursuit of the entitlements of the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence (including qualifications), as planned through 16+ Learning Choices;
- to prioritise young people aged 16-24 wishing to study at college; and
- to deliver qualifications which develop the skills and capabilities required for entry to and progress in the labour market.

As noted in the Introduction to this document, the SFC Corporate Plan 2009-12 established five strategic themes and seven outcomes which have been mapped to the Scottish Government’s priorities.

The college, in developing its Strategic Plan has embraced these priorities and aims and this is reflected within the aims and objectives noted and the detailed activities set out in the Operational Plan.

In doing so, the college seeks to strike a balance between being responsive to the identified needs of its customers and actively seeking to stimulate demand as in the areas of social inclusion and widening access.

The second factor which has a major influence in determining the college portfolio is:

- The impact of local economic development

*“Glasgow’s further and higher education institutions are a vital economic asset to the city’s (and Scotland’s) economy and have a key role in supporting success in key growth sectors.”*

*Glasgow Economic Commission  
June 2011*

The college recognises the crucial importance of embedding economic and labour market trend analysis in its decision making process in relation to its curriculum portfolio.

The demands of the Glasgow and West of Scotland labour market - in terms of individual and business learning requirements - are the most important factors in determining the curriculum portfolio and consequent customer profile of the college.

At a fundamental level, the labour market consists of people seeking jobs and employers seeking workers. The supply of appropriate learning opportunities to provide people with the skills that employers are currently or will in the future be looking for is obviously a crucial element in this process.

To help college management develop and maintain an appropriate, customer-focussed curriculum portfolio, the labour market is examined from many different perspectives. The following is a brief summary of some of the major local labour market and economy trends.

The data have been extracted from a report compiled by SLIMS Consultancy undertaken on behalf of the Glasgow Economic Commission and published in June 2011.

Glasgow is a key part of the Scottish economy:

*Glasgow accounted for 16% of Scotland’s GVA in 2008; approximately 17% of all Scottish jobs are located in Glasgow; Glasgow has 11% of Scotland’s population.*

*In 2009, 11.5% of all active businesses in Scotland were in Glasgow.*

*32% of Glasgow residents hold a degree; Scottish average 34%, UK average 30%.*

*20% of resident working age population possess no qualifications compared with 13% for Scotland (2009).*

*“reducing the number of residents with no qualifications remains a key challenge for Glasgow”. (P3)*

*% of working age population in Glasgow who are economically active - 71.2% (2009)*

*% of working age population in Scotland who are economically active - 79.7% (2009)*

The Glasgow Economic Commission noted the following:

***“Glasgow has a uniquely strong asset base across many of the Scottish Government priority sectors and it is essential that Glasgow capitalises on these to fully grasp the economic and employment opportunities they provide.”***

***Glasgow Economic Commission  
Final Report  
June 2011***

The Commission identified the following key sectors as having the greatest potential to deliver economic and employment growth opportunities:

- Low Carbon Industries (renewables)
- Engineering, Design and Manufacturing
- Life Sciences
- Financial and Business Services
- Tourism and Events

In addition to these key sectors, the Commission also recognises:

***“....the important contribution of the Creative Industries to Glasgow’s quality of life and investment “offer” and sees an opportunity to develop a strategy which focuses on the commercial exploitation of the city’s creative assets and talents.” (P7)***

***Glasgow Economic Commission  
Final Report  
June 2011***

From the above, it is clear that there are a number of challenges facing Glasgow which the college will be able to address through delivery of relevant vocational education and training.

## CURRICULUM PORTFOLIO

Having considered the governmental and economic factors influencing and defining its market place, the college is able to develop and maintain an appropriate, customer-focussed curriculum portfolio.

Consequently, all new and revised learning programmes within the college's curriculum portfolio are approved only where a genuine and increasing labour market demand can be shown to exist. In addition, all programmes within the college's curriculum portfolio annually undergo a Product Life Cycle analysis. This graphically illustrates the volume of applications and enrolments over previous years for each programme and enables college management to react at an early stage to signs of changes or shifts in customer demand.

To better react to its customers' needs, the college continually reviews and adapts its learning infrastructure. This enables a more flexible and dynamic approach to providing the current and future learning needs of our customers, as determined by the college's market place.

