

**AYRSHIRE COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
TO BE HELD ON 26 MARCH 2026 AT 4.00 PM, AYR CAMPUS**

AGENDA

4pm to 4.30pm: Pre meeting introduction, update and Q&A with Sean McGovern, Chair SAI Aerospace Training Ltd

4.30pm onwards: Part A – Welcome, Report and Minutes

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|---|--|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Welcome and Declarations of Interest | | |
| 2 | Apologies | | |
| 3 | Minute of the meeting held on 11 December 2025 | | Paper 1 (SM) (C/P) |
| | • Board of Management Action Tracker | | Paper 1A (SM) (P) |
| 4 | Matters Arising | | |
| 5 | Student Association Report Q3 | | Paper 2 (DH/CS) (P) |
| 6 | Interim Chair’s Report | | Paper 3 (SM) (P) |
| 7 | Principal’s Report | | Paper 4 (AC) (R) |

Part B – For Discussion, Decision or Approval

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|----|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 8 | Board Governance & Programme of Meetings AY2026-27 | | Paper 5 (HD) (P) |
| 9 | 2026-27 Budget Update | | Paper 6 (ARi) (R) |
| 10 | Performance Dashboard Q3 | Link to Dashboard | Verbal (SR/ARi/DD) (R) |
| 11 | Sustainability Framework and Climate Change Report | | Paper 7 (ARi) (P) |
| 12 | College Strategic Risk & Opportunities Register | | Paper 8 (ARi)(P) |

Part C – Standing Committee Business: For Review or Approval

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|----|--|----------|-------------------|
| 13 | Committee Chairs Reports on 3rd Quarter Committee Meetings | | |
| | • Learning & Teaching Committee 05 March 2026 | | Paper 9 (BG) (P) |
| | • PIF Committee 10 March 2026 | | Paper 10 (TD) (P) |
| | • Audit & Risk Committee 17 March 2026 | | Paper 11 (MR) (P) |
| | • REMCo 15 January 2026 | | Verbal (SM) |
| 14 | Confirmed Standing Committee Minutes | | |
| | • Learning & Teaching Committee 27 November 2025 | Paper 12 | (P) |
| | • PIF Committee 18 November 2025 | Paper 13 | (P) |
| | • Audit & Risk Committee 02 December 2025 | Paper 14 | (P) |
| | • Joint ARC & PIFCo (Financial Papers) 18 November 2025 | Paper 15 | (P) |

Part D – To Receive for Information

- 15 **AOCB**

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 18 June 2026

*(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published on the College website; (P) Papers will be published on the College website
(R) Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial sensitivity or for reasons of personal data confidentiality*

**Minute of the Board of Management Meeting
Held by Hybrid Attendance at Kilwinning Campus and
via Video Conference Using Microsoft Teams
on Thursday 11 December 2025**

Present:

Sharon Morrow	Interim Chair
Matthew Wilson	Vice Chair
Alison Sutherland	Senior Independent Member
Jason Currie	Non-Executive Board Member
Jane Grant	Non-Executive Board Member
Brian Green	Non-Executive Board Member
Darcie Hamilton	Elected Student President
Gillian Longmuir	Non-Executive Board Member
Michael Ross	Non-Executive Board Member
Chris Boyce	Elected Member, EIS-FELA Teaching Staff
Janette Steel	Elected Member, Curriculum Staff
Marko Prorocic	Elected Member, Professional Services Staff
Angela Cox	Principal, Ex-Officio

In attendance:

Sara Rae	Vice Principal – Skills and Enterprise
David Davidson	Vice Principal – People, Performance and Transformation
Hilary Denholm	Board Governance Adviser
Alan Ritchie	Vice Principal – Finance & Infrastructure
Angela Scoular	Executive Assistant to the Principal and Chief Executive (Minutes)

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting including new members and attendees.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alicia Clyde, Tracey Dalling, Iain Shearer (Non-Executive Board Members), Lisa Keggans (Elected Member, UNISON Support Staff) and Connor Skipsey (Elected Student Vice President).

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 25 September 2025 (Paper 1) (P)

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Gillian Longmuir **Seconded:** Alison Sutherland

Board of Management Action & Decision Log (Paper 1a) (P)

All actions due in the period were noted as complete.

4. Matters Arising

There were no outstanding matters arising from the minutes.

5. Student Association Report Q2 (Paper 3) (P)

Board members were provided with updates on the activities undertaken by the Student Association with particular reference to the two pillars of their work, namely the Student Voice and Student Community, and to further ensure that the student voice is heard in all relevant forums.

D Hamilton introduced Paper 3 as presented and summarised key highlights from the report.

The Board noted:

- With regards to Student Officers and Executive Committee, the recruitment of Student Officers remains underway, however most Officers have now been onboarded and are undertaking a variety of activities relating to their roles.
- In terms of Student Community, various clubs and groups are available to students to access and appear to be well-engaged.
- The Student Association have been involved in various campaigns over recent months such as Dyslexia Awareness Week, World Mental Health Day, Black History Month and Care Experienced Week.
- The Nexus was launched to students during Freshers in September and the launch activity for September saw a total number of visitors to the Nexus reach around 600. The subsequent months have had fewer visitors however this was expected and there still appears to be a steady stream of traffic nonetheless. Some further launch activity will be considered for Semester 2.
- Recruitment of the Class Ambassadors has been completed and approximately 248 Class Ambassadors have been recruited. This demonstrates a reduction in student representation compared to last academic session. The Student Association have undertaken some informal consultation with sector counterparts, with Sparqs and with NUS Scotland to try and understand if the reduction in Class Ambassador numbers and recruitment challenges is a sector wide issue and the feedback returned is confirming that many other colleges and universities are facing a similar circumstance.
- This year sees the College undergoing an internal audit for Student Voice. The Student Association have worked with the relevant key colleagues to assess the audit needs, collect evidence and showcase that evidence to ensure compliance with the audit requirements. Once the audit report is available, it will be reviewed and action any relevant developments points as appropriate.

M Wilson raised queries regarding who audits the Student Voice and also if the Student Association had noticed a change in the demographic of its members. It was confirmed that the audit forms part of the Internal Audit Plan and the number of Student Association members has decreased however there has been a change in the level of engagement. This may relate to being a different cohort of students.

The Board noted the report as presented.

6. Interim Chair's Report (Paper 4) (P)

The Interim Chair provided an update on activities conducted since the last Board meeting in September and took the paper as read. No additional points were highlighted and no queries were raised.

The Board noted the report as presented.

8. Responsibilities and Standing Orders Update V14 (Paper 5) (P)

The Board was asked to approve the suggested additional alterations to the Ayrshire College Responsibilities and Standing Orders presented as V14 in Appendix 1. This followed on from discussions at the last Board meeting in September.

In summary these additional alterations comprise:

- 1. Section 3 - Evaluation sections included in ARC & LTQC ToRs*
- 2. Risk Register updated to Risk & Opportunities Register*
- 3. Section 5 - Annex C – Hybrid meetings guide inserted*
- 4. Section 9 - New Board evaluation Section 9 inserted*

The approved V14 of the Ayrshire College Responsibilities and Standing Orders will be published on the Ayrshire College website once the updated versions of the documents have been approved.

Decision – BOM52-D01: The Board approved the updates within the revised Ayrshire College Responsibilities and Standing Orders V14.

9. 2024-25 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report (Paper 6) (P)

J Grant, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, presented the 2024-25 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report to the Board detailing the work conducted by the Committee during the year to 31 July 2025.

The Board of Management was requested to approve the 2024-25 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.

Decision – BOM52-D02: The Board approved the 2024-25 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.

10. 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report (Paper 7) (P)

A Ritchie presented the 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report as part of the annual assurance suite of reports to the Board of Management. The Annual Report provided a detailed summary of the controls they have tested and their audit conclusion on the effectiveness of their operation within the areas the Audit and Risk Committee is required to report on, and to support the Audit and Risk Committee with its responsibilities to provide an opinion.

The Report was presented to the Joint Audit and Risk / People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee at its meeting on 18 November 2025 where it was approved for presentation to the Board of Management.

S Morrow noted that it was an excellent report and it was great to see that no recommendations had been made.

The Board of Management was requested to approve the report.

Decision – BOM52-D03: The Board approved the 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report.

13. Q2 Performance Dashboard Update (*Verbal*)

S Rae reported that the College was on track to achieve the credit target for 2025-26 however engagement with key teams was taking place in order to maximise credits, particularly for classes due to commence in January 2026.

With regards to student retention, all modes looked to be on track however the part-time provision was expected to be higher.

D Davidson added that staff satisfaction was also on track and positive feedback had been gathered through the liP review process.

S Morrow noted that it was great to see that areas were on track and achieving as expected and this was testament to everyone's hard work.

17. 2024-25 Annual Freedom of Information Report (*Paper 13*) (P)

S Rae highlighted the main points from the report to provide assurance that the College is meeting its statutory obligations under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and related regulations.

The Board noted:

- The College achieved a 100% on-time response rate to FOI and Environmental Information Requests (EIR) in 2024-25, improving from 95% in the previous year. This reflects strengthened internal tracking and information gathering processes.
- There was a decrease in total requests (33 in 2024-25 vs. 39 in 2023-24), with a significant drop in EIR requests, suggesting reduced public concern over environmental issues. However, the College continues to monitor areas like RAAC in buildings and environmental management for potential risk recurrence.
- The profile of Stakeholder requestors shifted, with more requests coming from private companies (24%) and fewer from unions and the Scottish Parliament. This may indicate changing stakeholder interests or increased external scrutiny, which could introduce new reputational or compliance risks.
- Salary and staff information remain high-interest areas, with requests focusing on principal's salary, staff earning over £50k, and staff departures. These topics are sensitive and require careful management to mitigate reputational and compliance risks.
- The report identifies ongoing risks in environmental compliance and the handling of sensitive staff data.

Decision – BOM52-D08: The Board approved the 2024-25 Annual Freedom of Information Report for publication.

19. 2024-25 Annual Complaints Report (Paper 15) (P)

S Rae highlighted the key movements, trends and areas of concern from this report which compared the 2024-25 and 2023-24 Annual Complaints Reports. The analysis covered overall complaint volumes, resolution performance, complaint categories, sub-category trends and notable risks or emerging issues.

The Board noted:

- The 2024-25 Complaints Annual Report demonstrates the College's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement in complaints handling.
- The College has seen a notable increase in the total number of issues and complaints received compared to the previous year, rising by 14% and 8% respectively. Despite this, performance in early resolution and timeliness has improved, with a higher proportion of complaints resolved at Stage 1 and within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) target timescales.
- While the proportion of upheld or partially upheld complaints has decreased slightly, the overall increase in complaint volumes highlights the importance of maintaining robust processes and adequate resources to manage future demand.
- The College remains compliant with all legislative requirements for complaints handling, and the publication of this report reinforces its commitment to openness.
- Continued focus on staff training, communication, and operational improvements will be essential to sustaining positive trends and addressing emerging challenges.

Decision – BOM52-D10: The Board approved the 2024-25 Annual Complaints Report for publication.

Brian Green left the meeting.

22. Committee Chairs' Reports on 2nd Quarter Committee Meetings (Papers 18, 19 and 20)

The Board received a written report from each Committee Chair outlining a summary of key issues considered by the Standing Committees since the last meeting of the Board.

The confirmed minutes of these meetings will be received by the Board at its next meeting.

The Board noted the report from each Committee Chair.

23. Confirmed Minutes: Standing Committees (Papers 21, 22 and 23)

The following confirmed Standing Committee Minutes were received by the Board:

- Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee

- People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee
- Audit & Risk Committee

The Board received the above minutes from noting.

24. Papers for information

- Final 2025-26 Self-Evaluation and Action Plan Paper 24 (P)

25. AOCB

There were no other items of business for discussion.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 26 March 2026 at 4pm in Ayr

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published on College Website; (P) – Paper will be published on the College Website; (R) – Paper is reserved, because it contains data or information of a personal nature, which is restricted by legislation, or because it contains commercially sensitive information, and will not be published on the College Website

Reserved items on next page

Board of Management - Action and Decision Log

Meeting No 53 – 26 March 2026

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Reference	Details	Action Owner	Due Date	Action / Decision	Open / Complete / Approved / Declined
11.12.25	Responsibilities and Standing Orders Update V14	BOM52: D01	The Board approved the updates within the revised Ayrshire College Responsibilities and Standing Orders V14.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report	BOM52: D02	The Board approved the 2024-25 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report	BOM52: D03	The Board approved the 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Financial Statements to July 2025	BOM52: D04	The Board approved the 2024-25 Financial Statements to July 2025	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	Board Recruitment	BOM52: D05	The Board approved the 1-year extension for the Senior Independent member.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	Management Accounts as at 30 September 2025	BOM52: D06	The Board approved the Management Accounts as at 30 September 2025.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	SAI Update Report	BOM52: D07	The Board approved the formal request to increase the number of company directors from six to eight, and approved the appointments as detailed.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Annual Freedom of Information Report	BOM52: D08	The Board approved the 2024-25 Annual Freedom of Information Report for publication.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Annual Health, Safety Wellbeing Report	BOM52: D09	The Board approved the 2024-25 Annual Health, Safety Wellbeing Report	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Annual Complaints Report	BOM52: D10	The Board approved the 2024-25 Annual Complaints Report for publication.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	2024-25 Annual Procurement Report	BOM52: D11	The Board approved the 2024-25 Annual Procurement Report	NA	NA	Decision	Approved
11.12.25	Strategic Risk & Opportunities Register	BOM52: D12	The Board approved the Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register.	NA	NA	Decision	Approved

Title of Meeting: Board of Management Meeting

Date: 26 March 2026

Title: Student Association Report

Purpose: To provide members with updates on the activities undertaken by the Student Association with particular reference to the two pillars of their work, namely the Student Voice and Student Community, and to further ensure that the student voice is heard in all relevant forums.

Recommendation: To note

1. Executive Summary

The Student Association team ordinarily consists of two elected officers. The Student President, Darcie Hamilton and Student Vice President, Connor Skipsey. The Student Association is governed by a Student Executive Committee within which students hold various volunteer Student Officer roles. The work of the Student Association is supported by the Student Association Advisor, Linda Corbett and is overseen by the Head of Quality Enhancement, Ann Heron.

2. Associated Risks

None

3. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

None

4. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

1. Background

The Student Association has undertaken a variety of work including student voice activity, student community activities, events and campaigns and projects.

Student Voice Audit

Following the completion of the Student Voice Internal Audit, we are delighted to have achieved the outcome of “Strong – no recommendations”. We’d like to extend our thanks to the auditors for their support with this exercise.

We are conscious that Student Voice is a complex area of work and will continue to strive to develop our activities and practices, particularly in relation to the Class Ambassador Programme.

Student Voice

Our Class Ambassador Programme saw good attendance in Semester 1 with lots of students engaging with us out with meeting times also, which is excellent.

This year, our monthly meetings, have been themed using the Student Learning Experience Model (designed by Sparqs) as part of the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework. This is providing rich feedback which we hope will support Curriculum with their end of year evaluations and subsequently support the development of the SEAP.

Our move to online only meetings in January (where many students may not be on campus) has proven successful, with an increase on attendance compared to last year.

Student Community

Our Clubs, Groups and Societies have continued throughout Semester One and we are pleased to note positive experiences from the students who engage in these activities. Activity for Semester 2 will remain largely the same, however we will engage with students to identify opportunities for other activities.

Our Clubs, Groups and Societies are led and supported by our Student Officers and so we’d like to take a moment to extend our thanks to them for their hard work and engagement.

Campaigns and Events

Since our last update, we have undertaken the following campaigns and events:

- International Men’s Day: We took part in these mini-market place events in collaboration with the Equality, Diversity and Performance Lead and were joined by Andy’s Man Club and our Police Scotland Liaison Officer. The theme was focussed on Men’s Mental Health and ensuring students have access to information, resources and support.
- 16 Days of Action: Our annual 16 Days of Action Campaign focussed on Digital Violence, what this is, how to spot it and how to get help and support. This was really well received by the students and led to some great conversations and awareness raising. Our thanks go to the team

from Right to Ask, Right To Tell (Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme) for taking part and promoting people's rights in relation to domestic violence.

- ReClaim the Night: College Representatives, including The Student Association Team, attended various ReClaim The Night Marches across Ayrshire. Darcie Hamilton, Student President was invited to give a speech at the closing event in East Ayrshire which was organised by our partners at The Star Centre. The speech focussed on Gender Based Violence being a problem every day of the year, and the importance of community and collective action.
- WinterFest: We had great fun engaging with students at WinterFest offering a wide variety of stall holders including lots of organisations covering mental health support and resources. We hosted a pop up photobooth, where students and their friends could dress up and get a fun picture. We also gave away free hats and scarves and chatted about what we offer at The Student Association in the way of clubs, groups and societies.

Projects

The **Student Association Funding Scheme** for Extra-Curricular and meta skills activities has been another great success this year. We ring fenced £6000 this year and were pleased to have 23 successful applications from students from a really wide variety of activities including a Chocolatier Master Class, extra-curricular trips and resources for enterprise activities. Well done to the students for their excellent applications this year. The fund is now closed and will re-open in the next academic year.

We'd like to express our thanks to the **Ayrshire College Foundation** and Ayrshire College for their generous donation of £1400 to The Student Association. These funds were earmarked for use in relation to student hardship. We chose to use the funds to purchase multi-supermarket gift vouchers valued at £25 each and have been working closely with our Engagement and Wellbeing Team to identify students who would benefit from the vouchers. The initial feedback has been excellent with students reporting that it's been a really big help and has support with being able to buy food and household essentials.

ReFreshers 2026 took place during the first week of February, and this was a great opportunity to welcome students back for Semester 2 and to introduce new students to college life. We focussed on promotion of The Nexus and letting students know about our Clubs, Groups and Societies. Our thanks go to our internal departments and external partners who were on hand providing information, resources, advice and support for students. For some entertainment, we were delighted to have secured the services of Award-Winning Magician Steven Blair. Steven provided close-up magic during the events much to the students delight.

2. Current Situation

Events and Campaigns

The Student Association has been gifted £31,853 from **The Walker Trust**. Again, we'd like to express our thanks to the College for their generosity for these monies which will go towards supporting student facing activities. After taking some time to consider these additional funds, we will be aiming spend £1853 in this academic year and will look to spend a further £10,000 per year for a further three academic years. In light of the success of the supermarket vouchers, part of this first year spend will go towards further supermarket vouchers for Semester 2 to the value of £1400 and the remainder of the year one spends will be directed towards student mental health activities.

Preparations for **LGBT History Month** have now been finalised, including a full suite of student communications. This will consist of scheduled emails, social media content and on campus promotional materials such as posters which are informative and give detail of the theme "Science and Innovation". The theme aims to highlight both historical and contemporary contributions of LGBT+ individuals within STEM fields. At the Ayr Campus, arrangements have been finalised for a drag show to take place within the Riverside building 4th floor Theatre. The event will take place on Friday 27th of February from 1pm-14:30pm, refreshments including snacks and juice will be provided for the students. The performance features Drag Queen Mina Lookgood.

For March, we are working with a team in the College including the Principal, the Equality and Diversity Performance Lead and Marketing to collaborate on an event to celebrate **International Women's Day**. The focus will be Women who are under-represented in a variety of Curriculum Areas. From the event, we hope to support the college to establish a network of women who can support each other going forward.

Further March campaign activity will include Young Carers Action Day and NeuroDiversity Celebration week. The team will then look ahead to further campaigns for nearer the end of the academic year including Mental Health Awareness Week.