A radical review of structure took place during session 2010-11 which led to significant changes and the creation of a faculty structure for learning and teaching effective from 1 August 2011. The college's curriculum portfolio is now delivered across five learning faculties:

- Business and Continuing Education
- Creative Industries
- Engineering and Technology
- Science, Health and Care
- Trade Union Education and Workplace Learning

In addition, an important element of the college's curriculum portfolio is its comprehensive programme of Access and Pathways courses. These are embedded within the mainstream learning faculties of the college and are specifically designed to address the areas of widening access and social and economic inclusion.

In particular, the college delivers the most extensive programme of Access courses in the West of Scotland. These are run as part of the Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP) and provide adults with few or no qualifications a guaranteed route to further and higher education.

Proposed changes in the curriculum offer are reviewed annually by the CEC following extensive internal and external analysis by teaching faculties. Faculty development plans are produced consistent with the aims and objectives set out in the Strategic and Operational plans of the college.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

In delivering the college's curriculum portfolio, the college seeks to forge partnerships at both strategic and operational levels. This reinforces the validity and currency of the college's learning programmes as well as enabling the college to maximise learning opportunities and optimise finite financial resources.

Through its links with Glasgow City Council the college strives to encourage the participation in learning amongst the diverse communities of the North West and North of Glasgow, with particular emphasis on both geographical and thematic groups facing social exclusion.

Linking into the College's work with CPP residents, the college works closely with the **Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP)** by offering the widest possible range of Access courses designed specifically to provide a direct pathway for adult returners to education, with little or no prior educational qualifications, through guaranteed articulation to University level degree courses via the college.

Allied to the partnership with SWAP, are the close links developed between the college and the **University of the West of Scotland** and **Glasgow Caledonian University** where academic agreements have been reached allowing direct progression opportunities from named college HND awards to degree level programmes at both Universities.

Close collaborative links also exist between the college and Glasgow secondary schools. The college is closely involved in providing school students with information, advice and guidance on possible courses and career routes as well as involvement in specific projects such as the **Celtic Learning initiative**.

The college continues to further develop and enhance its links with **international institutions of further and higher education** to enhance quality and opportunities for its customers with formal links established with organisations in countries across Europe including Russia, Italy, France, Poland, Finland, Sweden and Lithuania as well as elsewhere overseas including China, United States, Canada, Pakistan, India and Libya.

The college has a formal agreement with the State University of Civil Engineering in Rostov-on-Don (Russian Federation) with student and staff exchanges on an annual basis.

The college is continually reviewing its strategy in relation to international work and opportunities and the Board of Management approved a strategic paper on this area of work.

Within the United Kingdom, the college works closely with **North Hertfordshire College** sharing best practice and working on joint initiatives e.g. “Bridging the Gap” project.

The college continues to seek to collaborate with others in the delivery of time limited projects which advance good practice in the sector.

As noted earlier, the college has entered into a collaborative agreement with **Anniesland, Cardonald, John Wheatley, Langside and North Glasgow** colleges to form the Glasgow Colleges’ Federation.

## SECTION 5

### QUALITY IMPROVEMENT: STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

#### Quality Improvement Strategic Intentions

Stow College has continued to mature in relation to Quality Improvement since the first requirements to meet external quality standards were introduced to Further Education more than sixteen years ago.

Over the last five years up to the present time, there have been significant achievements in our journey from quality standards compliance models to the process of continual improvement and quality enhancement using self evaluative techniques and approaches.

One of our main aims is to embed quality improvement within all our activities and functions to the extent that it becomes second nature to all employees. In addition to aligning our enhancement activities to the HMIE Quality Framework, we also continue to seek continual improvement through the use of the EFQM Excellence Model.

Stow College is committed to continuous quality improvement in all areas of our work and self evaluation sits at the heart of this.

The main vehicle for promotion of continuous quality improvement is the EFQM Excellence Model. In 2009, the college was the winner of the Quality Scotland Business Excellence Award and achieved Gold Status in Recognised for Excellence 5\* EFQM.

The college also achieved in 2009 the following awards:

- IIP Gold Certificate of Recognition;
- Healthy Working Lives Gold Award; and
- Mental Health Commendation Award

These examples of external recognition are met through a rigorous system of self evaluation and action planning for improvement which operates throughout every area of the college.

During session 2009/10, the college was subject to both an HMIE Aspect Review in Life Sciences and a full HMIE External Review which was conducted in May 2010.

Following the publication of the HMIE External Review Report in September 2010, the college produced a comprehensive Action Plan to move forward the development areas noted in the report. Progress in relation to improvement actions has been significant and this was reflected in the feedback provided to the college following the HMIE Annual Engagement Visit in May 2011.