We are delighted to be Sponsoring the 2026 **Ayrshire College Film Festival**. Our Sponsorship support included a donation of £500 and ongoing support for promotion of the Film Festival. The Film Festival itself is one of the creative department highlights of the year and brings together many classes, is open to all students and provides a platform to showcase student work. The Film Festival will take place in May in the historic Astoria Cinema in Ayr.

We noted in our last paper that we were working with **Hope by the Roadside** to introduce Pastoral Support for students, specifically at our Ayr and Kilwinning Campuses. These services are now up and running with the volunteers being on campus as of the first week of February. The volunteers can be identified through their Student Association branded hoodies, and we have emailed students to let them know the service is available.

Student Voice

At the end of Semester one, we issue our Class Ambassador Mid-Year Review Survey. This is an opportunity for the Class Ambassadors to tell us what has gone well for them and letting us know what could be better. Unfortunately, we have had a very low uptake for the survey this year and will therefore have some conversations around the programme at the February 2026 Meetings including encouraging Class Ambassadors to complete the survey in the hopes of getting more. However, the current limited data and verbal feedback indicates that students are largely happy with how the programme is running including training with some Ambassadors noting that they enjoyed having the opportunity to take part in something that was out with their classes.

Steering Groups

We are pleased to be working alongside colleagues in a variety of steering and working groups and taking the opportunity to represent student views. This includes Promoting Positive Behaviour where we are supporting the implementation of the smoking and vaping shelters across the campuses. We are also working closely with Estates on the Kilmarnock Car Park project, with the Sustainability Group looking at the UN Sustainability goals and integrating activity into the College. A large piece of this work will also be about capturing information on the already fantastic work going on across the College for all three pillars of sustainability (social, economic and environmental).

Student President Elections

The Student Association Advisor is currently in preparatory works for this year's Student President Nominations and Elections, with the elections scheduled for Mid-May.

3. Proposal

The Student Association will continue to focus on Student Voice and Student Community while identifying opportunities to collaborate and work in partnership with key stakeholders.

4. Resource Implications

None

5. Consultation

The Student Association will continue to consult with relevant key stakeholders around the college as required.

6. Conclusion

The Student Association are undertaking a broad spectrum of work with a view to having a strong student voice, offering a positive student experience and student community. We continue to look at our development opportunities and engage in meaningful projects.

*Darcie Hamilton
Student President
February 2026*

*Connor Skipsey
Student Vice President
February 2026*

Title of Meeting: Board of Management Meeting

Date: **26 March 2026**

Chair Report Purpose: The purpose of this report is to update Board Members on activities carried out by the Interim Chair since the 11 December 2025 Board meeting.

Recommendation: To Note

1. Executive Summary

To provide Board Members with an update of key activities I have been involved in since the last Board meeting.

- Stakeholder and partner engagement
- Internal College meetings and celebrations
- Board Development activities and review meetings
- Meetings associated with Colleges Scotland

2. Strategic Objectives

This paper supports our Strategic Ambition through helping fulfil our strategic objectives to deliver outstanding experiences, to be the partner of choice and to play a key role in enabling the future.

This is demonstrated by the range of meetings and activities as described within this quarterly update report.

3. Associated Risks

N/A

4. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An impact assessment is not applicable given the subject of this paper.

5. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

I have met with stakeholders and partners, by way of introductory dialogue. These meetings have included the new CEO of SAI Training Ltd, Sean McGovern. The Principal and I have met with the CEO of the SFC, Francesca Osowska and the Chair, Cara Aitchison.

a. Other Engagements

I was delighted to be able to attend the following events and internal College meetings:

- RemCo
- Induction follow up meetings with new Board members
- College Chairs Group
- Christmas staff celebrations
- 6-month review catch ups with Board Members
- 6-month review with the Principal/Chief Executive
- Colleges Scotland Chairs and Principals Forum
- Financial Sustainability Plan Discussion Session
- Post Budget session with Colleges Scotland
- Colleges Scotland Enlighten Session
- Board Development session and Annual Board Dinner
- Open Evening for Board Recruitment
- Ayrshire College Foundation Celebratory Lunch
- Weekly update meetings with the Principal & Chief Executive
- Weekly update meetings with the Board Governance Advisor

b. Future activities

- Recruitment shortlisting and panel participation
- Chairs with SNC Meeting in April 2026
- Board Strategy Session in April 2026
- Colleges Scotland/CPG Annual Conference
- Review meetings with the Principal and the Board Governance Advisor

7. Our Governance

a. Chairs (CSNC) Meetings

We held the second CSNC meeting of AY25/26 on 17 February, where we discussed and agreed updated recruitment templates, reviewed the Q2 Committees, agreed updated training and development requirements for Board members, and a communication plan to promote understanding of the role of the Board and to aid recruitment.

I encourage all Board members to pass suggestions, feedback and any queries to their relevant Committee Chairs for discussion at the next Chairs meeting which takes place 21 April 2026.

b. Board and Committee Membership and Recruitment

An informal open evening was held on 17 February for potential applicants and interested stakeholders could pop in to meet with and find out more from Board Members and the leadership team.

Formal recruitment opened via our website portal, with a closing date for applications of 13 March 2026. Shortlisting took place last week and interviews are planned for late April. Recommendations will be presented to the Board for ratification at the June meeting, followed by formal documentation being submitted to the Scottish Government for approval in time for August induction of new Non-Executive Board members.

c. Board Member Development

- Thank you to everyone that attended and supported the Board Development Session, followed by the Annual Board dinner in our training restaurant. Summary notes and slide decks were provided to those that were unable to attend the development session.
- All Board Members now have access to the learning & development platform Elevate, where mandatory and other optional development is available.
- Strategic Area Visits (Leading for Learning opportunities) will be relaunched in the next academic year to offer Board members a strategic visit in a College area where they do not currently have a detailed knowledge and wish to develop this.
- Opportunities for further development are published on the CDN website and also shared by the Board Governance Adviser.
- Please advise the Board Governance Adviser of your attendance at any learning that you complete as a representative of the Ayrshire College Board – this information can then be included in your development record.
- New information continues to be shared in the “Board members Knowledge & Development Bank” Teams page.
- The Annual Board Development plan is updated quarterly, with updates being shared on the “Board members Knowledge & Development Bank” Teams page.

8. Our Communications

Board members receive emails, and Microsoft Teams posts to college accounts regarding Board meetings & information, with personal/work contact being used only for urgent/time sensitive communications.

Please direct any Board News suggestions to the Board Governance Adviser for publishing on the website.

We are establishing quarterly communications linked to the college communications strategy to inform staff and stakeholders about Board member profiles and to increase understanding of what the Board does and how it operates.

Sharon Morrow
Interim Chair, Board of Management
26 March 2026

Board of Management

26 March 2026

- Subject:** Board Governance update, and Committee programme of meetings 2026/27
- Purpose:** To update the Board regarding Governance updates and to present the future annual meeting programme.
- Recommendation:** The Board is asked to discuss and note the Governance update and discuss and approve the 2026/27 Board and Committee meeting programme.
-

1. Executive Summary

The new edition of the Code of Good Governance (COGG) for Scotland's Colleges was published in December 2025 following review by the Good Governance Steering Group. The full COGG document is available in **Appendix 1**.

The key updates are highlighted in this paper for the Board of Management to discuss and note. A gap analysis and actions are also included for discussion and noting. The actions from this have been included in the updated rolling Board Development Plan (highlighted as COGG) attached in **Appendix 2**.

The Board of management is asked to review and approve a programme of meetings on an annual basis.

The Ayrshire College Board of Management Responsibilities and Standing Orders, (2.9) states that *'the Board shall hold as many Board and Committee meetings as may be necessary for the performance of its functions and at such times, places and frequency as the Board determines'*, and shall accordingly *'approve an annual programme of meetings'*.

An annual programme of Board and Committee meeting dates (**Appendix 3**) is therefore presented to the Board for review and approval.

2. Strategic Objectives

This paper supports our Strategic Ambition through helping fulfil our strategic objectives to deliver outstanding experiences, to be the partner of choice and to play a key role in enabling the future.

This is demonstrated by Governance updates being provided to the Board plus the formal governance structure and schedules.

3. Associated Risks

The College could fail to achieve high standards of corporate governance through the lack of a formal governance structure resulting in poor oversight of the College's strategic direction, performance and resources.

There is a risk that insufficient Board and Committee meetings take place if they are not scheduled to maximise member attendance and achieve quorums required to fulfil the Board of Management and Board Committee functions, Terms of References and Annual Workplans timeously.

4. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An impact assessment is not applicable given the subject of this paper.

5. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

6. Background

6a. The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges

The original Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges was published in December 2014. The Code is reviewed and updated annually by the Good Governance Steering Group.

Colleges Scotland act as custodian for any future reviews in liaison with the Good Governance Steering Group and in keeping with the way that the Code was created, the broad range of stakeholders who developed the Code are engaged fully with any revisions. CDN take responsibility for the production and dissemination of the Code document.

The new edition of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges was published in December 2025, will be re-issued on an annual basis in future, following review by the GGSG.

The key updates are highlighted in this paper for the Board of Management to discuss and note. A gap analysis and actions are also included for discussion and noting.

6b. 2026/27 Annual Programme of Board and Committee meetings

The Board of management is asked to review and approve a programme of meetings on an annual basis.

The Ayrshire College Board of Management Responsibilities and Standing Orders, (2.9) states that '*the Board shall hold as many Board and Committee meetings as may be necessary for the performance of its functions and at such times, places and frequency as the Board determines*', and shall accordingly '*approve an annual programme of meetings*'.

An annual programme of Board and Committee meeting dates is therefore presented to the Board for review and approval.

7. Current Situation

7a. The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges

The Code sets out mandatory principles and expectations for all Scottish colleges, focusing on:

1. Leadership and Strategy (Section A)

- Effective board governance, upholding values and ethos.
- Strategic vision, planning, and performance measurement.
- Leadership in equality, diversity, and social inclusion.
- Board membership reflecting community makeup.

2. Quality of the Student Experience (Section B)

- Student voice central to board decisions.
- Strong, autonomous, and adequately resourced students' association.
- Regular review of students' association constitution (at least every 5 years).
- Partnership agreements and quality monitoring.

3. Accountability (Section C)

- Transparent decision-making and prompt publication of agendas, minutes, and papers.
- Public register of interests and robust conflict of interest procedures.
- Non-executive majority for quorums and committee decisions.
- Mandatory committees: Audit, Remuneration, Finance, Nominations/Appointments.
- Audit Committee must include at least one member with recent relevant financial/audit experience.
- Remuneration Committee members must complete online training within one month of appointment.

4. Effectiveness (Section D)

- Annual self-evaluation of board effectiveness; external evaluation every 3–5 years.
- Results and development plans published online and sent to the funding body.
- Clear processes for evaluating board and committee chairs.
- Governance professional role clarified: reports directly to the chair, cannot hold another senior management post, right to speak at meetings, and must report unresolved concerns to the funding body.
- Induction, mentoring, and ongoing development for governance professionals and board members.

5. Relationships and Collaboration (Section E)

Partnership working with local/national bodies and across regions

Key Changes and Updates in the 2025–26 Code of Good Governance

a) Strengthened Student Engagement

- There is a stronger emphasis on the centrality of the student experience in all board decisions.
- Boards must now review the written constitution of their students' association at least every five years (B.7).
- More explicit requirements for partnership agreements and adequate resourcing of students' associations.

b) Governance Professional Role Clarified and Strengthened

- The governance professional must report directly to the chair in their governance capacity and cannot hold any other senior management position at the same time (D.14).
- The governance professional has an unambiguous right to speak at meetings and must report unresolved concerns to the funding body.
- New requirements for induction, mentoring, and ongoing development for governance professionals.

c) Board Effectiveness and Evaluation

- Annual self-evaluation of board effectiveness is now mandatory, with an externally facilitated evaluation required every 3–5 years (D.24).
- Results of evaluations and development plans must be sent to the funding body and published online.
- Clearer processes for evaluating the effectiveness of the board chair and committee chairs.

d) Remuneration Committee Training

- All Remuneration Committee members must complete an online training module within one month of appointment (C.19).

e) Transparency and Accountability

- More explicit requirements for the prompt publication of board/committee agendas, minutes, and papers (C.7).
- Boards must maintain a public register of interests and ensure robust conflict of interest procedures.
- Non-executive majority is required for quorums and committee decisions.

f) Diversity and Inclusion

- Boards must seek to reflect the makeup of their community in their membership and remove barriers to participation (A.13).
- Continued emphasis on equality, diversity, and social inclusion.

g) Committee Structures and Delegation

- Audit, Remuneration, Finance, and Nominations/Appointments committees are mandatory, with updated guidance on their composition and operation.
- The Audit Committee must have at least one member with recent relevant financial or audit experience (C.18).
- The chair cannot chair the Remuneration Committee.

h) Partnership and Collaboration

- Boards are required to work in partnership with local and national bodies, and support collaboration within and across regions (Section E).

The full version of the updated Code of Good Governance is available in **Appendix 1** or directly via the link to the PDF on the web: <https://www.cdn.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Code-of-Good-Governance-for-Scotlands-Colleges-2025-26.pdf>

Gap analysis:

Areas of Strong Alignment

- **Committee Structure & Scheduling:** Ayrshire College's annual programme includes all required committees and regular meetings, supporting compliance with the Code's requirements for structure and frequency.
- **Governance Professional:** The role is clearly defined and aligned with the Code's expectations.
- **Student Engagement:** The College recognizes the need for strong student engagement and regular review of the students' association constitution.
- **Transparency & Accountability:** The College is committed to publishing agendas, minutes, and maintaining a register of interests.
- **Board Evaluation:** Processes for annual and external evaluation are in place.

Potential Gaps & Actions for Full Compliance

The following have all been added into the Rolling Board Development Plan which is available in Appendix:

1. **Remuneration Committee Training-** Ensure all Remuneration Committee members complete the required online training within one month of appointment and maintain records of completion. *This was highlighted at the latest RemCo meeting on 15 January 2026, with members being asked to complete the Remuneration Committee training via the College Development Network online learning platform within one month & inform the Board Governance Professional.*
2. **Audit Committee Composition** - Confirm that at least one Audit Committee member has recent relevant financial or audit experience. *This is confirmed by the current ARC Chair, Jane Grant, having relevant financial and audit experience.*
3. **Students' Association Constitution Review** - Ensure the written constitution of the students' association is reviewed at least every five years, with evidence of this review documented. *This was last reviewed in March 2025 and documented via the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee (06.03.25) and also the Board of Management meeting (27.03.25) approved minutes.*
4. **Board Membership Diversity-** Continue efforts to reflect the community's makeup in board membership and document actions taken to remove barriers to participation. *This is confirmed via the current gender balance in Board membership meeting the target of over 50% female members. Board recruitment also takes accountability of the skills matrix, with vacancies actively advertised as widely as possible using a range of methods & contacts including Equality Partnership mailing list contacts.*

5. **Publication of Evaluations and Development Plans** - Ensure that results of board effectiveness evaluations and development plans are sent to the funding body and published online. *This is confirmed by results being published annually on the Ayrshire College website following Board of Management formal approval, plus emailed to the SFC annually.*
6. **Induction and Development for Governance Professional and Board Members** - Maintain records of induction, mentoring, and ongoing development for governance professionals and all board/committee members. *This is confirmed by the existence of individual induction checklists, Board development programmes, mentoring appointments, individual & group training & development records. The Board Governance Professional also attends College Development Network Governance Development sessions & a range of other specific Governance training including the Annual Standards Officer Workshops.*
7. **Conflict of Interest Procedures** - Regularly review and update conflict of interest procedures and ensure the public register of interests is current. *This is confirmed by the annual Board member paperwork requests and updates plus the public registers on the Ayrshire College website. The conflict of interest procedures form part of the Standing Orders and Responsibilities document that is reviewed annually.*

7b. 2026/27 Annual Programme of Board and Committee meetings

Appendix 3 outlines the proposed 2026/27 programme of Board and Committee meeting dates and details corresponding times and the venue at which each meeting may be held.

8. Proposals

The Board is asked to discuss and note the updates to the Code of Good Governance, the gap analysis and resulting actions.

The Board is asked to discuss and approve the programme of meeting dates as presented.

9. Consultation

Chair of Board of Management, College Principal & Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team, Board Governance Adviser.

10. Resource Implications

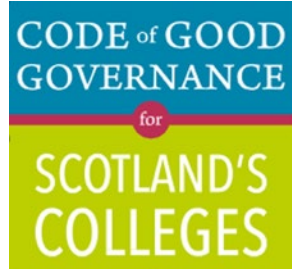
Financial resources will apply in relation to any associated on-site meeting costs and claimed expenses, and human resources to support the organisation, administration and governance of the programme of meetings.

11. Conclusion

The Board of Management are updated regarding Governance requirements to ensure compliance with The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.

The annual programme of Board and Committee meeting dates for AY2026-27 as presented offer optimal dates and times to enable forward planning and fulfilment of the Board of Management and Board Committee functions, Terms of References and Annual Workplans.

Hilary Denholm
Board Governance Advisor
26 March 2026



THE CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES

2025-2026



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1. BACKGROUND

The original *Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges* was published in December 2014. The Code is reviewed and updated annually by the Good Governance Steering Group. This is the edition for the 2025-26 session.

Colleges Scotland will act as custodian for any future reviews in liaison with the Good Governance Steering Group and in keeping with the way that the Code was created, the broad range of stakeholders who developed the Code will be engaged fully with any revisions. CDN will take responsibility for the production and dissemination of the Code document.

This Code refers to regional colleges, assigned colleges and regional strategic bodies.



2. FOREWORD

Colleges in Scotland thrive in the heart of their communities, serving the interests of those communities, students, employers, governments and their agencies and other stakeholders. They have an essential and valuable role in Scottish society. Colleges deliver 68 million hours of learning each year, and 95% of these learning hours lead to a recognised qualification. Across Scotland colleges employ 14,000 staff and deliver education, skills and training to 248,900 students and 14,830 apprentices. .

Colleges receive substantial public funding and also operate in an increasingly commercial and enterprising way. We value the significant contribution college board members make to governing our colleges and regional strategic bodies, and to their stewardship of taxpayer's money, ensuring its efficient and effective use.

Boards are expected to innovate, pursue new opportunities and take measured risks in delivering what is best for their stakeholders.

Against this background, it is right and proper that the highest standards of governance and propriety are expected of our boards and those individuals who serve them. This Code of Good Governance codifies the principles of good

governance for learners and learning that already exist in our colleges and promotes accountability and continuous improvement in how colleges and regional strategic bodies are governed.

The Code is based on key principles and has been written in a way that is mandatory and anticipates compliance. All colleges that receive funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or from a regional strategic body must comply with the Code as a term and condition of grant. Exceptions should be rare and must be explained publicly.

In addition to demonstrating good governance, colleges and regional strategic bodies must also ensure compliance with their statutory and other obligations. The governance professional role is vital in providing guidance to the board on its legal and other obligations.

Colleges have an important individual and collective role to play in promoting economic, social, and cultural well-being. We expect this Code to provide the essential underpinning to help discharge that role to the highest standards possible.

Dr David C. Watt OBE

Chair of the Good Governance Steering Group



3. CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES

Governance and the Code

Corporate governance:

- is the way in which organisations are directed and controlled within a legislative and regulatory framework
- defines the distribution of rights and responsibilities among the different stakeholders and participants in the organisation
- determines the rules and procedures for making decisions on corporate affairs including the process through which the organisation's objectives are set
- provides the means of achieving those objectives and monitoring performance.