In June 2011, the college was subject to the third and final year of the Investors in People (IIP) 3 year review strategy. The outcome from this review confirmed that the college continues to meet the Investors in People Standards and has again achieved Gold Status.

The college will approach the period ahead, confident in the knowledge that independent external reviews have confirmed the high quality standards achieved but also committed to continued improvement in all areas of the work of the college.

## SECTION 6

### REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The college senior management structure and internal committee structure were subject to radical change during academic session 2009-10. The senior structure was streamlined and now consists of the Principal and Chief Executive, Depute Principal and two Assistant Principals. The five major internal committees of Business Development, Curriculum, Customer Focus, Governance and Management and People Management were disbanded and replaced by:

- Chief Executive's Committee (CEC)
- Learning and Teaching Council (LTC)
- Performance Monitoring Committee (PMC)
- an expanded College Management Team (CMT)

Each of the committees is chaired by a member of the CEC and collectively they report to the Board of Management thus ensuring a clear relationship between strategic and operational objectives. In addition, the LTC and PMC have both Board and learner members.

The internal committees continuously monitor progress and report to the Board of Management at regular intervals. Specifically, progress reports on the College Operational Plan are received by the PMC at its monthly meetings.

This structure is considered to be an essential prerequisite for delivering the college's Mission and Vision, progress towards which is summarised below.

#### Summary

The college established the following targets for session 2010-2011:

5 Strategic Aims

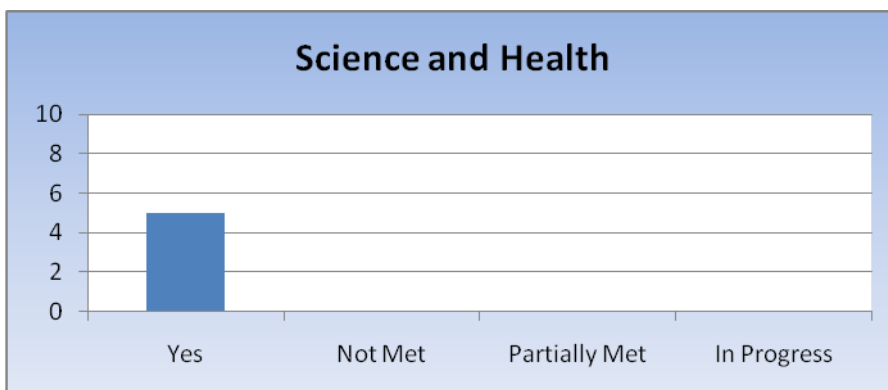
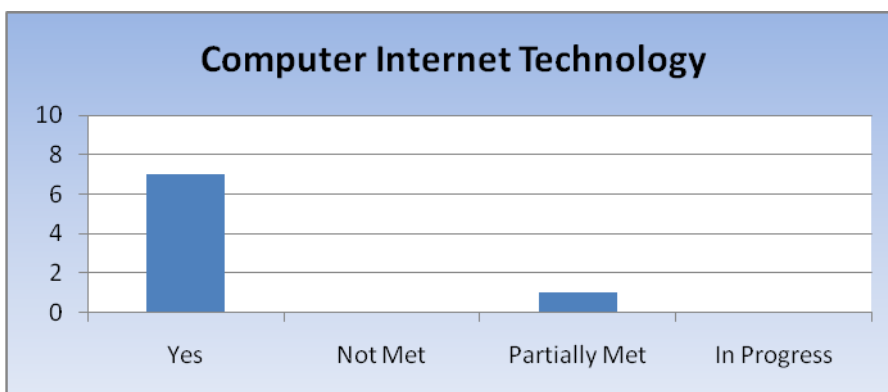
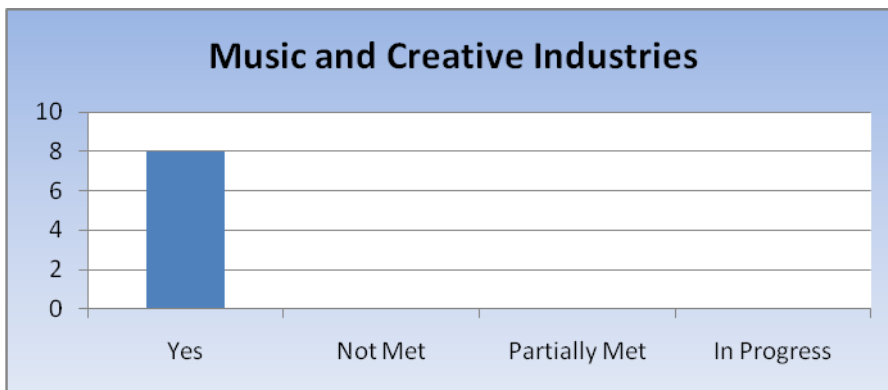
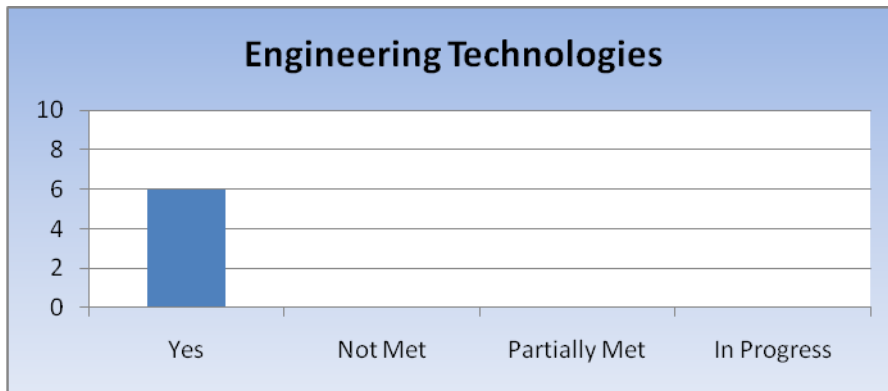
25 Strategic Objectives

111 Operational Targets

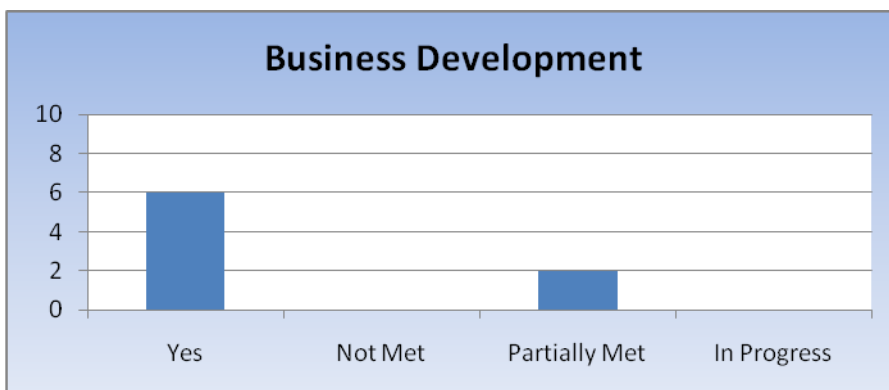
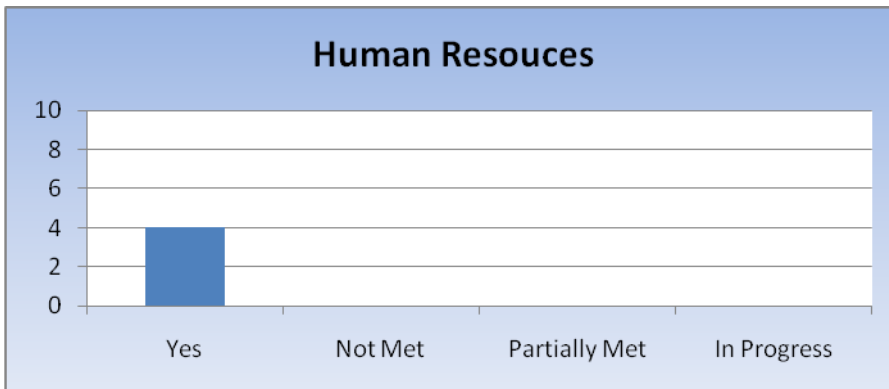
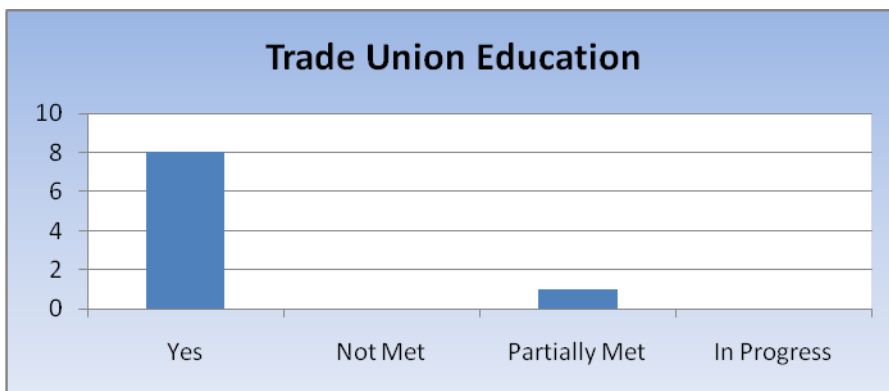
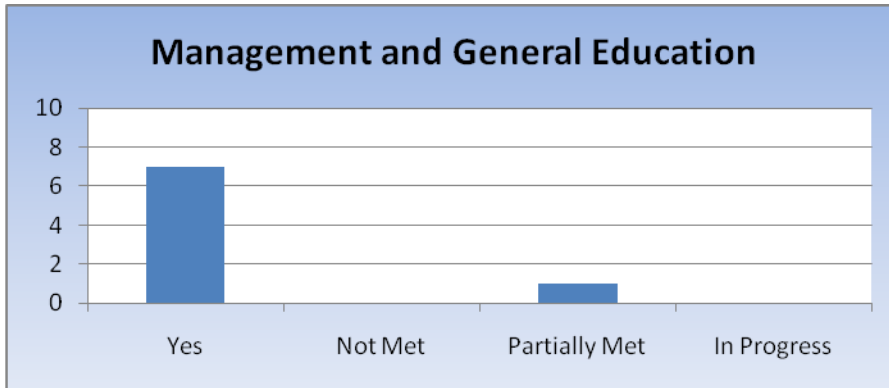
At the end of July 2011, 101 Operational Targets had been fully achieved, 5 were partially achieved, 4 have been placed on hold and 1 other is likely to be completed once a final financial assessment is available.