Scotland's colleges refer to colleges either funded by SFC or by a regional strategic body for the provision of education. Such colleges can be incorporated or non-incorporated. The overarching purpose of good governance for Scotland's colleges is to:

- lead the college, region or regional strategic body and set its strategic direction and values
- ensure effective management and financial controls to support the student experience within a framework of public accountability and transparency
- deliver high quality learning and outcomes.

The *Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges* has been developed and is owned by the college sector. Colleges are required to comply with it as a condition of grant from either SFC or their regional strategic body. It establishes standards of good governance practice for all boards and provides the essential foundations for compliance within the legislative framework.

Boards must not only follow the letter but also the spirit of the Code to ensure good governance. Boards must think deeply, thoroughly and on a continuing basis about their overall tasks and the implications of these for the roles of their individual members. Key to this is the leadership of the chair, the support given to and by the principal, and the frankness and openness of mind with which issues are discussed and tackled by all board members.

Statement of Compliance with Good Governance

Each board must state its adoption of the Code in the corporate governance statement contained in its annual financial statement. The chair, on behalf of the board, is expected to report as to how the principles have been applied by the board. Where, for whatever reason, a board's practice is not consistent with any principle of the Code, it should make this known to SFC or, if it is an assigned college, the regional strategic body. This should be done immediately they become aware of an inconsistency and, without exception, in advance of publishing the information. An explanation for that inconsistency must be clearly stated in its corporate governance statement. Boards will be expected to offer a clear rationale for exceptions in the context of their college's operational model and to identify mitigations.

Individual board members have a duty to act on serious concerns about the governance of their body. Information on who board members can approach is included in *The Guide for Board Members in the College Sector* available from the College Development Network.

4. PRINCIPLES

Section A: Leadership and Strategy

Conduct in Public Life

- A.1 Every college and regional strategic body must be governed by an effective board that is collectively responsible for setting, demonstrating, and upholding the values and ethos of the organisation.
- A.2 Every board member must ensure that they are familiar with, and their actions comply with the provisions of their board's Code of Conduct.
- A.3 The *Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland*, which incorporate the seven Nolan principles, must be the basis for board decisions and behaviour. These key principles, which apply individually and collectively, are:
- Duty/Public Service
 - Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability and Stewardship
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership
 - Respect

Vision and Strategy

- A.4 The board is responsible for determining their institution's values, vision, strategic direction, educational character, , and ethos. Regional strategic bodies must also determine the regional strategy for colleges assigned to them. The board of an assigned college must have regard to the strategy determined by the regional strategic body. Board members have a collective leadership role in fostering an environment that enables the body to fulfil its mission and meet Scottish Government priorities, for the benefit of students and the community it serves.
- A.5 The board must develop and articulate a clear vision for the region or college. This should be a formally agreed statement of its aims and desired outcomes which should be used as the basis for its overall strategy and planning processes.
- A.6 The board provides overall strategic leadership of the region or college. The board is responsible for formulating and agreeing strategy by identifying strategic priorities and providing direction within a structured planning framework.
- A.7 The board (except in the case of assigned college boards) is responsible for overseeing the negotiation of its funding agreement with SFC, to meet the needs of the college or region and make best use of available funding, consistent with national strategy.
- A.8 The roles and responsibilities of the boards of assigned colleges should be undertaken in the context of the roles and responsibilities of their regional strategic body.



Performance

A.9 The board must ensure that a comprehensive performance measurement system is in place which is clearly linked to the regional strategic framework and identifies key performance indicators. It must ensure that it scrutinises performance measures and reports these on their website in a manner that is both timely and accessible to stakeholders. This will allow the board to determine whether or not the vision and mission of the region or the college are being fulfilled and that the interests of stakeholders are being met.

A.11 The board must exercise its functions with a view to improving economic, cultural and social wellbeing in the locality of the college or region. It must have regard to social and economic needs and social inclusion.

A.12 The board must provide leadership in equality and diversity.

A.13 The board must seek to reflect in its membership, the make-up of the community through offering maximum opportunity of membership to a range of potential members and removing potential barriers to membership, in partnership with its regional strategic body, as appropriate.

Corporate Social Responsibility

A.10 The board must demonstrate high levels of corporate social responsibility by ensuring it behaves ethically and contributes to economic development while seeking to improve the quality of life of the local community, society at large and its workforce.



Section B: Quality of the Student Experience

Student Engagement

- B.1 The board must have close regard to the voice of its students and the quality of the student experience should be central to all board decisions.
- B.2 The board must lead by example in relation to openness, by ensuring that there is meaningful on-going engagement and dialogue with students, the students' association and as appropriate staff and trade unions in relation to the quality of the student experience. Consultation is essential where significant changes are being proposed.
- B.3 The board must consider the outcome of student surveys and other student engagements and monitor action plans that could impact on the quality of the student experience.
- B.4 The college board must have regard to the [Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Association in Scotland](#). It must put in place robust partnership procedures (e.g. partnership agreement) to work together to achieve change and which are supported by regular and open communications.
- B.5 The college board must encourage a strong and autonomous students' association and ensure that the students' association is adequately resourced.

B.6 The college board must ensure that the students' association operates in a fair and democratic manner and fulfils its responsibilities.

B.7 The college board should review the written constitution of its students' association at least every five years.

Relevant and High-Quality Learning

B.8 The board must seek to secure coherent provision for students, having regard to other provision in the region or college's locality. The board must be aware of external local, national and international bodies and their impact on the quality of the student experience, including community planning partners, employers, skills development and enterprise agencies and employer bodies. The board must seek to foster good relationships and ensure that the body works in partnership with external bodies to enhance the student experience, including employability and the relevance of learning to industry needs.

Quality Monitoring and Oversight

B.9 The board must ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for the effective oversight of the quality and inclusivity of the learning experience in the college or region. The board must ensure that the college works in partnership with sector quality agencies and other appropriate bodies to support and promote quality enhancement and high-quality services for students.



Section C: Accountability

Accountability and Delegation

- C.1 The board is primarily accountable to its main funder, either SFC or its regional strategic body. Through the chain of funding, the body is ultimately responsible to the Scottish Ministers who are accountable to the Scottish Parliament.
- C.2 The board must ensure delivery of its agreed outcomes or in the case of an assigned college, its agreed contribution to the region's agreed outcomes.
- C.3 The board must ensure it fulfils its statutory duties and other obligations on it, and that the terms and conditions of its grant are being met.
- C.4 Scottish Ministers have powers to suspend or remove by order any or all board members of an incorporated college (except the principal) or a regional board for serious or repeated breaches of a term and condition of grant.
- C.5 The board also has a wider accountability to a range of stakeholders including students (both current and prospective), its staff, the wider public, employers and the community it serves, for the provision high quality education that improves people's life chances and social and economic well-being.
- C.6 Incorporated colleges and regional boards must maintain and publicly disclose a current register of interests for all board members. Board members have a personal responsibility to ensure any changes to their register of interests are notified timeously to the governance professional and to declare any specific conflicts of interest in the business of the meeting prior to the commencement of each meeting of the board and its committees and withdraw from meetings as appropriate.
- See section D.6 for the 'objective test' for judging if there is a conflict of interest.
- C.7 The board must ensure that its decision-making processes are transparent, properly informed, rigorous and timely, and that appropriate and effective systems of financial and operational control, quality, management of staff, risk assessment and management are established, monitored, continuously improved and appropriately impact assessed. This includes:
- a) the prompt production, dissemination and online publication of board/committee agendas, minutes and papers to the public
 - b) every board meeting and every committee meeting having a well-structured agenda circulated timeously in advance
 - c) the retention of all key documentation which help justify the decisions made by the board and its committees
 - d) setting quorum for board and committee meetings in line with good practice and preferably at 50% or higher are non-executive members. A board should satisfy itself that adequate arrangements are in place to ensure that decisions it has delegated to a committee are taken with a non-executive majority. When determining a quorum, the chair of the board may be considered to be a non-executive member. (see Annex 1 for the definition of non-executive)
- C.8 The board may delegate responsibilities to committees for the effective conduct of board business. As a minimum the committees required are Audit, Remuneration, Finance and Nominations/Appointments. Delegation of responsibilities from and matters reserved to the board and its committees must be set out in a scheme of delegation including the functions delegated by the board to the chair, committees, the principal and the governance professional (and any other members of staff).

Incorporated college boards and regional boards have no powers to delegate functions to an individual board member (except the chair who has no authority to act out with their delegated powers).

- C.9 The board must ensure every board committee has a specified member of the management team to provide objective, specialist advice to support it to discharge its remit, including by explaining in an accessible way the matters under discussion and the possible implications of different options.
- C.10 The board must consider and have in place procedures to ensure effective working relationships and constructive dialogue amongst the board as a whole and ensure there are effective reporting and two-way communications between committees and the board. The board must ensure that discussions and decisions of every committee are accurately recorded and reported to the board, no later than the next meeting of the board.

Risk Management

- C.11 The board of a college or a regional body is responsible for the overall management of risk and opportunity. It must set the risk appetite of the body and ensure there is an appropriate balance between risk and opportunity and that this is communicated via the principal to the body's management team.
- C.12 The board must ensure that sound risk management and internal control systems are in place and maintained. It must ensure there is a formal on-going process for identifying, reporting, evaluating and managing the body's significant risks and review the effectiveness of risk management, business continuity planning and internal control systems.

Audit Committee

- C.13 The Audit Committee must support the board and the principal by reviewing the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances including the body's governance, risk management and internal control framework. The Scottish Government Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook promotes the development of an assurance framework to aid the Committee in fulfilling this role. See [Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook](#)
- C.14 The scope of the Audit Committee's work must be defined in its terms of reference and encompass all the assurance needs of the board and the principal. The Audit Committee must have particular engagement with internal and external audit, and must work with management and auditors to resolve any issues in relation to financial reporting.
- C.15 The Audit Committee must promptly pursue recommendations arising from audit reports and must monitor their implementation.
- C.16 The membership of the Audit Committee cannot include the board chair or the principal and, in line with the Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook, 'executive members of the organisation should not be appointed to the Audit and Assurance Committee', and the majority of members must be non-executive. The role of the college executive is to attend meetings at the invitation of the committee chair and to provide information for particular agenda items.
- C.17 The Audit Committee terms of reference must provide for the committee to sit privately without any non-members present for all or part of a meeting if they so decide. The Audit Committee members should meet with the internal and external auditors without the executive team present at least annually.

C.18 At least one member of the Audit Committee should have recent relevant financial or audit experience.

Remuneration Committee

- C.19 It is essential that members of the Remuneration Committee understand their role and responsibilities. Members must undertake the online training module for Remuneration Committees provided by College Development Network within one month of appointment.
- C.20 The board must have a formal procedure in place for setting the remuneration of the principal by a designated committee of non-executive members. The board may wish to supplement this by taking evidence from a range of sources. In particular, staff and students should have a role in gathering and submitting evidence in relation to the college principal to the relevant committee.
- C.21 The board chair cannot be the chair of the Remuneration Committee (but they can be a member of it).

Financial and Institutional Sustainability

C.22 The board is responsible for ensuring the financial and institutional sustainability of the body. The board must ensure compliance with its Financial Memorandum (either with SFC or the regional strategic body, depending on which is funding it), including in relation to incorporated colleges and regional boards, relevant aspects of the Scottish Public Finance Manual.

C.23 The board must ensure that:

- funds are used as economically, efficiently and effectively as possible
- effective monitoring arrangements are in place
- college staff report relevant financial matters to it.

C.24 For colleges that are charitable organisations, board members are also charity trustees. The board of a college that is a charity must ensure its members are aware of their responsibilities under charity legislation and for complying with relevant provisions as set out by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. See [OSCR Guidance and Good Practice for Charity Trustees \(02.04.25\)](#)

Staff Governance

- C.25 The college board as the employer, is responsible for promoting positive employee relations and for ensuring effective partnership between recognised trade unions and management.
- C.26 The board must have a system of corporate accountability in place for the fair and effective management of all staff, to ensure all legal obligations are met and all policies and agreements are implemented and identify areas that require improvement and to develop action plans to address them.
- C.27 The college board must comply with collective agreements placed on it through national collective bargaining for colleges.

Section D: Effectiveness

The Board Chair

D.1 The chair is responsible for leadership of the board and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its role. The chair is responsible for setting the board's agenda and ensuring that adequate time is available for discussion of all agenda items, particularly strategic issues. The chair must promote a culture of openness and debate by:

- encouraging the effective contribution of all board members
- fostering constructive challenge and support to the principal, executive team and fellow board members
- effective team-working
- positive relations between board members.

The chair must engage with the principal and the governance professional in a manner which is both constructive and effective.

D.2 The board and its committees must have the appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge of the body to enable them to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities effectively.

Senior Independent Member

D.3 The board must appoint one of the non-executive members to be the senior independent member to provide a sounding board for the chair and to serve as an intermediary for the principal, other board members and the governance professional when necessary (see Annex 1 for the definition of 'non-executive'). The senior independent member should also be available where contact through the normal channels of chair, principal or governance professional has failed to resolve an issue or for which such contact is inappropriate. The senior independent member is also responsible for holding annual meetings with Board members, without the Chair, to appraise the Chair's performance and provide the Chair with relevant feedback

Further information on the role of the senior independent member can be found in [The Guide for Board Members in the College Sector](#).

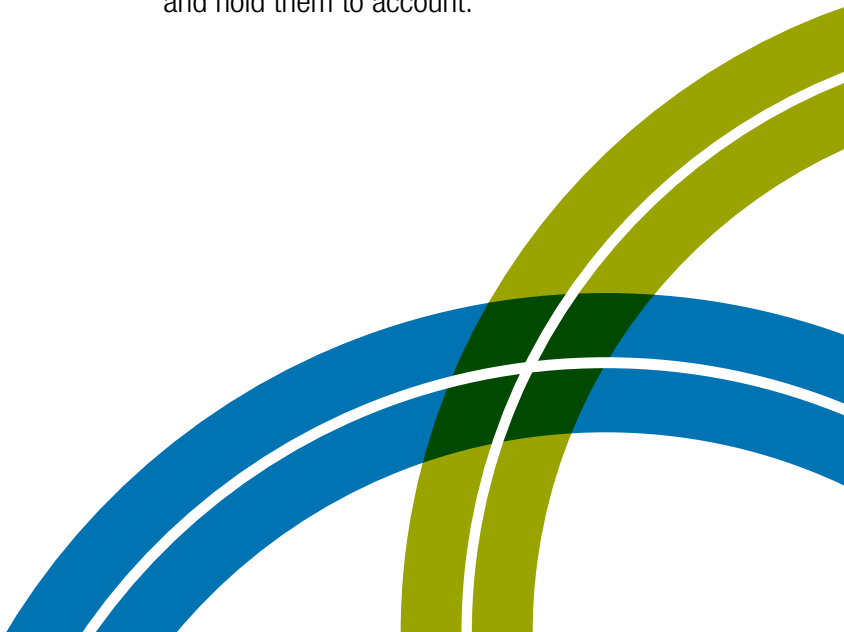


Board Members

- D.4 Each board member is collectively responsible and accountable for all board decisions. Board members must make decisions in the best interests of the college and/or region as a whole rather than selectively or in the interests of a particular group.
- D.5 Staff, student and trade union board members are full board members and bring essential and unique, skills, knowledge and experience to the board. Staff, student and trade union board members must not be excluded from board business unless there is a clear conflict of interest, in common with all board members.
- D.6 Where the college is a charity, all board members, as charity trustees, including staff, student and trade union board members, have legal duties and responsibilities under the Charities Act 2005. This includes registering any personal interests that could be seen as conflicting with the interests of the body. The 'objective test' for judging if there is a conflict of interest is:
- "... whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your decision making in your role as a member of a public body".*
- D.9 The college board must delegate to the principal, as chief executive, authority for the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the college, and must ensure the establishment of such management functions are undertaken by and under the authority of the principal.
- D.10 The college board must ensure a clear process is in place to set and agree personal performance measures for the principal. This process should seek the views of students and staff. The chair, on behalf of the board, should monitor, review and record the principal's performance, at least annually, against the agreed performance measures.
- D.11 The principal, as a board member, shares responsibility for good governance with the chair and all other members of the board, supported by the governance professional. The principal also enables good governance through supporting effective communication and interaction between the body and the rest of the college including staff and students.
- D.12 The board provides strategic direction for the region and/or college, and the chair provides leadership to the board. The principal provides leadership to the staff of the body.
- D.13 The board must provide a constructive challenge to the principal and executive team and hold them to account.

Principal and Chief Executive

- D.7 The college board must appoint the principal as chief executive of the college, securing approval for the appointment and terms and conditions of the appointment from the regional strategic body if necessary.
- D.8 The college board must ensure there is an open and transparent recruitment process for the appointment. Students and staff must have an opportunity to contribute to the recruitment process.



Governance Professional

D.14 The board must appoint a governance professional who is responsible to it and reports directly to the chair in their governance professional capacity. The governance professional may be a member of the senior management team in their governance professional capacity, but they cannot hold any other senior management team position at the same time. The appointment and removal of the governance professional is a decision of the board.

D.15 All board members must have access to the governance professional who has an important governance role in advising the board, the committees and individual board members and supporting good governance. The distinctive governance professional role includes:

- facilitating good governance and advising board members on:
 - the proper exercise of their powers, including in relation to relevant legislation
 - the board's compliance with its Financial Memorandum, the Code for Good Governance, its Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation
 - their behaviour and conduct in relation to the board's Code of Conduct.

- providing clear advice to the chair and the board/committees on any concerns the governance professional may have that board members have not been given:
 - sufficient information
 - information in an appropriate form
 - sufficient time to monitor, scrutinise or make informed and rigorous decisions in an open and transparent way.
- attending and providing support to every board meeting and every meeting of every board committee. Where the governance professional is unable to attend, while the governance professional retains overall responsibility, proper arrangements must be made to cover the role with a person who is fully able to discharge the role effectively.
- having an unambiguous right to speak at board and committee meetings to convey any concerns they may have about governance. This extends to someone substituting for the governance professional.
- reporting any unresolved concerns about the governance of the body to the relevant funding body (i.e., SFC or the regional strategic body).

D.16 The board must ensure the governance professional:

- has suitable skills, knowledge and behaviours to carry out their role effectively
- receives appropriate induction, and if new to the role, is mentored by a more experienced governance professional for at least their first year
- has adequate time and resources available to undertake their role effectively.

D.17 The board must ensure arrangements are in place to deal with a governance professional's potential or real conflicts of interest.

Board Member Appointment, Induction and Training

- D.18 For boards with responsibility for board appointments, the board must ensure a formal and open procedure is in place for recruiting and selecting new non-executive board members. Boards must have regard to current Ministerial Guidance on board appointments.
- D.19 The board is responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the conduct of student elections and nominations, and elections and nominations of staff and trade union members to the board.
- D.20 The chair must ensure that new board members receive a formal induction on joining the board, tailored in accordance with their individual and collective needs. The governance professional should support the chair in the provision of relevant induction for new board members.
- D.21 The board must ensure all board members undertake appropriate training and development in respect of their governance role. The governance professional should support the chair in the provision of relevant training and development opportunities for board members, which should be tailored to meet board members skills and needs. The governance professional must keep records of the development activity of board members, including the chair.
- D.22 The board must ensure that new committee members receive a committee induction and have their specific training needs assessed and met.