The following tables display the progress for each department/support area and the overall college total.

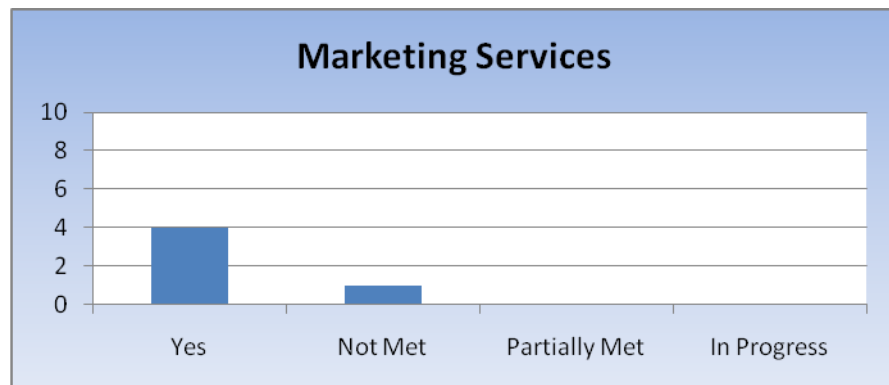
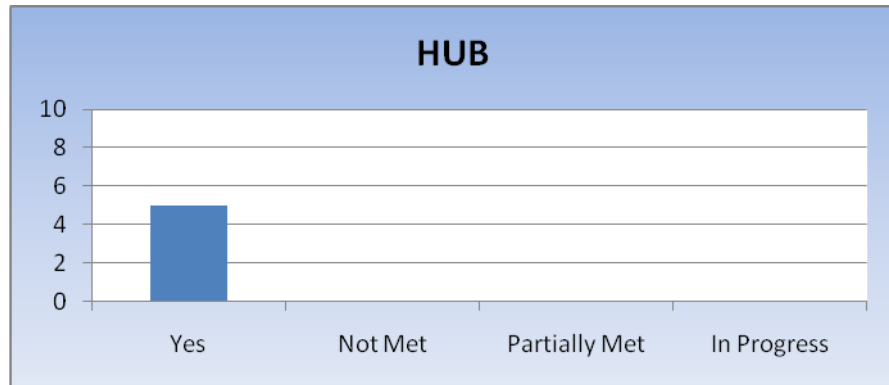
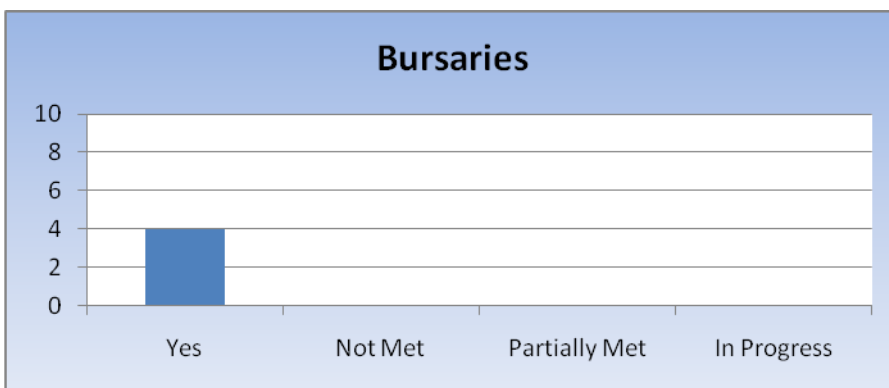
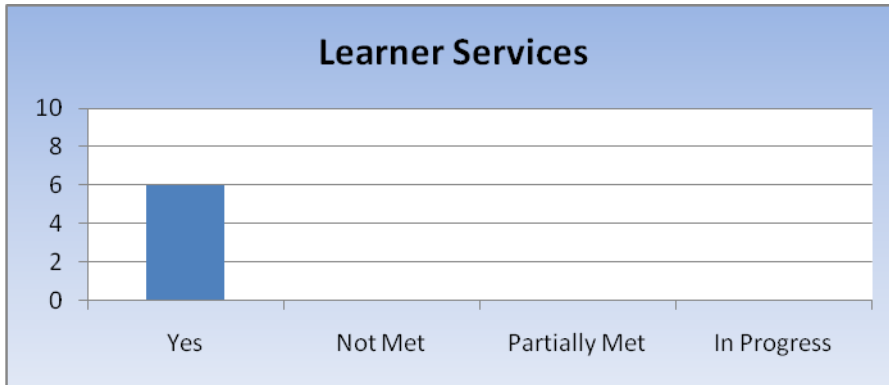
## Operational Plan 2010/11 – Progress Report August 2011



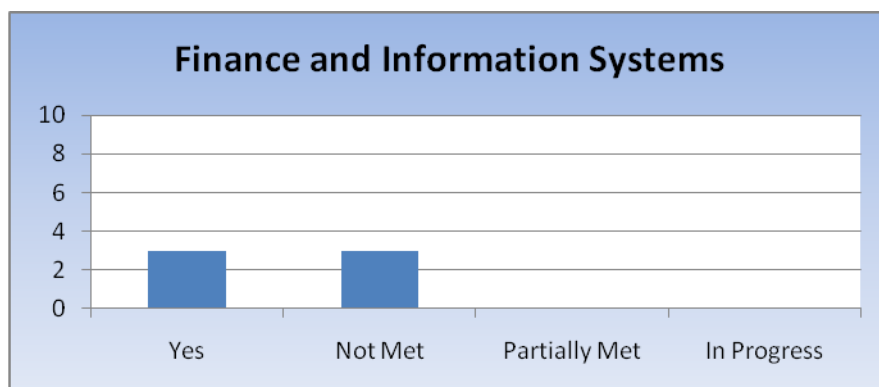
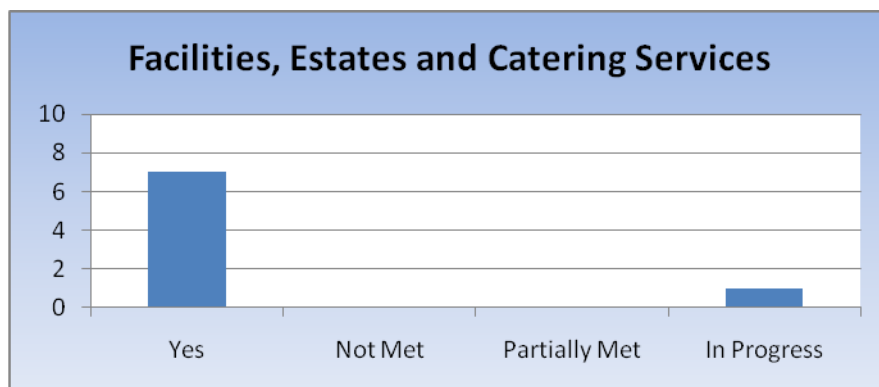
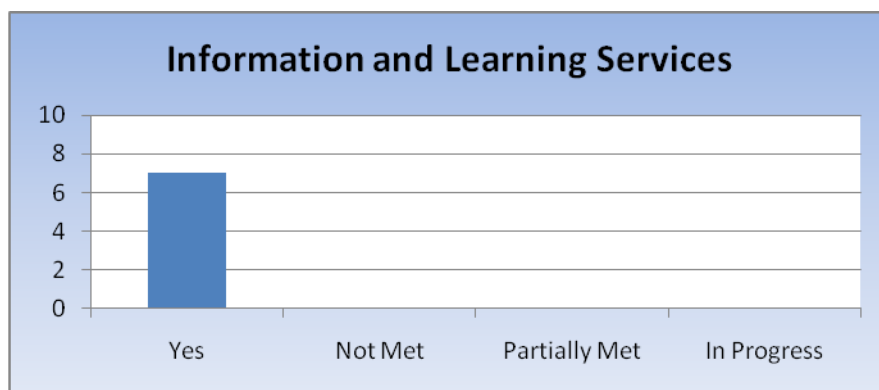
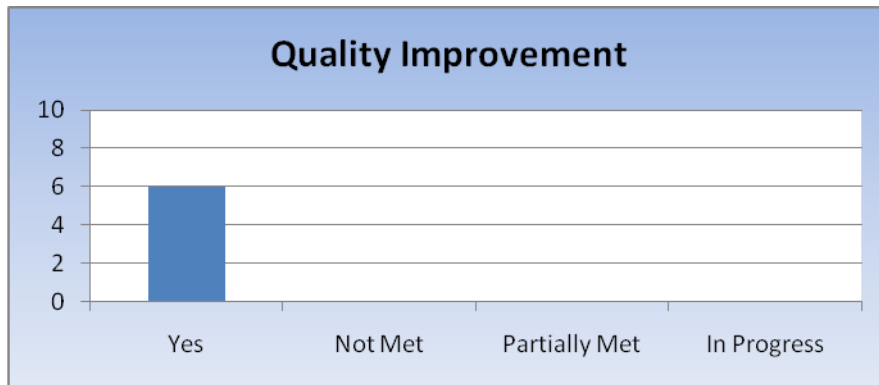
# Operational Plan 2010/11 – Progress Report August 2011