Board Evaluation

- D.23 Extension of the term of office of board appointments requires evidence and the board must ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to support this.
- D.24 The board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should also be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every three to five years. The board should determine the timing for this externally facilitated review as part of the annual effectiveness review. The board is not required to conduct a self-evaluation of its effectiveness in the same year as an externally facilitated evaluation. The board must send its self-evaluation (including an externally facilitated evaluation) and board development plan (including progress on previous year's plan) to its funding body and publish them online.
- D.25 The board must agree a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the board chair and the committee chairs. The evaluation of the board chair should normally be led by the senior independent member.
- D.26 The board must ensure all board members are subject to appraisal of their performance, conducted at least annually, normally by the chair of the board.
- D.27 The performance of regional college chairs will also be evaluated by the Scottish Government, as regional college chairs are appointed by the Scottish Ministers and are personally accountable to them.
- D.28 The performance of assigned, incorporated college chairs will also be evaluated by the regional strategic body, as they are appointed by the regional strategic body and are personally accountable to them.

Section E: Relationships and Collaboration

Partnership Working

- E.1 The board must work in partnership to secure the coherent provision of high quality fundable further and higher education in their localities.
- E.2 The board must ensure effective consultation, local and regional planning and must follow the principles of effective collaborative working: mutual respect, trust and working towards commonly agreed outcomes.
- E.3 The board must ensure effective partnership working with local and national bodies including businesses, public and third sector organisations to develop commonly agreed priorities following the principles of effective collaborative working.
- E.4 The board must encourage and support effective partnership working and collaboration within and across regions to address local needs and meet national priorities and specialisms.



ANNEX 1

References and Definitions

- “**college**” means a college funded by either SFC or a regional strategic body.
- “**incorporated college**” means a college with a board of management under part 1 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992.
- “**assigned college**” means a college assigned to a regional strategic body.
- “**board**” means the governing body of the college or to the regional strategic body.
- “**body**” means the organisation in question, i.e., a college or regional strategic body.
- “**principal**” includes where appropriate in the context, the chief officer or equivalent person of a regional strategic body.
- ‘**non-executive**’ means a member who is not the chair of the board and who does not otherwise hold a specific position on the board i.e., is not a student member or a staff or trade union member; and in the case of a college board, is not the principal; and in the case of a regional board is not the chair of an assigned college.
- The reference to a non-executive majority under C.7(d) reflects the underlying governance principle of ensuring an appropriate degree of independence and objectivity in all board decision-making. A board quorum should always require a non-executive majority. When determining a quorum, the chair of the board may be considered to be a non-executive member.
- The Court of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) for the region and is the only RSB in Scotland.



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 College Development Network

 @ColDevNet



Principles	Development recommendations	Source	Action Plan	Impact	Lead	Priority	Strategic Ambition Objective	Timeline	Status
		Principal	Receive regular reports and/or papers at the Audit & Risk and People, Infrastructure and Finance committees	Improve Board member knowledge and awareness of College & the Ayrshire Way culture					
B: Quality of the Student Experience 1. Student Engagement 2. Relevant and High-Quality Learning 3. Quality Monitoring and Oversight	More student engagement at Board level	Self Eval questionnaire BGA Ongoing from AY24-25 Development plan COGG	Involve in recruitment. Involve in Induction, training & development. Involve inboard section of the website and board communications, More contact with Board members to gather student feedback/opinions. Ensure the written constitution of the students' association is reviewed at least every five years, with evidence of this review documented.	Student perspective in recruiting new board members, plus development for student representatives. Increased two-way communications, information sharing and understanding	BGA SIM	1	Outstanding Experiences	ongoing throughout AY25/26 Reviewed in March 2025	Icebreaker at Development sessions
	Increase focus on current trends, and forward planning to ensure learning remains relevant and students have outstanding experiences. Reduce our retrospective reporting	Chair	More live updates & reports – support and encourage dashboard development for a range of KPIs to better inform board and improve data analysis by board members.	Information is current to allow analysis, scrutiny and feedback. Focus on bringing prosperity & reducing educational, health and social inequalities amongst our students	Chair ELT	1	Enabling The Future	ongoing throughout AY25/26	Live dashboard reviews on meeting agendas
	Consider additional quality-based reporting	BGA	More information from Quality dept	Improved quality-based reporting	BGA ELT	2	Enabling The Future	July 2026	
C: Accountability 1. Accountability and Delegation 2. Risk Management 3. Audit Committee 4. Remuneration Committee 5. Financial and Institutional Sustainability 6. Staff Governance	Delegation review	BGA	Workshop session on the Role of the Board – Feb 2026 To review the Scheme of Delegation which was last reviewed Sept 2000 – take to Board March 2026	Board members especially new members understand fully their role. Assurance re appropriate delegation is in place	BGA	3	Enabling The Future	July 2026	12 Feb 2026 development session
	Risk Management – further development & training	ARC Ongoing from AY24-25 Development plan	Assurance mapping further development	Improved sustainability, risk oversight, wider understanding, enhanced assurance, active register, dynamic response to emerging risks	BGA, Auditors ARC	1	Outstanding Experiences	ongoing throughout AY25/26	Assurance mapping on meeting agendas
	ARC – new member input	ARC Other board members (if they wish to attend) COGG	Specific training via CDN Meetings with VP Finance & Infrastructure Training from WBG	Maximise new member input to ARC Confirm that at least one Audit Committee member has recent relevant financial or audit experience.	BGA	1	Outstanding Experiences	Feb 2026 Aug 26	12 Feb 2026 development session Recruit new NED to ARC
	RemCo – new member input	Interim Chair	New member mentoring/coaching Induction notes developed for Chairs & Vice Chairs	Maximise new member input	Interim Chair SIM	1	Enabling The Future	June 2026	Mentors identified

Principles	Development recommendations	Source	Action Plan	Impact	Lead	Priority	Strategic Ambition Objective	Timeline	Status
		COGG	CDN RemCo Training module completion	All current REMCo members complete same training module for consistency, understanding & to comply with COGG	BGA			March 26	
	Maximise Board knowledge. re Finance & Sustainability	Self Eval questionnaire Ongoing from AY24-25	Specific training/presentations to Board esp on Fair Work training on Financials for Non-Financials Review Sustainability measures/KPIs. How is the Board using AI? Advantages? Risks?	Maximise new member understanding & input. Demonstrate The Ayrshire Way	BGA ELT ELT	2	Enabling The Future	June 2026	WBG training AI framework development Increased People focus BRIC now PIFCo 21 Jan Fin sust
	Review Governance Reports/Infor to Board	BGA	Dashboard Governance KPIs review including supporting creation of increased number of dashboards KPIs. ARC currently supplied with assurance annual report	Improved governance assurance	BGA	3	Enabling The Future	June 2026	Governance mapping work
D: Effectiveness	The Board Chair	Interim Chair	Support & Development for new Interim Chair Define Vice Chair role	Demonstrate The Ayrshire Way	BGA	1	Outstanding Experiences	June 2026	Interim Chair Induction checklist completion
	Senior Independent Member (SIM)	Interim Chair, BGA	Succession planning for SIM. Induction notes developed for Chairs & Vice Chairs	Maximise SIM effectiveness. Demonstrate The Ayrshire Way	Interim Chair SIM BGA	1	Outstanding Experiences	ongoing throughout AY25/26	Induction notes developed for Chairs & Vice Chairs
	Board Members	Interim Chair COGG	Demonstrate The Ayrshire Way Teambuilding/Teamworking Mentors for new members Non-Exec time prior to meetings Increase discussion & input to meetings. AI skills Review skills matrix to include AI. Midyear reviews late Jan/Feb Competency review DiSC profiles – added to Induction process. review personal spec & job role descriptor. L4 leading – review the process Continue efforts to reflect the community's makeup in board membership and document actions taken to remove barriers to participation.	Improved attendance rates Timely decisions Effective interaction, challenge, critical thinking and decision making. Demonstrate The Ayrshire Way Consistency across Leadership team re ELT DISC profiling already completed Diverse input from local community	Interim Chair BGA Chairs & Vice Chairs ELT	1	Outstanding Experiences	ongoing throughout AY24/25 Aug 26	30 min non-exec time invitations sent. mentors for new members DiSC completed new members. Chairs & SNC meetings Recruitment review work
	Principal and Chief Executive	Chair & BGA	Promotion of Colleges First approach Great Conversations	Ensure Principal appraisal linked to relevant values, codes etc and is effective & worthwhile	Interim Chair	3	Enabling The Future	July 2026	

Principles	Development recommendations	Source	Action Plan	Impact	Lead	Priority	Strategic Ambition Objective	Timeline	Status
	Governance Professional	BGA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Test and evaluate Co Pilot benefits for BGA & for Board 2. Governance mapping – efficiencies? 3. Investigate formal learning/qualification. 4. Develop BGA Gantt duties chart. 5. How add value to Board? 	<p>Improved awareness, resource pooling, benchmarking</p> <p>Share more governance information with the Board.</p> <p>Increased Board development & knowledge of Governance</p> <p>Simplify BGA duties timeline</p>	BGA	2	Enabling The Future	ongoing throughout AY25/26	<p>Co Pilot & laptops offered to members.</p> <p>Knowledge bank additions</p>
	Board Member Appointment, Induction and Training	Ongoing from AY24-25 Development plan COGG	<p>Maximise new member input.</p> <p>Elevate access for key courses.</p> <p>Use evaluation for Induction/exits.</p> <p>Key meetings in Induction Checklist</p> <p>Student association input</p> <p>Ayrshire Way video usage at Induction</p> <p>Group Inductions, peer support</p> <p>Maintain records of induction, mentoring, and ongoing development for governance professionals and all board/committee members.</p>	<p>Increased scrutiny & discussion</p> <p>Increased feedback received</p> <p>Key meetings planned</p> <p>Increased efficiency of resources & teambuilding</p> <p>More focused & relevant</p> <p>Demonstrate effectiveness of learning & development</p>	BGA ELT	2	Partner of Choice	Jan 2026 Aug 26	<p>Elevate access established.</p> <p>Induction Checklists updated</p> <p>Ayrshire Way video used.</p> <p>SA involved in Induction</p> <p>Induction materials review</p> <p>Training review</p>
	Board Evaluation	Ongoing from AY24-25 Development plan COGG	<p>New/additional ways of evaluation</p> <p>Eval at Committee level</p> <p>Update self eval Q to link with Strategic objs</p> <p>Review annual appraisal form re Great Conversations</p> <p>Ensure that results of board effectiveness evaluations and development plans are sent to the funding body and published online.</p>	<p>Increased feedback received</p> <p>Better strategic links & feedback</p> <p>Transparency & compliance</p>	BGA	2	Enabling The Future	Feb 2026 Completed Dec 2025	<p>Self eval Q for PIFCo</p> <p>Eval LTQC</p> <p>Eval section in V14</p>
E: Relationships and Collaboration	Demonstrate Partnership Working	Ongoing from AY24-25 Development plan	<p>Stakeholder map reviewed annually.</p> <p>Stakeholder map included in Board Member induction</p> <p>Social media/website demonstrations of engagement</p> <p>Develop mentorships & peer support.</p> <p>Introduce pre meeting briefing for members.</p> <p>Member input into 3C development sessions</p> <p>Shadowing other college committees</p>	<p>Demonstration of range of stakeholder relationships & College contributions</p> <p>Demonstrate 'The Ayrshire Way'</p>	ELT Chair BGA	1	Partner of Choice	ongoing throughout AY25/26	<p>Pre meeting briefings & non-exec time offered.</p> <p>02 September development session input</p>
		Ongoing from AY24-25	Invite key stakeholder speakers, set informal voluntary meetings and discussion times out with formal meetings.	Demonstration of range of stakeholder relationships & College contributions	ELT Chair	2	Partner of Choice	ongoing throughout AY25/26	Twilight sessions planned

Principles	Development recommendations	Source	Action Plan	Impact	Lead	Priority	Strategic Ambition Objective	Timeline	Status
		Development plan			BGA				Use of internal audit time & skills
		Ongoing from AY24-25 Development plan	<p>Offer dedicated time for informal discussion, focus on significant college issues relevant to the Board with key stakeholders invited to present and engage with the Board.</p> <p>Include briefings and discussions on wider strategic context of post 16 education.</p> <p>Offer briefings and discussions on growth deal and established businesses within the local economy.</p> <p>Ensure members invited to relevant stakeholder visits and meetings</p>	<p>Update & inform Board re current issues, allow for strategic questioning, longer term thinking and discussion, enhance members stakeholder knowledge, assist with informed decision making, maintain understanding of current key employment needs to aid strategic decisions.</p> <p>Demonstrate The Ayrshire Way</p>	ELT Chair BGA	1	Partner of Choice	ongoing throughout AY25/26	<p>Less papers, more discussion</p> <p>Informal pre meeting non-exec time offered.</p> <p>02 Sept briefing papers & session</p> <p>College Financial Sustainability Plan updates now standing agenda item</p>

Paper 05 - Appendix 03

COMMITTEE	DATE	TIME	VENUE	PAPERS CIRC	SLT
Board Development Session 1	Tuesday 01 September 2026	1:30-5pm	Kilmarnock/Teams	25.08.26	
Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee	Thursday 10 September 2026	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	03.09.26	
People, Infrastructure & Finance Committee	Tuesday 15 September 2026	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	08.09.26	
Audit & Risk Committee	Tuesday 22 September 2026	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	15.09.26	
Board of Management Meeting	Thursday 01 October 2026	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	24.09.26	
Chairs & SNC Meeting 1 of 3	Tuesday 06 October 2026	4-5PM	Ayr/Teams	29.09.26	
Joint ARC & PIFCo (Financial Statements only)	Tuesday 17 November 2026	4-5PM	Ayr/Teams	10.11.26	
People, Infrastructure & Finance Committee	Tuesday 17 November 2026	5-6PM	Ayr/Teams	10.11.26	
Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee	Thursday 26 November 2026	4-6PM	Ayr/Teams	21.11.26	
Audit & Risk Committee	Tuesday 01 December 2026	4-5PM	Ayr/Teams	24.11.26	
Board of Management Meeting	Thursday 10 December 2026	4-6PM	Ayr/Teams	03.12.26	
Chairs & SNC meeting 2 of 3	Tuesday 15 December 2026	12:30-5pm	Kilmarnock/Teams	08.12.26	

Board Development Session 2	Thursday 11 February 2027	12.30-5pm & dinner	Kilmarnock/Teams Then Salt & Barrel 5pm – 8pm	04.02.27	
Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee	Thursday 04 March 2027	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	25.02.27	
People, Infrastructure & Finance Committee	Tuesday 09 March 2027	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	02.03.27	
Audit & Risk Committee	Tuesday 16 March 2027	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	09.03.27	
Board of Management Meeting	Thursday 25 March 2027 Thursday 15 April 2027	4-6PM	Kilmarnock/Teams	08.04.27	
Chairs & SNC Meeting 3 of 3	Thursday 20 April 2027	4-5PM	Kilwinning/Teams	13.04.27	
Board Strategy Session	Tuesday 27 April 2027	9:30am-1pm	Kilwinning/Teams	20.04.27	
Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee	Thursday 27 May 2027	4-6PM	Kilwinning/Teams	20.05.27	
Audit & Risk Committee	Tuesday 01 June 2027	4-6PM	Kilwinning/Teams	25.05.27	
People, Infrastructure & Finance Committee	Tuesday 08 June 2027	4-6PM	Kilwinning/Teams	01.06.27	
Board of Management Meeting	Thursday 17 June 2027	4-6PM	Kilwinning/Teams	10.06.27	

Title of Meeting: Board of Management

Date: 26 March 2026

Title: **Sustainability Framework and Climate Change Report**

Purpose: The purpose of this report is to present the College's Sustainability Framework and provide an update on progress against its climate change commitments, including the completion of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) return.

The Sustainability Framework outlines the College's strategic approach to social, economic, and environmental sustainability, highlights performance across key emission areas, and identifies ongoing actions to support continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes.

Recommendation: Following consideration and approval by the People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee, the Board is requested to approve the Sustainability Framework.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report presents the College's Sustainability Framework and provides an update on progress toward its climate change commitments, including completion of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) return.
- 1.2. The Framework outlines the College's strategic approach to social, economic and environmental sustainability, aligned with the EAUC Climate Change Roadmap and mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- 1.3. The report summarises the College's three-year emissions performance, noting continued reductions in Scope 1 and 2 emissions due to energy-efficiency measures, alongside a recent rise in Scope 3 emissions driven by procurement activity. It also highlights operational improvements across gas, electricity, water and waste, demonstrating progress while identifying areas requiring further focus to support ongoing improvement.

2. Associated Risks

- 2.1. There are no new risks arising from this report. All relevant sustainability, climate-related, operational and compliance risks are already captured within the College's Strategic Risk Register and continue to be monitored through established governance processes.

3. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

- 3.1. In relation to the contents of this paper, there is no requirement for an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment to be conducted at this time.

4. Publication

- 4.1. This paper will be published on the College's website.

Alan Ritchie
Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure
26 March 2026

5. Sustainability Framework

- 5.1. The College has developed a comprehensive Sustainability Framework (**Appendix 1**) that aligns closely with the [EAUC Climate Change Roadmap](#) and is guided by the strategic direction of the College's Social, Economic and Environmental Sustainability (SEES) Governance Group.
- 5.2. The Framework encompasses four key areas: Estates and Operations, Partnership and Engagement, Learning, Teaching and Research, and Leadership and Governance. Together, these themes reflect our commitment to the social, economic, and environmental pillars of sustainability.
- 5.3. Each area is mapped to the relevant [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) to ensure our activities support wider global sustainability efforts.
- 5.4. The Framework sets out clear and achievable targets and showcases examples of good practice across the College through a set of curated case studies. The College will continue to pursue innovative projects that enhance its sustainability performance and support ongoing improvements.

6. Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) Return

- 6.1. The annual PBCCD return was completed and submitted by the required 30 November 2025 deadline.
- 6.2. The table below provides a summary of what is meant by Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions data:

Scope	Contains	Examples
1	Direct emissions from owned/controlled sources	Boilers, fleet vehicles
2	Indirect emissions from purchased energy	Electricity, heating, and cooling
3	All other indirect value-chain emissions	Procurement, travel, waste, water, suppliers, commuting

6.3. The table below presents a three-year comparison of scope 1 to 3 emissions.

Three-Year Comparison: Scope 1, Scope 2, Scope 3				
Year	Scope 1 tCO₂e	Scope 2 tCO₂e	Scope 3 tCO₂e	Total tCO₂e
2022-23	2,282	1,054	4,920	8,256
2023-24	1,175	710	3,120	5,005
2024-25	1,103	591	5,822	7,516

6.4. Over the three years, the College’s total reported carbon emissions have fluctuated, dropping from 8,256 tCO₂e in 2022–23 to a low of 5,005 tCO₂e in 2023–24, before rising again to 7,516 tCO₂e in 2024–25.

6.5. Scope 1 emissions have steadily decreased, falling from 2,282 tCO₂e to 1,103 tCO₂e, reflecting ongoing improvements in energy efficiency and onsite operations.

6.6. Scope 2 emissions have also declined consistently from 1,054 tCO₂e to 591 tCO₂e, largely due to reductions in electricity consumption and optimisation of building energy systems.

6.7. Scope 3 emissions, however, show significant variation—dropping sharply in 2023–24 before increasing to 5,822 tCO₂e in 2024–25. This rise is primarily linked to procurement associated with the College’s digital transformation programme.

6.8. Overall, while Scopes 1 and 2 demonstrate sustained progress in reducing emissions, the increase in Scope 3 highlights the need for continued focus on supply chain and procurement-related impacts.