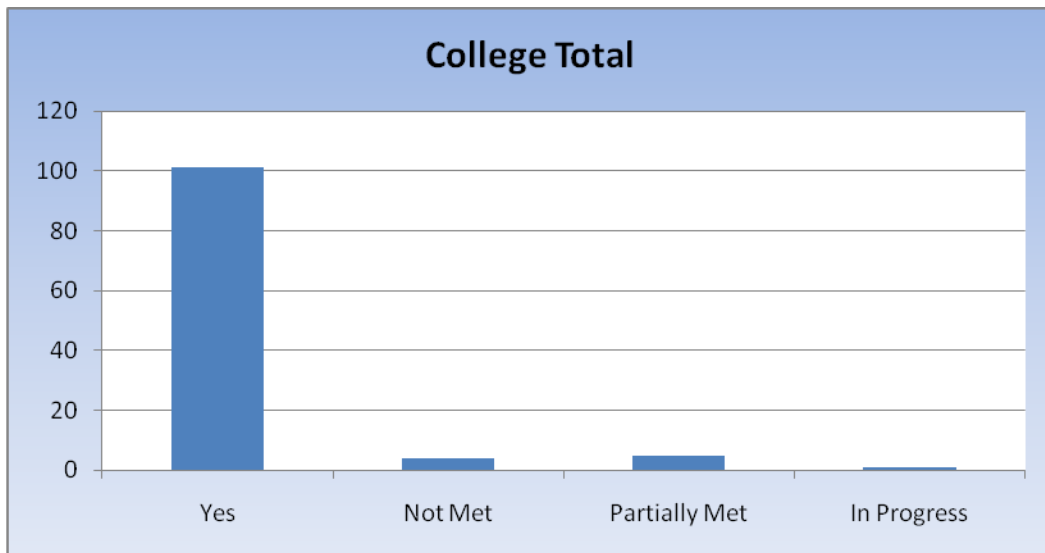
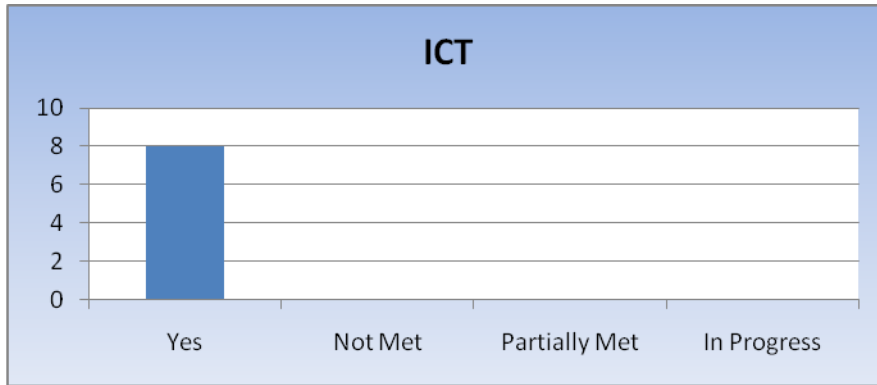
# Operational Plan 2010/11 – Progress Report August 2011