6.9. The following table provides data on the key elements of the College’s annual emission figures along with an explanation of the movements:

Three-Year Comparison: Gas, Electricity, Water, Waste					
Year	Gas	Electricity	Water	Waste Recycled	Biomass
	kWh	kWh	m³	%	kWh
2022-23	6,520,296	3,272,499	22,789	55	654,300
2023-24	5,710,837	3,152,176	24,715	43	996,000
2024-25	4,859,265	3,023,490	21,772	53	1,259,720

- 6.10. **Gas consumption** has been significantly reduced across our sites due to a combination of building optimisation measures and set point adjustments. Key improvements include:
- Kilwinning Campus: Installation of new high-efficiency condensing boilers and heat exchangers, along with a new Building Management System (BMS), ensuring optimal performance and reduced gas usage
- 6.11. **Electricity consumption** has decreased through building optimisation and set point adjustments. Energy usage is continuously monitored via energy management systems and supplier portals, which provide real-time data and issue alerts for sudden spikes or irregular patterns.
- Kilmarnock Campus: Continued efficient operation of the biomass boiler, contributing to lower reliance on gas.
- 6.12. **Water usage:** Automated meter readers at Ayr, Kilmarnock, and Kilwinning, giving us real-time visibility of water use and helping us quickly spot issues such as leaks or unusual consumption.
- 6.13. The £8,000 funding secured for our water audit has now been fully utilised, and all recommended actions have been completed. These upgrades are already reducing water waste and associated costs, with an estimated annual carbon saving of 10 tCO₂e. Please note that the 2024/25 figures do not include Kilwinning because of a faulty meter, which Total Gas is currently repairing.
- 6.14. **Waste:** The on-site recycling rate has increased over the last year, thanks to collaboration with our waste management company, the introduction of new waste bins, and awareness training for the Estates Team. Next steps include developing awareness campaigns for staff and students to improve recycling practices further and support our sustainability goals.
- 6.15. The **biomass** kWh has increased compared to last year. This rise is primarily due to the boiler operating more efficiently and experiencing significantly less downtime than in previous years. While biomass usage has increased, gas consumption has decreased during the same period.

2026-2029

The Ayrshire College Sustainability Framework sets out how we will embed sustainability across our learning, operations and partnerships. It provides a clear structure for action and a way to measure our progress as we work towards a more sustainable and resilient future for our students, staff and communities.

Sustainability Framework



Empowering People for a Changing World



SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029

Introduction

The Ayrshire College Sustainability Framework sets out how we will embed sustainability across our learning, operations and partnerships. It provides a clear structure for action and a way to measure our progress as we work towards a more sustainable and resilient future for our students, staff and communities.

This Framework reflects the College's role in supporting both national and global goals. In Scotland, colleges are key partners in achieving net zero emissions by 2045, contributing to the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan, Public Bodies Climate Change Duties and the Just Transition towards a fair, green economy. We are committed to preparing our learners with the skills, knowledge and values needed to thrive in this changing world.

Our approach is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a global framework for action on climate, equality and prosperity. The SDGs offer a lens through which we can view and measure our impact, connecting local progress with global responsibility. At a national level we are committed to the actions of the FE Climate Change Roadmap, and this has helped shape our own plan for sustainability at the College.

The Framework is led and supported by the College's SEES Group (Social, Environmental and Economic Sustainability), who champion sustainability across the College and ensure coordinated progress. Through this approach, the College commits to leading by example — reducing our environmental footprint, inspiring sustainable behaviours and empowering our communities to help shape a fairer, greener future for Ayrshire and beyond.

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029

Purpose and Scope

The Sustainability Framework sets out how we plan, deliver and review our sustainability ambitions. It brings together our environmental, social and economic responsibilities within a single, clear approach that supports our Strategic Ambition and values.

The Framework guides decision-making across all areas of the College — from curriculum and operations to procurement, partnerships and community engagement. It ensures that sustainability is not a separate activity but a core principle shaping how we teach, work and innovate. Progress will be measured using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring transparency and enabling us to demonstrate the wider impact of our actions.

The Sustainability Framework is structured around three core pillars — Social, Economic and Environmental — which set the overall focus of our ambitions. To support delivery, the Framework also includes three cross-cutting Workstreams: Learning and Teaching; Partnerships and Engagement; and Estates and Operations. These Workstreams operate across all pillars and are based on our SEES group subgroups, ensuring sustainability is embedded in both our educational purpose and our operational practice.

The College recognises that delivering meaningful sustainability outcomes requires long-term commitment and investment. In the current challenging funding landscape for further education, progress will rely not only on College action but also on continued national support and government intervention to enable major infrastructure and decarbonisation projects.

Pillars



Social Sustainability

The College promotes equality, wellbeing and inclusion, ensuring everyone can learn and work in a supportive environment.

Our focus is on reducing inequalities and strengthening our communities through meaningful learning and engagement.



Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability means operating efficiently and responsibly while supporting the region's transition to a green economy.

We build future skills, use resources wisely and ensure long-term value for our students, partners and communities.



Environmental Sustainability

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact by cutting emissions, minimising waste and protecting natural resources.

Through our actions and learning culture, we contribute to a more climate-resilient and sustainable future.

Workstreams



Learning and Teaching

Sustainability is embedded across learning, teaching and research, equipping students and staff with the knowledge, skills and curiosity to drive a fair, inclusive and net-zero future. The College fosters innovation and inquiry that address real-world sustainability challenges and create lasting social, environmental and economic benefit.



Estates and Operations

The College manages its campuses and resources responsibly, reducing carbon emissions, improving efficiency and supporting biodiversity.

Every operational decision considers environmental, social and economic impact.









Partnerships and Engagement

Working collaboratively with students, staff, employers and communities, the College promotes shared responsibility for sustainability.

Partnerships strengthen regional resilience and support Scotland's just transition to a green economy.

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029

Framework in Action

		PILLARS		
		 SOCIAL	 ECONOMIC	 ENVIRONMENTAL
WORKSTREAMS	 LEARNING AND TEACHING	Fosters inclusion, wellbeing and opportunities for all learners.	Supports development of green skills for a future-focused economy.	Equips learners with skills to respond to climate and nature crises.
	 ESTATES AND OPERATIONS	Ensures safe, accessible and positive learning and working environments.	Uses resources efficiently to ensure long-term financial resilience.	Reduces environmental harm by managing energy, waste and resources responsibly.
	 PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT	Strengthens social impact by widening participation across Ayrshire.	Drives innovation, investment and opportunity across the region.	Supports shared environmental action through collaboration.



WORKSTREAM OBJECTIVES

Learning and Teaching

- **Integrate sustainability into the curriculum across all courses, using the Responsible Futures Framework for accreditation.**
- **Provide carbon literacy training for all staff and students to raise awareness and promote sustainable practices.**
- **Encourage and support projects focused on sustainability and climate change**



SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029



#PassingPositivity

Mental Health United is a student-led initiative designed to support positive mental health and wellbeing across Ayrshire. Developed by HND Sports students at the College, the project uses the power of sport, physical activity and human connection to encourage open conversations and support those who may be struggling. The initiative emerged at a time of rising suicide rates in the region, motivating students to take action as peers and community advocates.

Over the course of a year, the campaign created a programme of visible, inclusive activities aimed at getting people active, connected and talking. Students organised school outreach sessions, community sports festivals, fitness challenges, wellbeing workshops and social events. A strong campaign identity, supported by branded sportswear and the hashtag #PassingPositivity, helped build momentum and awareness both on campus and online.

To extend its reach, the group partnered with The Kris Boyd Charity, founded after personal loss experienced by the former Scotland international footballer. Together, they hosted high-profile mental health awareness events, including a major charity football tournament at the College's Kilmarnock campus featuring 18 teams and attendance from Kris Boyd, Paul McNeill from the Scottish FA, and former professional Andy McLaren. Support organisations including Breathing Space, Choose Life and the Samaritans provided direct access to advice and services on the day.

The impact has been significant. The project has engaged thousands of students, staff and community members, helping to reduce stigma, build confidence and normalise conversations around mental health. With support from national sports figures, celebrities and the wider community, the message of #PassingPositivity spread far beyond Ayrshire, amplifying hope, visibility and connection.

Mental Health United continues to grow, demonstrating the power of student leadership, partnership and collective action — and reinforcing the belief that a single conversation, activity or moment of support can make a meaningful difference.



"I am truly honoured to be part of MENTAL Health United. I've witnessed first-hand the powerful difference this group makes in people's lives, offering support, hope and a sense of belonging when it's needed most."

Kris Boyd

Former Professional Footballer and Scotland International

"Football is a powerful tool to engage with people and create opportunities to talk about life and mental health. Bringing people together in this way allows conversations to happen naturally and can make a real difference, showing how sport can support people and help them feel connected."

Andy McLaren

Former Professional Footballer and Scotland International



SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029



Mental Health United: Football Supporting Mental Wellbeing

The College is using football as a powerful tool to support mental health through Mental Health United, which forms part of its Community Sports Hub. The Hub connects sports clubs and organisations to promote wellbeing, inclusion, and social connection.

The programme runs weekly drop-in sessions that blend physical activity with open conversation in a relaxed, welcoming environment. Each session includes two 30-minute football games led by Sports Lecturer David Dougan, followed by a 15-minute "Team Talk". The Team Talk is co-facilitated by David and Richard, a Mental Health Nurse and staff volunteer. Both take part in the games alongside participants, helping to break down barriers, build trust, and create genuine connection.

With 43 registered members, the group is open to anyone whenever they feel ready to attend. If someone hasn't been along for a while, they receive a supportive check-in to make sure they're okay, reinforcing the sense of care and belonging at the heart of the programme.



Building Belonging and Confidence

Participants are rewarded with branded t-shirts, hoodies, hats, and backpacks, helping to build pride, confidence, and a strong sense of community identity. The Team Talk has proven especially impactful, giving men a relatable, football-focused space where they feel comfortable opening up about their mental health.

Inclusive and Impactful

The group brings together people aged 17 to 58, including school pupils, college staff, individuals experiencing unemployment, and those in recovery from addiction. Referrals come from organisations such as Police Scotland, Salvation Army, Student Services, and the East Ayrshire Recovery Hub.

These sessions have successfully united people from very different backgrounds, helping to reduce isolation and broaden perspectives. One participant from Nigeria shared how the experience helped him better appreciate the opportunities available in Scotland and feel more connected to his community.



"It's a safe space to play football and talk about mental health"

Simon Donnelly

Former Scotland International

"We see deeper and more meaningful connections each week"

Richard Hughes

Lecturer, Health & Social Care

Supported by the Sporting Community

The programme is supported by the Kris Boyd Charity and OnlySport, and has welcomed guest speakers from across the footballing world. These include Andy McLaren, Chris Burke, Garry Hay, Simon Donnelly, and Kris Boyd, further strengthening the programme's impact and visibility.



WORKSTREAM OBJECTIVES

Estates and Operations

- **Measure the College's carbon footprint and set targets to reduce emissions, including Scope 3 emissions**
- **Implement strategies to reduce energy use, such as upgrading to energy-efficient lighting and heating systems**
- **Develop a fossil fuel divestment plan and transition to renewable energy sources for the College estate**
- **Establish a new Space Management Policy to improve space utilisation and reduce operational costs**



SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029



Furnishing Sustainability

The College has forged a pioneering partnership with Saxen Commercial Interiors — Scotland’s leading provider of new and refurbished commercial furniture — to embed environmental and economic sustainability into its campus environments. Since launching the collaboration, the College has invested nearly £15,000 in upcycled, recycled and refurbished furniture supplied by Saxen. This investment supported furnishing across multiple campus spaces, most notably the College’s café, which was recently fitted out using Saxen’s sustainable furniture solutions.

Saxen’s approach aligns closely with circular-economy principles: they refurbish existing furniture through their “Refurbhub”, restoring all kinds of office furniture, from lounge seating to desking, pods, booths, and storage, at a fraction of the cost of new pieces. This process extends product lifecycles and avoids landfill. Some of the furniture also incorporates eco-friendly materials such as recycled textiles and plastics, helping reduce resource consumption and embodied carbon.

In addition to sourcing from Saxen, the College supports furniture donation. Surplus items from the College are passed on via Saxen to local charities and community organisations, boosting reuse, community benefit and resource circulation.

By adopting Saxen as its “first port of call” for furniture procurement, the College is embedding sustainability into everyday decisions, aligning with its broader institutional commitment to social, environmental and economic responsibility. The result is attractive, functional spaces on campus that symbolise care for people and planet — and a practical demonstration that reuse and circular procurement can deliver value, reduce waste and support local communities.

“Saxen is delighted at Ayrshire College’s support and faith in us, we are incredibly proud of the work we do to bring sustainability into every project we undertake. We look forward to seeing what the future brings and embracing this journey”

Lyndsey McLarney,
Interiors Solutions Manager, Saxen

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029

Nourishing our Community

What began as a simple idea to support student retention has grown into a core expression of the College's commitment to social and economic sustainability. Several years ago, the College introduced free soup and porridge to ensure that no student was learning on an empty stomach. While initially supported by external funding, the success and importance of the initiative led the College to embed it permanently into the College budget, recognising it as an essential part of how the College cares for its community.

Today, the initiative runs across all three campuses and has become important to many learners. The offer is simple, accessible and stigma-free: no questions asked, no eligibility criteria, just a warm, nourishing meal available to everyone. For many students balancing study, work and rising living costs, this small daily support can make a significant difference to energy levels, concentration and overall wellbeing. The scale of the initiative reflects its value. In the 2024–25 academic year, the College provided 13,561 bowls of soup and 5,765 bowls of porridge—more than 19,000 servings of nutritious food made freely available to learners..

The impact reaches beyond individual wellbeing. By embedding the programme into its operating budget, the College is demonstrating leadership in addressing food insecurity, reducing barriers to education and supporting a fairer, more resilient region. What started as a retention measure has become a powerful, practical example of how the College lives its values—nourishing not only learning, but community and opportunity.

"Our priority is to deliver tangible benefits in the regions where we operate and invest. Supporting this initiative for Ayrshire College reflects our commitment to building meaningful local partnerships and create lasting benefits. Students are the emerging workforce of the future – our commitment here starts with a nutritious meal to support learning."

Mark Vyvyan-Robinson

Business Development Director for Highview



Powering Learning Sustainably

The College is proud to be a key beneficiary and partner in the Nethermills Hydro Scheme — an innovative renewable energy project that brings clean, zero-carbon power directly to our Riverside Building in Ayr. Located on a historic stretch of the River Ayr once home to 26 watermills, the project represents a modern revival of local innovation. Developed by Energy Agency Renewables Limited, it blends environmental restoration, heritage and engineering while delivering long-term benefits for the College and wider community.

The scheme centres on a 4-metre Archimedes screw turbine, a fish-friendly, efficient technology with minimal ecological impact. Construction began in 2021 and required careful planning to manage river conditions and install the 25-tonne screw imported from Belgium. The powerhouse was designed to sit sensitively in the landscape, including a sedum roof to boost biodiversity, and more than 30 local businesses contributed to the build, demonstrating strong regional collaboration.

Since becoming operational in February 2022, Nethermills Hydro has generated 977 MWh of renewable electricity for the College, with 750 MWh (76%) used directly onsite and the remainder exported to the grid. This locally produced energy reduces carbon emissions and operational costs, strengthening our commitment to environmental sustainability.

The scheme is also a valuable educational asset. Students created a mural for the powerhouse and are designing an interpretive display, while the site supports technical learning. A fish counter operated by Ayrshire Rivers Trust further contributes data to national research. Nethermills Hydro stands as a clear example of how Ayrshire College supports — and benefits from — innovative, community-embedded renewable energy solutions.

Nethermills Hydro Scheme is a powerful example of what can be achieved when organisations share a commitment to sustainability and innovation. Ayrshire College has been an exceptional partner in helping transform a historic stretch of the River Ayr into a modern source of zero-carbon electricity that directly supports the College's sustainability goals. The Energy Agency is immensely proud of this project, not only for delivering clean, reliable renewable energy, but also by helping to inspire the next generation. Being able to support students with access to a real-world learning resource is particularly rewarding.

Alan McGonigle

Managing Director, Energy Agency





WORKSTREAM OBJECTIVES

Partnerships and Engagement

- **Work with local authorities, businesses, and the community to improve local biodiversity and promote sustainable practices**
- **Participate in the Global Goals Teach-in and establish a climate action network with the local council**
- **Share best practices and collaborate with other colleges and universities to advance sustainability efforts**



Driving Sustainable Growth: The College and the Ayrshire Growth Deal

The Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) is seen as a catalyst for embedding sustainability within the College's operations and strategic direction. As part of the regional economic strategy, the Growth Deal emphasizes clean growth, innovation and inclusive development. These principles align closely with the College's Strategic Ambition (2024–2027). This alignment has influenced several key areas:

Estate and Infrastructure Development

Investment priorities under the Growth Deal will support the modernisation of the College estate, enabling energy-efficient upgrades and the adoption of low-carbon technologies. These improvements should reduce the College's carbon footprint and contribute to Scotland's net-zero targets.

Curriculum and Skills Pipeline

The Growth Deal's focus on sectors such as engineering, aerospace and clean growth has informed curriculum planning. The College now integrates sustainability principles into course design and delivery, ensuring learners acquire skills relevant to a green economy. This approach strengthens the regional workforce and supports long-term environmental goals.

Collaborative Partnerships

Through Growth Deal initiatives, the College has deepened partnerships with local businesses, public agencies and third-sector organisations. These collaborations foster innovation in sustainable practices and create opportunities for joint projects that advance environmental stewardship across Ayrshire.

Governance and Reporting

The College's sustainability reporting framework has evolved to reflect Growth Deal priorities. Annual climate change data submissions, risk assessments and action plans now incorporate regional objectives, ensuring transparency and accountability in delivering sustainable outcomes

The Ayrshire Growth Deal is a catalyst for embedding sustainability at the heart of our College's operations and strategic direction. Its emphasis on clean growth, innovation and inclusive development aligns perfectly with our own strategic ambitions for 2024–2027. This partnership not only accelerates our progress towards a low-carbon future but also ensures that our learners, staff and wider community benefit from a more resilient, forward-thinking institution"

Alan Ritchie
Vice Principal - Finance and Infrastructure, Ayrshire College





Collaborating for People, Place and Sustainability

The College plays an active role in shaping the future of the region through participation in key strategic partnerships that support regeneration and sustainability. As a member of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Regeneration Taskforce, the College works alongside local authorities, community representatives and regeneration specialists to support the delivery of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Master Plan.

Regular Taskforce meetings bring together all partners and the Master Planning team to coordinate activity, share progress and ensure that regeneration efforts are aligned, collaborative and responsive to local needs.

Through this involvement, the College contributes its expertise in skills development, education and community engagement, helping ensure that regeneration supports inclusive growth and long-term resilience.

The College's presence within the Taskforce strengthens connections between education, employability and place-based development, reinforcing the role of the town centre as a vibrant hub for learning, work and community life.



South Ayrshire Council Sustainability Strategic Delivery Partnership

The South Ayrshire Sustainability Strategic Delivery Partnership (SDP) brings together the Council, community planning partners, and local organisations to coordinate action on sustainability across South Ayrshire. Ayrshire College is an active member of this partnership, bringing valuable expertise in education, skills development, and community engagement.

Working across the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) priorities, the partnership focuses on turning shared ambitions into practical delivery. As part of this, Ayrshire College contributes by supporting skills for the green economy, embedding sustainability within curriculum and campus operations, and offering opportunities for collaboration on research, innovation, and community projects.

By collaborating with community planning partners, the partnership supports adaptation to a changing climate and promotes a just transition to net zero, ensuring environmental action contributes to improved and inclusive outcomes for local communities now and in the future.

"Ayrshire College plays a valuable role in our South Ayrshire Sustainability Strategic Delivery Partnership. By working together as partners through the SDP we are better able to collaborate to respond to the climate and nature emergencies, ensuring through our actions that local people and communities thrive on the path to a more resilient low carbon future. The Community Planning approach allows us to better work together, learning together and weaving our response across all our activities and services, supporting each other and our communities."