# Operational Plan 2010/11 – Progress Report August 2011



# Operational Plan 2010/11 – Progress Report August 2011



## SECTION 7

### STRATEGIC PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES IN THE MEDIUM TERM

The Board of Management, in developing the Strategic Plan for 2011-2014, has reviewed its Mission, Vision and Values, and established Strategic Themes, Aims and Objectives for the period.

The college is aware that there are major issues which have the potential to impact upon our plans but as noted in Section 3, we have in place a high level strategy for managing such risks. As a result, we consider that, notwithstanding environmental vagaries, our aims and objectives are sufficiently robust and valid to provide the strategic direction to guide us through the period ahead.

The college, like others in the sector, will have major challenges to face in the light of public sector funding cuts. The uncertainties posed by the impending 'green paper' on the college sector and the fragility of the economy.

Against this backdrop the college has developed a strategy for the period ahead which is consistent with its mission and vision and is designed to meet the lifelong learning needs of the people of Glasgow, the West of Scotland and national and international markets.

The college has adopted a customer focus in developing its curriculum offer and on the basis of trend analysis and extrapolation, does not anticipate a major change in the broad subject areas which it currently offers. However, as noted earlier the identification of key sectors for economic and employment growth opportunities by the Glasgow Economic Commission in its Formal Report of June 2011 has already been reflected in the refocusing and reprioritisation by the college of its curriculum portfolio to better anticipate and respond to the changing environment. In addition, within this broad spectrum, it is anticipated that the modes of delivery will continue to expand with an increased focus on blended learning solutions as a key area of development.

To meet the diverse needs of a variety of groups and communities, and to continue to widen access and address the social inclusion agenda, the college needs to further develop distributed, blended and online learning opportunities and solutions. These developments are further encouraged by college awareness of unsatisfied demand for programmes and courses which cannot be addressed within the current constraints in growth imposed by the SFC.

Some points to note in this respect including the following:

- Applications for college places at Stow have increased by 75% over sessions 2009/10 and 2010/11;
- At June 2011, applications had increased by 61% when compared to June 2010;

- In his letter of guidance to the SFC of 17 November 2010, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Mike Russell recognised the “major management and governance challenges for the college sector” while identifying the following key priorities:
  - to maintain the volume of activity at the sector’s current target level;
  - to protect in cash terms the student support budgets;
  - to continue and accelerate the progress the sector has made with the council’s support on collaboration, mergers and efficiencies, thereby achieving more efficient, effective and coherent provision;
  - to focus college activity with school pupils on S3 to S6 pupils in pursuit of the entitlements of the Senior Phase of CfE (including qualifications) as planned through 16+ Learning Choices;
  - to prioritise young people aged 16-24 wishing to study at college; and
  - to deliver qualifications which develop the skills and capabilities required for entry to and progress in the labour market.

In conclusion, economic conditions forecast over the medium to long term dictate that Stow College, as part of the overall college sector, will face significant budgetary constraints over the next five to ten year period. At the same time demand for places will continue to increase requiring the college to focus all available resources towards the maintenance and improvement of front line services.

As an employer, the college believes that, as far as possible, security and continuity of employment for our staff is a prerequisite to improving the quality of learning and teaching for our learners.

Throughout this period, the focus will remain our students, and their learning needs.

This is our commitment to our community, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.