Lorna Jarvie
SDP Chair, South Ayrshire Council.



GOVERNANCE



Measures and Accountability

Objective:

To create momentum and ensure alignment on what happens next.

Commitment:

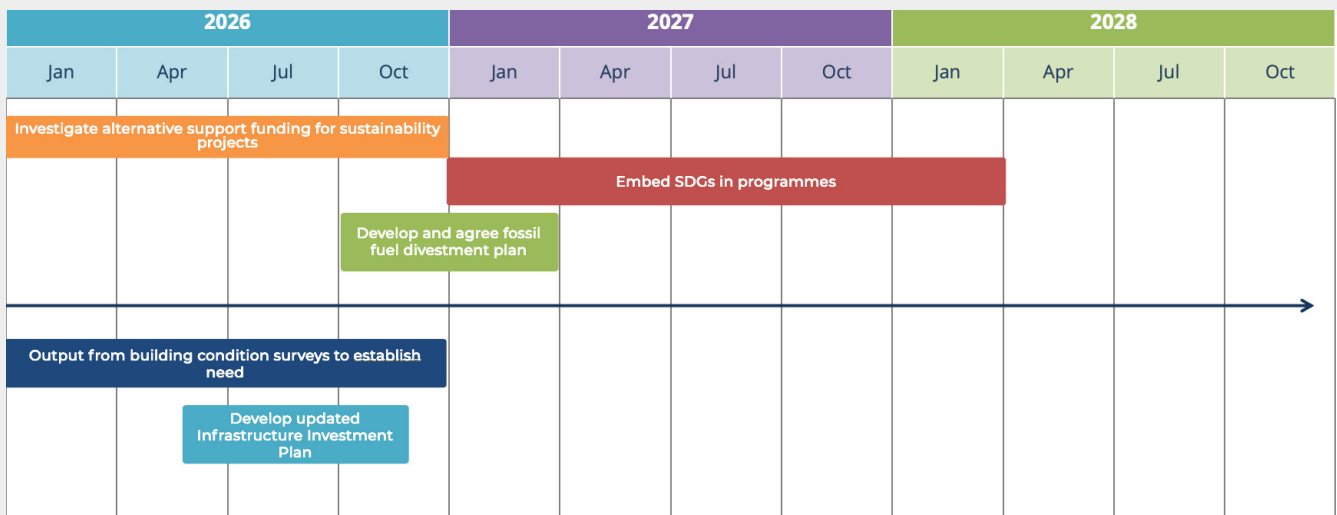
To keep ourselves accountable, and to weave sustainability into College governance by:

- Developing and implementing a format for reporting on sustainability, including a sustainability dashboard
- Publishing annual sustainability reporting, including the annual Public Sector Climate Change duties data, to track progress and maintain transparency with stakeholders
- Signing the SDG Accord and submit required evidence
- Developing KPIs across the College to reflect our commitment to sustainability and reviewing climate change risk mitigations and controls to ensure relevancy and that they are up-to-date
- Further embedding and enhancing the role of the SEES Group in College decision-making
- We are accountable to College Board of Management through People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2026-2029

Roadmap 2026-2029

Strategic Target	SDG Alignment	Deliverables
Sustainability Leadership	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; Affordable and Clean Energy; Partnership for the Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed SEES Group Develop and agree fossil fuel divestment plan Participation in sector reporting Development of specific sustainability KPIs as part of Facilities Dashboard
Sustainability Education	Partnership for the Goals; Climate Action; Affordable and Clean Energy; Quality Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed SDGs in programmes Develop and deliver carbon literacy training for staff and students
Carbon Management	Climate Action; Affordable and Clean Energy;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and create costed project proposals for energy-efficient upgrades Identify and use clean energy sources
Sustainable Infrastructure and Space Management	Sustainable Cities and Communities; Responsible Consumption and Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Space Management Policy Use output from building condition surveys to establish baseline and need Develop updated Infrastructure Investment Plan



Anchor Institution



We are an anchor institution in Ayrshire, and we support over **800 jobs** in the region



Re
Our
inc
bet

Electricity

Our electricity usage has **decreased by 4%** between 2023/24 and 24/25



Gas

Our gas usage has **decreased by 15%** between 2023/24 and 24/25



We gave out over 19,000 free bowls of soup and porridge to our students in 2024/25



We are a proud Living Wage employer



Automated Meter Readings

We are investing in our water infrastructure, and now have Automated Meter Readers (AMRs) on all 3 sites.

£10.9m

We awarded over £10.9m in student grants in 24-25 supporting over 3000 students.

Recycling Rates

Our on-site waste recycling rate increased by almost 10% between 2023/24 and 24/25



We are a Disability Confident employer

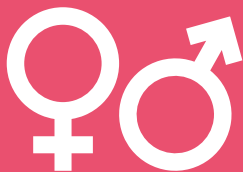
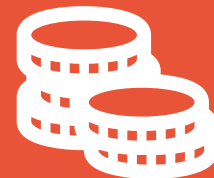


18 Teams

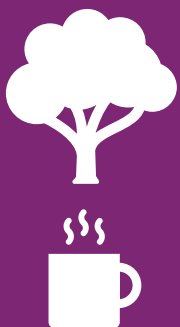
competed in our charity football tournament to promote mental health

Cost of Living

We supported almost **1900 students** with additional payments during the cost of living crisis in 2024-25



We have achieved a 50:50 gender balance on our Senior Leadership Team



378 Trees

With our catering partners, Coffee Conscience, we planted 378 trees in 2024/25

Our use of biomass, a clean energy source, has **increased by 26%** between 2023/24 and 24/25

Ayr Campus

Dam Park
Ayr
KA8 0EU

Kilmarnock Campus

Hill Street
Kilmarnock
KA1 3HY

Kilwinning Campus

Lauchlan Way
Kilwinning
KA13 6DE



Empowering People for a Changing World

Title of Meeting: Board of Management

Date: 26 March 2026

Title: **Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register**

Purpose: The paper presents to the Board:

- a) An update of the strategic risks and opportunities faced by the College following a review by the College Leadership Team.
- b) The Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register for review and approval.

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

- a) Consider the proposed amendments to the strategic risk faced by the College.
- b) Consider the presentation of strategic opportunities in the future.
- c) Approve the Strategic Risk Register for presentation to the Board of Management.

1. Executive Summary

1.1. This paper provides an update on the College's strategic risks and emerging opportunities, following a comprehensive review by the College Leadership Team and the Board Committees. The register now includes both risks and opportunities, reflecting a broader scope for future work.

1.2. Key changes since December 2025 include:

- Risk Scores
 - All risk scores remain unchanged. There was consideration of increasing the Job Evaluation score due to ongoing delays in the national scheme. This was not considered to be an increased risk to the achievement of the College's strategic objectives, and the score was left unchanged.
 - The new AI Framework risk is now fully scored and described.

- Mitigating Actions
 - Expanded details, especially for curriculum, climate and AI risks. Controls and actions have been updated across all areas.
 - Opportunities
 - The presentation of the identified ten strategic opportunities has been improved.
- 1.3. Overall, the February 2026 register is seen as more comprehensive, with clearer assignment of responsibilities and timelines and a greater emphasis on strategic planning and resilience.
- 1.4. Following discussion with the Audit and Risk Committee, the College will look to implement a programme of strategic risk controls reviews to be undertaken by the College's internal auditors. This programme is designed to provide the Audit and Risk Committee, and ultimately the Board, with assurance that the stated controls in relation to the top 5 risks are operating as intended, and to identify any further controls that the College could implement to mitigate the risks.

2. Associated Risks

- 2.1. There are no further risks to consider outside of the content of this paper.

3. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

- 3.1. The content of this paper does not require an EDIA to be undertaken.

4. Publication

- 4.1. This paper will be published on the College website.

Alan Ritchie
Vice Principal, Finance and Infrastructure
26 March 2026

1. Background

- 1.1. The Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2. The College Leadership Team have reviewed and updated the risk register, including the controls and mitigating actions. There is also a section in this report that summarises the identified opportunities.
- 1.3. This report outlines the key changes from the October 2025 register in scoring or movement for existing risks.

2. Strategic Risk

- 2.1. Following the review by the College Leadership Team, the following amendments were made to the Register:

2.2. Financial Sustainability

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 25.
- **Review Note:** Overall consensus that this risk still represents the highest strategic risk faced by the College. No member of the review team suggested any changes to the risk content.
- **Mitigating Actions:** To note that the accounting issue of RDEL/CDEL is not yet resolved and has been classified as amber.

2.3. Job Evaluation

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 20.
- **Review Note:** The issue of an increased number of freedom of information requests was noted as part of the review.
- **Mitigating Actions:** All mitigating actions are on course for completion.

2.4. Data Security (Cyber-Attack)

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 16.
- **Review Note:** A consistent theme of the reviewers was “when rather than if” and of the likely material impact on the College operations. However, several actions have been taken or are scheduled, which will continue to mitigate the risk. A paper will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee to provide an update on the nature of these actions.

- **Mitigating Actions:** The College has completed a draft Cyber Incident Response Plan, with training and scenario testing having been completed. The Plan will be subject to an internal audit in April to assess its effectiveness. Work is underway to review and assess the Managed Security and Operations Centre services, with a report due by the end of the academic year.

2.5. Climate Change

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 12.
- **Review Note:** One group noted the suggestion to reprofile the risk as sustainability, which the SLT will consider at the next review. The College now has a Sustainability Framework that aims to address the wider sustainability challenge it faces.
- **Mitigating Actions:** Several actions have now been completed with the publication of the Sustainability Framework. Sustainability dashboard and KPIs are under consideration and will be presented at the next PIFCo meeting. The College has recently employed an Enterprise Data Analyst who will look to bring a corporate look and feel to future dashboards.

2.6. Curriculum Offer

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 12.
- **Review Note:** There was a consensus that the risk level was correct; however, it was noted that the ongoing review of SFC funding, consolidation of SDS into SFC and lack of flexibility in course delivery all present future challenges to mitigating this risk. Potential for student disengagement needs to be recognised if the College does not amend its delivery portfolio. Suggestion to move the risk impact to 4 from 3.
- **Mitigating Actions:** The College has completed a couple of actions in relation to planning and costing for the coming year. The College continues to review its data requirements and to consider employing an Enterprise Data Analyst to accelerate data gathering and presentation.

2.7. Recruitment and Retention of Staff

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 12.
- **Review Note:** There was consideration that the effects might not be the same across all areas of the College, with some areas likely to be impacted more severely, i.e. specialist skill teaching areas.
- **Mitigating Actions:** No significant changes, but dates and ongoing actions are updated.

2.8. AI Framework

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 12.
- **Review Notes:** There was a feeling that the College is still at the early stages of understanding the full impact of AI across all areas of the organisation. It was noted that there is a sub-group of the DT&GG specifically looking at AI and its implications. This group will report in due course. This reflected several comments that we don't know enough information to make informed decisions at this point. Potential for the College to be left behind if it cannot adopt appropriate AI technology. Again, this was reflected across several groups: resources need to be allocated to develop a meaningful framework.
- **Mitigating Actions:** The update from the DT&GG will inform the development of an AI Framework, with future discussions at SLT likely to be requested to assign resources to investigate the opportunities presented by AI.

2.9. People and Culture

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 9.
- **Review Note:** Limited comments made in relation to this risk, with an overarching view that the College, based on survey data, is heading in the correct direction.
- **Mitigating Actions:** No issues to report.

2.10. Investing in College Infrastructure

- **Risk Description:** Remains unchanged.
- **Residual Risk Score:** Remains at 9.
- **Mitigating Actions:** No issues to report.

3. Emerging Risks

- 3.1. The College Leadership Team also considered the emerging risk list in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.2. The review group thought that the Top 10 sector-wide risks facing UK colleges strongly align with several of the major risks identified in the College's February 2026 Strategic Risk Register, particularly around financial sustainability, cybersecurity, and curriculum alignment with evolving skills needs. Both sector reports and the College's register position financial instability as the most material threat, driven by pressures on public funding, inflation, and limited ability to generate alternative income. Cybersecurity also features prominently in both, with the College recognising heightened exposure due to increased virtual working and sector-wide targeting.

- 3.3. Where risks differ, most are in the College's workforce pressures and operational challenges. Sector reports highlight national shortages in key teaching areas, whereas the College's top people-related risk centres on the national job evaluation project, emphasising risks around industrial relations, equal pay claims, and destabilisation of pay and grading structures. Similarly, the sector commonly lists estate pressures, rising operational costs, and regulatory volatility as standalone risks, but the College consolidates these into its overarching financial risk rather than treating them as separate categories.
- 3.4. The review group highlight student mental health with escalating levels of crises, suicide attempts across the country and cost-of-living pressures, all contributing to the increasing mental health crisis. It was acknowledged that the College's risk in this area is likely absorbed within safeguarding/public protection; hence, it is not explicitly emphasised. The Senior Leadership Team will consider this potential risk at its next review.

4. Strategic Opportunities

- 4.1. Based on a review by the College Leadership Team and taking account of the latest strategic documents, partnerships and regional development plans, the College has developed the Opportunity Register included in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2. The register has been developed to highlight strategic fit, financial return and risk level for each of the opportunities. It is still being developed, and any feedback from the Committee is welcome.

(Paper 8(1))



STRATEGIC RISK AND OPPORTUNITIES REGISTER

Ayrshire College - Summary Strategic Risk Register

Risk Number	Original Reference Number	Reference Number	Oversight Committee	Name	Risk Description	Risk Owned and Managed by	Inherent Risk Score	Previous Residual Risk Score	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Movement	Risk Appetite	Status
1	BRIC02	SR001	BRIC	Financial Sustainability	There is a risk of the College becoming financially unsustainable because of the uncertainty surrounding SFC core grant, accounting for SFC estate maintenance funding, other external funding sources, the level of inflation and an inability to generate alternative income resulting in the College being unable to achieve its Strategic Ambition 2024-2027 and constraints being placed on its operating model.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	20	25	5	5	25	↔	Minimal	Mitigating actions to be taken
2	BRIC07	SR003	BRIC	Job Evaluation	There is a risk that the College would receive equal pay claims because of significant and ongoing delays on the national job evaluation project with no clear plan or timescales and no tangible outcomes available to date. There is also a risk that local employee relations would deteriorate, causing general staff dissatisfaction amongst Professional Services staff. Resulting in: (i) industrial action (ii) a destabilisation of the College's current pay and grading structures, (iii) the potential for financial impacts arising from equal pay claims, (iv) the College required to absorb the management, risk and delivery of a local job evaluation project out with the scope of the national project (v) disputes lodged against the College arising from pursuing a local process (vi) reputational damage to the College.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	20	20	4	5	20	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken
3	BRIC03	SR002	BRIC	Data Security	There is a risk of College systems and processes being the victim of a cyber-attack because of increased virtual working and deliberate targeting of the education sector resulting in the loss of key data, financial loss, students being unable to successfully progress on their learning journey and significant reputational damage.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	20	16	4	4	16	↔	Minimal	Mitigating actions to be taken
4	BRIC05	SR004	LTQC BRIC	Climate Change	There is a risk that the College will not achieve its climate change targets because of lack of internal capacity, access to wider government funding or a lack of sectoral strategic focus resulting in the College not being able to meet its environmental responsibilities.	Principal	20	12	3	4	12	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken
5	LTQ02	SR005	LTQC BRIC	Curriculum Offer	There is a risk of curriculum activity not being linked to current and future skills requirements or social and economic recovery needs and issues because of reduced engagement / communication, insufficient planning, impact of changes to HE institutions admission policy and real term reduction in SFC funding resulting in the College failing to deliver a portfolio that is relevant, flexible and responsive to employer and industry needs.	Vice Principal Skills and Enterprise	20	12	4	3	12	↔	Open	Mitigating actions to be taken

Risk Number	Original Reference Number	Reference Number	Oversight Committee	Name	Risk Description	Risk Owned and Managed by	Inherent Risk Score	Previous Residual Risk Score	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Movement	Risk Appetite	Status
6	BOM04	SR006	LTQC BRIC	Recruitment and Retention of Staff	There is a risk of the College not being able to recruit / retain qualified and experienced staff to 'difficult to recruit to' roles: because of the limitations of national bargaining, specifically the inability to offer competitive salaries, resulting in gaps in the delivery of some College services.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	16	12	3	4	12	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken
7			BRIC	AI Framework	There is a risk that without a clearly defined AI Framework, using a common language, that the investment, development or application of AI solutions fails to deliver the anticipated benefits because of a knowledge gap and a misalignment to the College strategic objectives resulting in the various parties involved in AI governance, implementation and management will have misunderstandings, resulting in ineffective decision making and risk management.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	16	12	4	3	12	↔	Open	Mitigating actions to be taken
8	LTQ01	SR007	LTQC BRIC	People and Culture	Organisational review activity to address the financial sustainability challenges would lead to a deterioration in positive local employee relations and culture across the College: resulting in an increase in staff dissatisfaction which will impact negatively on staff moral and wellbeing and a reduction in engagement by staff to the detriment of the College students.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	16	9	3	3	9	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken
9	BOM1	SR008	BRIC	Investing in College Infrastructure	There is a risk that the College is unable to deliver on the objectives set in the College Infrastructure Strategy because of SFC capital funding allocations and capital funding restrictions resulting in the failure to develop and maintain an inspirational college experience through an integrated and high-quality infrastructure.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	15	9	3	3	9	↔	Open	Mitigating actions to be taken

Ayrshire College - Strategic Risk Register

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(e)	(e)	(e)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(i)	(i)		
Risk Number	Unique Reference Number	Name	Risk Description	Risk Owned and Managed by	Inherent Risk Score	Previous Residual Risk Score	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Movement	Risk Appetite	Status	Controls	Mitigating Actions	Deliverable By	Deliverable Date
1	BRIC02	Financial Sustainability	There is a risk of the College becoming financially unsustainable because of the uncertainty surrounding SFC core grant, accounting for SFC estate maintenance funding, other external funding sources, the level of inflation and an inability to generate alternative income resulting in the College being unable to achieve its Strategic Ambition 2024-2027 and constraints being placed on its operating model.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	20	25	5	5	25	↔	Minimal	Mitigating actions to be taken	<p>Strong financial governance by the Board of Management and it's Committees. Members receive and discuss detailed financial information and provide oversight, scrutiny and challenge to support the Senior Leadership Team.</p> <p>Annual external audit report concludes that the College has effective financial controls and internal systems in place, with no significant weaknesses identified. The College's arrangements for fraud prevention and detection are appropriate and recommendations for improvement are minor and focused on enhancing efficiency and reducing manual errors.</p> <p>Strong financial planning systems and robust processes in place including detailed monitoring and control procedures for assessing income levels and forecasting of expenditure against budget. Budget holders are fully involved and engaged, and the College has a mature and well-developed culture of financial accountability.</p> <p>Annual completion and updating of SFC's Mid Year Return and Financial Forecast Return requiring colleges to prepare financial projections for the next three years. The College is aware of the financial challenges faced in the coming years and maintains a separate financial risk register as part of the Management Accounts.</p> <p>Internal audit reviews different aspects of the College's financial control environment as part of the annual audit plan. (i) Payroll (Nov 2024) - strong assurance with 1 low-grade recommendation (ii) Overall Financial Controls (April 2025) - strong assurance with no recommendations (iii) Financial Regulations and Compliance (Feb 2026) - strong assurance with no recommendations (iv) Non-SFC Income (Feb 2026) - strong assurance with no recommendations.</p> <p>The College maintains an open dialogue with the SFC in regard to the College financial challenges and also through the CDN Finance and Vice Principals networks. The College has written to and met with the SFC to indicate that the current levels of uncertainty are now placing significant planning constraints on the College.</p> <p>The College continues to work with Colleges Scotland to lobby the SFC and the Scottish Government on the future sector financial position through a new or revised funding model.</p>	<p>The College continues to engage with the SFC / external auditors to discuss the College's future financial position and the use of CDEL/RDEL funding. Current discussions whilst initially hopeful of a CDEL/RDEL resolution have floundered when Audit Scotland became involved. The possibility of a qualification on the 2026-27 accounts remains.</p> <p>The Board reviewed and approved the 2025-26 Budget in June 2025. The College will continue to monitor and review its financial position. BRIC are receiving quarterly reports on the financial position against the 2025-26 budget including delivery risks.</p> <p>The College has developed a Financial Sustainability Action Plan which outlines a comprehensive set of actions across six key areas to ensure the College's long-term financial health. The plan will be monitored by the Chairs Committee along with the Board of Management. Regular updates will be provided and the 2025-26 forecast amended as necessary.</p> <p>SFC 2025 Financial Forecast Return has been submitted and is currently subject to review by the SFC. The College has met with the SFC to discuss the likely 2025-26 position and the longer term financial position of the College. No financial support is being offered to the College and it is expected to deal with the financial challenges it faces from its own resources. The College will continue to pursue support and improved funding through improved use of the data available to it.</p> <p>Management Accounts to be provided to ELT and SLT monthly during 2025-26 prior to presentation to PIFCo and Board for consideration. Mgt accounts will highlight KPIs, risks to budget delivery, and the cash position.</p> <p>The College is investing in a new finance system which will further develop the online real time financial information made available to all budget holders.</p>	<p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Chief Financial Controller</p>	<p>Jan-26</p> <p>Jul-26</p> <p>Jul-26</p> <p>Jul-26</p> <p>Jul-26</p> <p>Apr-26</p>

Risk Number	Unique Reference Number	Name	Risk Description	Risk Owned and Managed by	Inherent Risk Score	Previous Residual Risk Score	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Movement	Risk Appetite	Status	Controls	Mitigating Actions	Deliverable By	Deliverable Date
														Discussions are ongoing with all teams regarding delivery of additional commercial income.	Director of Enterprise Development	Jul-26
2	BRIC07	Job Evaluation	<p>There is a risk that the College would receive equal pay claims because of significant and ongoing delays on the national job evaluation project with no clear plan or timescales and no tangible outcomes available to date.</p> <p>There is also a risk that local employee relations would deteriorate, causing general staff dissatisfaction amongst Professional Services staff.</p> <p>Resulting in: (i) industrial action (ii) a destabilisation of the College's current pay and grading structures, (iii) the potential for financial impacts arising from equal pay claims, (iv) the College required to absorb the management, risk and delivery of a local job evaluation project out with the scope of the national project (v) disputes lodged against the College arising from pursuing a local process (vi) reputational damage to the College.</p>	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	20	20	4	5	20	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken	<p>Through College Employers Scotland (CES), the College contributes to the decision-making process in relation to the ongoing development of the national job evaluation project. The Vice Principal, People, Performance and Transformation, and the Strategic People Partner are members of the Strategic HR Group.</p> <p>The College actively supports the national job evaluation project, which is supported through CES governance arrangements.</p> <p>The College updates Professional Services staff as appropriate on the progress of the job evaluation project.</p> <p>The College has positive engagement with the full-time officers of Unison FE Branch through participation in the LJNCC.</p> <p>The integrity of the current Professional Services staff pay and grading structure is maintained through benchmarking to safeguard against future equal pay grievances.</p> <p>The College maintains a register of new job roles or roles which have evolved since September 2018. Combined with existing records will allow the College to assess likely cost of a job evaluation scheme delivered nationally or locally.</p>	<p>Key partners and stakeholders continue to be kept up to date with the ongoing developments.</p> <p>The College's financial position (and risk score) will be reviewed and revised following any settlement of the nationally agreed pay award and as part of the College's 2025-26 budget review process. Until the job evaluation process is agreed this risk score will continue to remain out with the Board's risk appetite.</p> <p>The College will continue to seek involvement in discussions with SFC and Scottish Government in relation to future support towards the implementation of future job evaluation schemes.</p> <p>The College is looking to undertake a high level job evaluation scoring and pay modelling exercise to establish the overall exposure to potential equal pay claims. As the national process runs on without an end in sight the exposure faced by the College to equal pay claims increases.</p>	<p>Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation</p> <p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure</p> <p>Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation</p>	<p>26-Jul</p> <p>26-Jul</p> <p>26-Jul</p> <p>26-Jul</p>

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3	BRIC05	Data Security	There is a risk of College systems and processes being the victim of a cyber-attack because of increased virtual working and deliberate targeting of the education sector resulting in the loss of key data, financial loss, students being unable to successfully progress on their learning journey and significant reputational damage.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	20	16	4	4	16	↔	Minimal	Mitigating actions to be taken	<p>Robust system security, including restricted access to hardware, secure passwords (16 characters in line with industry best practice) and restrictions on system and hardware permissions to safeguard college data. Regular data backup and safe custody. The College has implemented Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for staff and students to improve the security and control of College ICT systems.</p> <p>Experienced Digital Team in place with the required key skills, which are supplemented by specialist maintenance contracts or consultants when required. The Infrastructure Team regularly monitors the servers supporting key data sources to ensure that they are appropriate for the information held.</p> <p>The College has engaged a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). The CISO was secured through a shared service role across the college and university sectors. The CISO shared service enables the College to access experienced and dedicated staff who work across the sector and who can utilise their knowledge and experiences from other organisations. This means the College benefits from cross-institutional learning and best practices, and is not reliant on a single individual.</p> <p>Regular reports on the work of the College's IT Team are presented to SLT. These reports provide information on the key activities undertaken by the Team for the period under consideration and outline the key tasks due to be undertaken in the coming quarter.</p> <p>Finance and HR staff receive regular guidance on cybersecurity risks and threats.</p> <p>A review of the IT team's structure has been undertaken to ensure sufficient and effective cybersecurity knowledge and resources are available to keep College systems secure. A revised structure, including the appointment of a Cloud and Security Manager, has been concluded and is operating as intended.</p> <p>The College has positively engaged with the recommendations made by both external and internal auditors following audit assignments. All recommendations have been addressed.</p> <p>The College has implemented a Managed Security Operations Centre (SOC) through a partner to provide 24/7 monitoring and containment services. This service is tasked with stopping any activity that raises a concern and contacting the Director of Digital Infrastructure. It currently monitors the college's cloud, local network, including firewalls and devices.</p>	<p>Training on data security to be provided to all staff on a regular basis including simulated phishing attacks.</p> <p>Completion of Cyber Incident Response Plan including development of incident playbooks and system criticality prioritisation.</p> <p>To undertake internal audit of Cyber Incident Response Plan along with carrying out desk top exercise to test the plan.</p> <p>To review impact and operating practices in relation to managed SOC service.</p>	Director of Digital Infrastructure	Director of Digital Infrastructure	Director of Digital Infrastructure	Director of Digital Infrastructure	Jul-26	Jan-26	Apr-26	Jan-26

Risk Number	Unique Reference Number	Name	Risk Description	Risk Owned and Managed by	Inherent Risk Score	Previous Residual Risk Score	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Movement	Risk Appetite	Status	Controls	Mitigating Actions	Deliverable By	Deliverable Date
4	BOM04	Climate Change	There is a risk that the College will not achieve its climate change targets because of lack of internal capacity, access to wider government funding or a lack of sectoral strategic focus resulting in the College not being able to meet its environmental responsibilities.	Principal	20	12	3	4	12	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken				
													<p>The College has updated its Sustainability Framework, and this was approved by the Senior Leadership Team in February 2026. It will now be presented to PIFCo and then the Board for approval. The Framework recognises the College's work to address the United Nations' sustainability goals.</p> <p>The College's Social, Economic, Environmental and Sustainability Group has now been established and fully embedded, providing a strong platform to address the College's climate challenges. The remit and composition of the underpinning governance model are now in place and operating effectively. As part of the Group's work, actions have been identified and are being delivered in line with the Further Education Climate Change Roadmap.</p> <p>The College monitors its sustainability impact through its energy management and IoT systems, which enable regular monitoring of energy use and performance. In addition, the College completes and submits the annual Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) return. An update report is provided to PIFCo regularly as part of the Facilities Update.</p> <p>The College will look to build upon the sustainability initiatives already in place (the hydro scheme in the River Ayr, solar panels across its campuses and a biomass boiler in the Kilmarnock campus.) The funding of these initiatives is a critical factor and it is hoped that the soon to be published SFC Infrastructure Strategy will assist in this process.</p> <p>The College has an established Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in place, which is regularly reviewed. The plan supports the management of climate-related risks by ensuring the College can maintain critical operations and services during periods of disruption arising from extreme weather events, energy supply issues, or other environmental impacts. This enhances the College's overall resilience and contributes to the achievement of its sustainability and climate change objectives.</p> <p>The College raises awareness of sustainability among staff and students through communications, training, and engagement activities, embedding sustainability principles within the curriculum and wider College culture to promote environmental responsibility and support progress toward climate targets.</p> <p>The College regularly reviews and realigns its sustainability timelines and initiatives to ensure consistency with local authority priorities, regulatory guidance, and sectoral best practice, supporting compliance and effective delivery of climate targets.</p>			
													The College will strengthen governance and oversight by maintaining the SEES Group , which has a clear remit, defined responsibilities, and established reporting lines to the senior management team and the Board.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jul-26	
													The College requires to refresh its Sustainability Framework in line with the College Climate Change Road Map. It is anticipated that this will be taken forward by a sub group of the overarching SEES Group.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Dec-25	
													College to submit annual public sector climate change report by end of November 2025	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Nov-25	
													The College will develop reporting to both Board and wider staff on the impact that the College has on the environment.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jan-26	
													College to engage with external partners to identify potential opportunities to improve the overall sustainability of the College.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jul-26	
													The College will engage staff and students through awareness campaigns, training, and communications that embed sustainability principles within the curriculum and College culture, while actively promoting participation in initiatives to encourage behaviour change and progress toward environmental targets.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	26-Jun	
													The College will actively identify and apply for government, SFC, and other external funding streams to support energy efficiency, decarbonisation, and wider sustainability projects.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	26-Jul	
													The College will maintain and regularly review the Business Continuity Plan to ensure that critical services and operations can continue effectively during climate-related or environmental disruptions.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	26-Jun	

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5	LTO01	Curriculum Offer	There is a risk of curriculum activity not being linked to current and future skills requirements or social and economic recovery needs and issues because of reduced engagement / communication, insufficient planning, impact of changes to HE institutions admission policy and real term reduction in SFC funding resulting in the College failing to deliver a portfolio that is relevant, flexible and responsive to employer and industry needs.	Vice Principal Skills and Enterprise	20	12	4	3	12	↔	Open	Mitigating actions to be taken				
													<p>Strategic Curriculum Planning. Annual, evidence-based review aligning curriculum to LMI, economic growth plans, and national skills priorities. The CDP process takes account of past and projected trends including changing demographics, skills demand, increased retention by schools of senior phases pupils and student choice.</p> <p>Regional Skills Intelligence. Ongoing development of the Ayrshire Regional Skills Insight Report informed by SDS, Regional and National Strategies, Local Authorities, and industry data.</p> <p>Employer Engagement Strategy. Development of Employer and Industry Advisory Boards to ensure active employer advisory structures across curriculum areas with knowledge exchange and regular feedback mechanisms to inform the skills and training offer.</p> <p>Curriculum Governance. Regular Board/SLT reporting on curriculum relevance, skills alignment metrics, and employer engagement performance.</p> <p>Partnership Working. Strategic collaboration with HEIs, Local Authorities, and Skills and Enterprise agencies via the Ayrshire Skills Group to align provision and respond to HE policy shifts.</p> <p>Financial Scenario Planning. Integration of curriculum cost and income modelling to anticipate SFC funding and recruitment impacts.</p> <p>Marketing and Communication. Integrated Marketing and Curriculum Planning to ensure promotion aligns with regional skills priorities and future workforce needs with campaigns designed around key growth sectors. Internal Communication Alignment- structured communication channels between Marketing, Curriculum Heads, and Employer Engagement teams to ensure consistent messaging and awareness of new or changing provision. Website reflecting College Brand and positioning as a Skills Led Region and Partner of Choice.</p>			
													The College will review and update the 2026-27 portfolio offering.	Vice Principal Skills and Enterprise	Jan-26	
													The College will review its pricing strategies for both tuition fees and alternative income to ensure income streams are maximised and attractive to potential students	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jan-26	
													As part of the College Employer Engagement Strategy a Stakeholder Engagement Plan to be undertaken to ensure training needs of the Regional workforce are being met	Director Enterprise Development	Jul-26	
													The College will continue to review the adoption of new technologies and pedagogies to enhance learning and teaching to ensure delivery is relevant, agile and flexible.	Assistant Principal Student Experience and Quality Enhancement	Jul-26	
													Improved use of data to review applicant conversion, student feedback and destination trends in student recruitment.	Assistant Principal Skills and Innovation	Jan-26	
													Staff briefings on curriculum strategy and skills priorities to maintain internal alignment.	Vice Principal Skills and Enterprise	Jul-26	
													Establishment of an Ayrshire College Skills and External Partnership Group	Director Enterprise Development	Jul-26	
													Establishment of an Ayrshire College Skills and External Partnership Group	Director Enterprise Development	Jul-26	

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6	BOM1	Recruitment and Retention of Staff	There is a risk of the College not being able to recruit / retain qualified and experienced staff to 'difficult to recruit to' roles: because of the limitations of national bargaining, specifically the inability to offer competitive salaries, resulting in gaps in the delivery of some College services.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	16	12	3	4	12	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken				
													<p>The College is a signatory to the revised NRPA, which is the mechanism for negotiating salaries for lecturers and support staff across the Sector.</p> <p>The College has established a Staff Voice Group to help inform our future strategic decision-making.</p> <p>The College has robust arrangements in place to support recruitment and selection, including an interactive, online process. Job descriptions and person specifications are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure roles remain current and attractive to prospective applicants.</p> <p>College vacancies are promoted and advertised across a range of media and networks. Support from external agencies is sourced, as necessary and appropriate, in accordance with APUC processes.</p> <p>CPD and staff development programmes are delivered on an ongoing basis to equip staff with current and future skills.</p> <p>Members of the College's executive team are involved in the national bargaining process involving college employers and the trade unions. The College contributes to negotiating strategies through the College Employers Association (CES).</p> <p>The number of applications received for advertised posts is monitored to ensure that vacancies are attracting a suitable level and quality of applicants. The College shares vacancies with external partners to ensure broad circulation.</p> <p>Detailed social media campaigns are developed for posts which are identified as difficult to recruit. The College works with advertising agencies to promote vacancies across suitable networks.</p> <p>A College transformation project has been established to consider current and future workforce skills requirements and deliver the necessary CPD programmes.</p> <p>The College continues to build on its recent iIP Gold and iIP Wellbeing successes through addressing the areas where further improvements can be made.</p> <p>The College continues to promote the range of benefits and terms and conditions available to staff.</p>			
													The Senior Leadership Team continues to explore innovative approaches to secure the necessary talent to sustain the delivery of learning and teaching and professional services.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	26-Jul	
													The College is exploring staff benefits to support retention and recruitment.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	26-Jul	

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7	BRIC10	AI Framework	<p>There is a risk that without a clearly defined AI Framework, using a common language, that the investment, development or application of AI solutions fails to deliver the anticipated benefits</p> <p>because of a knowledge gap and a misalignment to the College strategic objectives</p> <p>resulting in the various parties involved in AI governance, implementation and management will have misunderstandings, resulting in ineffective decision making and risk management.</p>	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	16	12	4	3	12	↔	Open	Mitigating actions to be taken	<p>The College has established a Digital Governance and Transformation Group which is chaired by the Director of Digital Infrastructure. The DGTG has a sub group which will review the potential impacts and opportunities presented by AI. The review will include defining College roles and responsibilities for AI oversight.</p> <p>The College has a history of alignment with relevant laws and regulatory compliance through conducting regular legal reviews and impact assessments.</p> <p>The Risk Management Policy and Procedure is now well developed allowing the College to identify any emerging AI risks and assess their impacts. Consideration will be given to the development of specific AI risk register if it is felt to be appropriate and proportionate.</p> <p>Procurement practices in the College are considered to be robust which will allow the College to vet AI vendors and partners for compliance with College standards. Consideration to be given to including AI-specific clauses in contracts and SLAs.</p> <p>Students are being taught about ethical use of AI via LRC workshops.</p> <p>Lecturers are using AI via TeacherMatic to develop online learning content. This both demonstrates the efficiencies that can be achieved but in parallel also digitally upskilling them in a more restricted environment so as to reduce the risk of any data breaches and become more familiar with what AI and what it can do.</p>	<p>The College will develop a clear AI framework that is aligned with the College strategic ambition and includes use cases, risk appetite, investment plans and success metrics.</p> <p>The College will create a Policy for AI development, procurement, deployment and monitoring to include ethical guidelines, fairness, transparency and accountability.</p> <p>Training and awareness raising sessions will be provided leadership and staff on AI risks, ethics, and governance. The College will look to promote a culture of responsible AI use.</p> <p>The College will continue to monitor and respond to any incident involving AI. On going monitoring will look for any impacts in performance and data anomalies.</p> <p>The College will ensure high-quality, representative and secure data governance through the development of a data management framework which will apply data minimization and anonymization where appropriate.</p> <p>"The need for DGTG and the AI sub group to set guidelines for both creative and organisational / business process use of AI. The importance of staff guidelines that encourage creative exploration while reinforcing boundaries (e.g., no student personal data in AI tools, no automated scoring).</p> <p>Encouraging AI use for lesson planning, content creation, and resource development, with best practice sharing. The need for coordinated, carefully selected AI transformation projects to improve AI maturity and ROI."</p>	Director of Digital Infrastructure	Jan-26
														Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jan-26	
														Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	Jul-26	
														Director of Digital Infrastructure	Jul-26	
														Director of Digital Infrastructure	Jan-27	
														Director of Digital Infrastructure	Jul-26	

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8	LTQ02	People and Culture	Organisational review activity to address the financial sustainability challenges would lead to a deterioration in positive local employee relations and culture across the College: resulting in an increase in staff dissatisfaction which will impact negatively on staff moral and wellbeing and a reduction in engagement by staff to the detriment of the College students.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	16	9	3	3	9	↔	Cautious	Mitigating actions to be taken				
													<p>Staff, stakeholders, and partners are regularly updated on key College issues, including separate events with community partners and local employers.</p> <p>The College is a signatory to the revised NRPA, participates fully in CES meetings, and supports the national negotiating machinery. The College meets regularly with EIS-FELA and Unison to maintain positive local employee relations. Regular communication with staff takes place using a range of methods, e.g., staff open forums, newsletters, and all-staff updates.</p> <p>Robust procedures have been developed to support the College to function effectively during periods of strike action.</p> <p>The College has established forums for its College Leadership Team, Heads/Managers of Departments and Curriculum Quality Manager. These forums are used to share ideas and good practice across curriculum and professional service areas. It can also be used so that others learn from the experiences of areas where initiatives were not as successful as originally envisioned.</p> <p>Ayrshire College was awarded Investors in People (IIP) Gold and IIP Wellbeing accreditation. The report provided areas of good practice and recommendations to support future improvements. The College works with IIP on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The College launched a programme of staff transformational change projects. The staff development project involves several workstreams to develop the internal College talent pool and to reinforce behaviours in the workplace. This has resulted in the implementation of Evolve leadership and development programme for all managers, Great Conversations and Knowledge Skills and Behaviour Framework for lecturing staff. This is all supported with the launch of the new Learning Management System, Elevate.</p>			
													Continued delivery of Evolve Leadership and Management Development Programme through embedded learning in everyday practices. Refresh the Aspire Management Programme to develop leaders to meet future College objectives.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	26-Jul	
													Continue to develop The Ayrshire Way and embed 3C Time across the College in 2025/26 to share best practice and support innovation and continuous improvement.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	26-Jul	
													Develop appropriate action plans to address the recommendations set out within the IIP People and Wellbeing Reports. To continue to build on positive culture and positive staff relations.	Vice Principal People, Performance and Transformation	26-Jul	

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9	BRIC03	Investing in College Infrastructure	There is a risk that the College is unable to deliver on the objectives set in the College Infrastructure Strategy because of SFC capital funding allocations and capital funding restrictions resulting in the failure to develop and maintain an inspirational college experience through an integrated and high-quality infrastructure.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	15	9	3	3	9	↔	Open	Mitigating actions to be taken				
													<p>The December 2024 Board approved the College Infrastructure Strategy which encompasses both digital and physical estate developments. An update report on progress towards achieving the objectives stated in the Strategy will be provided annually to BRIC</p> <p>The College has updated the SFC on the wider infrastructure plans for the College and the specific plans for the Ayr campus. A funding request has been submitted to the SFC for support with wider College developments. A response is awaited following recent discussions.</p> <p>The College's Senior Leadership Team prepare an annual capital programme that addresses the key requirements for the coming year. The College has no immediate major estate related works requirements. However, the level of capital provided to the College over the last three years, and the indication that this may not change significantly going forward, will put pressure on the upkeep and development of the estate. It will also put pressure on curriculum service offerings if the College is to ensure these remain in line with the latest industry standards and requirements.</p> <p>In line with the Financial Regulations requirements all capital projects over £250k are reported to BRIC. This reporting will include a Post Occupancy Evaluation Report where the expenditure is over £1m.</p> <p>The College will proactively seek opportunities for capital investment from sponsors and stakeholders including the Ayrshire Growth Deal.</p> <p>The College continues to seek opportunities to access additional capital funding streams. To support this work the College is undertaking tenders to have costed capital projects that can support future funding applications.</p> <p>The College has a well defined Curriculum Development Planning process in place which identifies any estate / IT requirements. These requirements are incorporated into the annual capital plan as appropriate.</p>			
													The output from the 2026-27 CDP exercise requires to be reviewed and an initial assessment of both estate and digital needs to be established.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jan-26	
													To investigate the benefits of partnering with property management and development companies using APUC or other framework agreements. This will allow the development of long term relationships and a fuller understanding of College operations.	Head of Facilities	Jul-26	
													To regularly update BRIC on significant estate related matters.	Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure	Jul-26	

Ayrshire College Strategic Opportunities Register

Number	Opportunity		Owner	Strategic Fit	Financial return	Risk Level	Time to Impact
1	Aerospace and Aviation Skills Expansion	The College is central to Scotland's aerospace sector, especially through its Prestwick hub. New courses like the 12-week Aerospace Engineering programme and partnerships with GE Caledonian and NMIS position the College to lead in high-value job creation and advanced manufacturing training.		High	Medium	High	Long
2	Digital and 5G Innovation Leadership	Ayrshire has been designated a 5G Innovation Region, with the College playing a pivotal role in immersive learning using AR/VR and AI. This opens doors for leadership in digital skills development, smart manufacturing, and tech-enabled education.		High	Low	Low	Medium
3	Strategic Partnership with UWS	The formal partnership with the University of the West of Scotland enables joint curriculum development, shared facilities and a unified regional skills strategy in key sectors like healthcare, digital and creative industries		Medium	Medium	High	Long
4	Clean Growth and Net Zero Transition	The College is aligning with regional and national priorities around clean energy including the Offshore Wind Skills Programme. This positions the College to support Scotland's net zero ambitions through workforce development.		High	High	Low	Medium
5	Community Wealth Building	As part of the Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy, the College is a key anchor institution in Community Wealth Building, supporting inclusive growth, local procurement and social enterprise development.		High	Medium	Low	Medium
6	Visitor Economy and Marine Tourism	With major investments in marine tourism (e.g., Cumbrae Marina), the College can expand training in hospitality, tourism and marine operations, supporting regional economic diversification		High	High	Low	Medium
7	Skills Investment Fund (ASIF)	The £3.5 million Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund offers direct funding to upskill residents and employees in growth sectors like engineering, digital and clean growth. The College is the lead training partner.		High	Medium	Low	Short
8	Advanced Manufacturing and Food Tech	The College is expanding its reach to underserved communities, aligning with regional goals to reduce deprivation and improve employability through targeted programmes for women, youth and those with health challenges.		High	High	Medium	Long
9	Curriculum Transformation and Flexible Delivery	Through the College Transformation Framework, the College can innovate its curriculum delivery, including flexible credit models, hybrid learning and industry-aligned micro credentials.		High	High	Medium	Long

High	High	High	Long
Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Low	Low	Low	Short

Ayrshire College Strategic Risk Register

Overall Risk Rating

Probability	Almost certain	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely	4	8	12	16	20
	Possible	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
	Rare	1	2	3	4	5
		Insignificant	Minor	Significant	Major	Extreme
		Impact				

Detailed Description of Risks

The risk matrix below demonstrates how RAG classifications are applied based on the risk score:

RAG SCORE KEY	LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY
1-4	VERY LOW RISK
5-8	LOW RISK Very minimal concern or on Target - Under Management Control When Blue, controls and assurances are adequate/effective in proportion to the risk
9-14	MODERATE RISK Minimal concern or on Target - Under Management Control When Green, controls and assurances are adequate/effective in proportion to the risk
15-19	MEDIUM RISK At Risk or Late – Under Management Control When Amber, some areas of concern over the adequacy / effectiveness of the controls in place and assurances obtained in proportion to the risk
20-25	HIGH RISK At Risk or Late – Not Under Management Control – Action Required When Red, significant concerns over the adequacy/effectiveness of the controls in place and assurances obtained in proportion to the risk

Risk Appetite Statement

	0 NONE Avoidance of risk is a key organisational objective.	1 MINIMAL Preference for very safe delivery options that have a low degree of inherent risk and only a limited reward potential.	2 CAUTIOUS Preference for safe delivery options that have a low degree of residual risk and only a limited reward potential.	3 OPEN	4 SEEK Eager to be innovative and to choose options offering higher business rewards (despite greater inherent risk).	5 SIGNIFICANT Confident in setting high levels of risk appetite because controls, forward scanning and responsive systems are robust.
FINANCIAL How will we use our resources?	We have no appetite for decisions or actions that may result in financial loss.	We are only willing to accept the possibility of very limited financial risk.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of limited financial risk. However, VFM is our primary concern.	We are prepared to accept some financial risk if appropriate controls are in place. We have a holistic understanding of VFM with price not the overriding factor.	We will invest for the best possible return and accept the possibility of increased financial risk.	We will consistently invest for the best possible return for stakeholders, recognising that the potential for substantial gain outweighs inherent risks.
REGULATORY How will we be perceived by our regulator?	We have no appetite for decisions that may compromise compliance with statutory, regulatory or policy requirements.	We will avoid any decisions that may result in heightened regulatory challenge unless essential.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of limited regulatory challenge. We would seek to understand where similar actions had been successful elsewhere before taking any decision.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of some regulatory challenge as long as we can be reasonably confident, we would be able to challenge this successfully.	We are willing to take decisions that will likely result in regulatory intervention if we can justify these and where the potential benefits outweigh the risks.	We are comfortable challenging regulatory practice. We have a significant appetite for challenging the status quo to improve outcomes for stakeholders.
REPUTATIONAL How will we be perceived by the public and our partners?	We have no appetite for decisions that could lead to additional scrutiny or attention on the organisation.	Our appetite for risk taking is limited to those events where there is no chance of significant repercussions.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of limited reputational risk if appropriate controls are in place to limit any fallout.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of some reputational risk if there is the potential for improved outcomes for our stakeholders.	We are willing to take decisions that are likely to bring scrutiny of the organisation. We outwardly promote new ideas and innovations where potential benefits outweigh the risks.	We are comfortable to take decisions that may expose the organisation to significant scrutiny or criticism as long as there is a commensurate opportunity for improved outcomes for our stakeholders.
QUALITY How will we deliver safe services?	We have no appetite for decisions that may have an uncertain impact on quality outcomes.	We will avoid anything that may impact on quality outcomes unless essential. We will avoid innovation unless established and proven to be effective in a variety of settings.	Our preference is for risk avoidance. However, if necessary, we will take decisions on quality where there is a low degree of inherent risk and the possibility of improved outcomes, and appropriate controls are in place.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of a short-term impact on quality outcomes with potential for longer-term rewards. We support innovation.	We will pursue innovation wherever appropriate. We are willing to take decisions on quality where there may be higher inherent risks but the potential for significant longer-term gains.	We seek to lead the way and will prioritize new innovations, even in emerging fields. We consistently challenge current working practices to drive quality improvement.
PEOPLE How will we be perceived by the public and our partners?	We have no appetite for decisions that could have a negative impact on our workforce development, recruitment and retention. Sustainability is our primary interest.	We will avoid all risks relating to our workforce unless essential. Innovative approaches to workforce recruitment and retention are not a priority and will only be adopted if established and proven to be effective elsewhere	We are prepared to take limited risks with regards to our workforce. Where attempting to innovate, we would seek to understand where similar actions had been successful elsewhere before taking any decision.	We are prepared to accept the possibility of some workforce risk, as a direct result from innovation if there is the potential for improved recruitment and retention, and developmental opportunities for staff.	We will pursue workforce innovation. We are willing to take risks which may have implications for our workforce but could improve the skills and capabilities of our staff. We recognize that innovation is likely to be disruptive in the short term but with the possibility of long-term gains.	We seek to lead the way in terms of workforce innovation. We accept that innovation can be disruptive and are happy to use it as a catalyst to drive a positive change.

The College recognises that its appetite for risk varies according to the activity undertaken, and that its acceptance of risk is subject always to ensuring that potential benefits and risks are fully understood before developments are authorised, and that sensible measures to mitigate risk are established.

In terms of priorities, the need to avoid financial, regulatory and reputational risk will take priority over other factors e.g. it will be acceptable to undertake risks in development activities providing they do not expose the College to undue financial, regulatory and reputational risk. Similarly, the College is open to innovation in education and student experience if this supports and enhances its reputation and does not expose it to undue financial or regulatory risks. A balanced assessment must be taken of risks – in many cases there are risks attached to both doing something and doing nothing

The College's appetite for risk across its activities is provided in the following statements:

1) **FINANCIAL** – The College aims to maintain its long-term financial sustainability and its overall financial strength. Whilst targets for financial achievement will be challenging the College has a minimal appetite for risk that puts in peril the long-term sustainability of the College.

2) **REGULATORY**– The College places great importance on governance, and has no appetite for any breaches in statute, regulation, professional standards, bribery or fraud. It wishes to maintain accreditations related to courses or standards of operation, and has no appetite for risk relating to actions that may put accreditations in jeopardy

3) **REPUTATIONAL** – It is regarded as critical that the College preserves its high reputation. The College therefore has a cautious appetite for risk in the conduct of any of its activities that puts its reputation in jeopardy, could lead to undue adverse publicity, or could lead to loss of confidence by the political establishment and funders of its activities.

The above statements take priority over the statements of areas of risk appetite below.

4) **QUALITY**– The College wishes to stimulate students to develop a wish to engage in lifelong learning, encourage an independent attitude and an aspiration to achieve success. It recognises that this should involve an increased degree of risk in developing education and the student experience and is comfortable in accepting this risk subject always to ensuring that potential benefits and risks are fully understood before developments are authorised and that sensible measures to mitigate risk are established.

5) **PEOPLE** – The College aims to value, support, develop and utilise the full potential of our staff to make the College a stimulating and safe place to work. It places importance on a culture of equality and diversity, dignity and respect, collegiality, annual reviews, the development of staff, and the health and safety of staff, students and visitors. It has a cautious appetite for any deviation from its standards in these areas.

Top 10 Risks Affecting UK Colleges (2025–2026)

Drawn from the most recent 2025–2026 sources across higher and further education. Each risk includes **why it matters**, supported by citations.

1. Financial Instability

UK colleges and universities are under severe financial strain due to frozen tuition caps, rising costs, and declining international enrolments. Fee caps have not kept pace with inflation, leaving real-terms income significantly reduced, while visa restrictions have sharply reduced international student numbers. Rising pension and operational costs compound these pressures.

A 2025 analysis also notes proposed government levies on international fee income, increasing the risk further. [[cliffordchance.com](https://www.cliffordchance.com)] [[grantthornton.co.uk](https://www.grantthornton.co.uk)]

2. Declining Admissions and Enrolment

Enrolment pressures are repeatedly cited as the top risk in higher education, driven by demographic shifts, competitive market dynamics, and increasing scrutiny of the ROI of degrees. Declines in domestic applications and heightened comparison shopping by students amplify vulnerability. [[ue.org](https://www.ue.org)], [[higheredrisk.com](https://www.higheredrisk.com)]

3. Cybersecurity & Data Security Threats

More than **90% of UK education institutions experienced a cyber-attack or breach** in the previous 12 months, highlighting the scale of vulnerability.

Cyber risk remains acute as institutions hold valuable research data and operate often-decentralised IT systems. Recent high-profile breaches emphasise persistent threat levels. [[ajg.com](https://www.ajg.com)] [[higheredrisk.com](https://www.higheredrisk.com)]

4. Workforce Recruitment & Retention Challenges

Colleges face chronic staffing shortages—particularly in construction, engineering, health, social care, and STEM subjects. Reports highlight widening pay gaps between FE and schools, rising vacancies (average 30 per college), and difficulty attracting teachers with industry experience.

This risk is expected to worsen without bold action, as workforce demand continues to grow. [[ncfe.org.uk](https://www.ncfe.org.uk)]

5. Student Mental Health Crisis

Colleges report escalating severity and volume of mental health cases. A 2024–25 survey found that **nearly one-third of colleges experienced at least one student suicide in the prior year**, and three-quarters recorded more than five suicide attempts. Economic hardship and cost-of-living pressures intensify these risks. Mental health is also a top strategic risk identified in wider higher-education risk forecasts. [\[independent.co.uk\]](#) [\[higheredrisk.com\]](#)

6. Estates, Facilities, and Deferred Maintenance Pressures

Deferred maintenance is a growing safety, financial, and reputational risk, with many institutions lacking enough capital funding to maintain ageing buildings. It ranks among the top risks in sectorwide surveys. Estate development is further pressured by sustainability requirements and budget constraints. [\[ue.org\]](#), [\[higheredrisk.com\]](#) [\[ajg.com\]](#)

7. Compliance, Regulatory and Policy Change

Colleges face a rapidly shifting regulatory landscape—spanning funding rules, qualifications reform (e.g., V Levels), skills devolution, inspection frameworks, and compliance obligations beyond safeguarding (e.g., data and governance). Compliance concerns rose significantly in recent risk rankings. FE-specific inquiries cite fragmented policy, underfunding, and inconsistent implementation as major systemic risks. [\[ue.org\]](#) [\[publicatio...liament.uk\]](#)

8. Operational Pressures and Rising Costs

Operational burdens—including rising staff salaries, maintenance, insurance complexity, and energy costs—continue to increase. Pressures on budgets due to inflation and national insurance changes are significant. Institutions are also managing cost-intensive obligations such as SEND provision, which is growing sharply. [\[cliffordchance.com\]](#) [\[ifs.org.uk\]](#)

9. Changing Skills Needs & Skills Gaps

The FE sector is central to meeting national skills missions, yet policy fragmentation and employer demand shifts leave colleges struggling to keep up.

Significant and rising skills shortages—especially in AI, digital, engineering, construction—are documented in multiple reports.

Skills England’s role continues to evolve, and sector leaders warn that gaps will widen without transformative intervention. [\[fenews.co.uk\]](#), [\[ncfe.org.uk\]](#) [\[ncfe.org.uk\]](#)

10. Public Safety, Safeguarding and Prevent-related Risks

Public safety—including safeguarding, extremism-related duties, and crisis response—remains a top institutional risk.

PREVENT-related governance concerns highlight risks to academic freedom, equality, and institutional autonomy if mishandled.

Broader safety threats are also listed among top sector risks. [\[new.ox.ac.uk\]](#) [\[ue.org\]](#)

Summary Table

Risk Area	Why It Matters	Key Sources
Financial Instability	Rising costs, frozen fees, falling international enrolments	[cliffordchance.com] , [grantthornton.co.uk]
Enrolment Decline	Demographics, ROI scrutiny, competition	[ue.org] , [higheredrisk.com]
Cybersecurity	90%+ institutions hit by breaches	[ajg.com] , [higheredrisk.com]
Workforce Shortages	Persistent vacancies, pay gap, skills shortages	[ncfe.org.uk]
Student Mental Health	Rising crises, suicide attempts	[independent.co.uk] , [higheredrisk.com]
Estates & Maintenance	Ageing infrastructure, safety & cost risks	[ue.org]
Compliance & Regulation	Rapid changes in funding, qualifications, inspection	[ue.org] , [publicatio...liament.uk]
Operational Pressures	Soaring costs, SEND pressures	[cliffordchance.com] , [ifs.org.uk]
Skills Gaps	Growing employer demand, insufficient supply	[feneews.co.uk] , [ncfe.org.uk]
Public Safety & Prevent	Safeguarding and rights-based risks	[new.ox.ac.uk] , [ue.org]

Title of Meeting: Board of Management

Date: 26 March 2026

Title: Committee Chair's Report - Learning Teaching and Quality Committee Meeting, 05 March 2026.

Purpose: To Inform, update, and alert the Board to any areas of escalation raised at Board Committee level.

Recommendation: The Board is asked to receive and note the report and review any areas escalated by the Committee to the Board.

1. Executive Summary

To provide the Board with a summary of significant items considered by the Learning Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQC) meeting in advance of the approved minutes being submitted to the Board in June 2026.

The LTQC Chair requests the Board to note:

- The volume and range of activities by the Student Association.
- The large amount of data analysis assisting action planning and reporting.
- The positive audit results.

2. Strategic Objectives

This paper supports our Strategic Ambition through helping fulfil our strategic objectives to deliver outstanding experiences, to be the partner of choice and to play a key role in enabling the future. This is demonstrated by the progress reports and further planned actions detailed, along with the agenda items as described within this quarterly update report.

Associated Risks

3. There is a risk that the Committee could fail to demonstrate that it was fulfilling the requirements of its Terms of Reference because it has not updated the Board of Management, resulting in a failure to evidence compliance with governing legislation and regulation, and the Board's governance requirements.

4. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An impact assessment is not applicable given the subject of this paper

5. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

6. Background

A meeting of the Learning Teaching and Quality Committee Meeting took place on 05 March 2026.

7. Current Situation

The Committee considered, noted, or approved the following:

Modern Apprenticeship Education Scotland Report

Joe Mulholland from Education Scotland provided an overview of the report on Education Scotland's external review of Ayrshire College's Modern Apprenticeship (MA) provision in November 2025 which covered apprentices within the College's direct Skills Development Scotland contract and evaluated three elements: leadership and management, delivery of training, and progress and outcomes.

Key strengths identified: Strong strategic leadership with clear vision; highly effective employer engagement; Innovative provision; levels of employer satisfaction in most areas; high quality resources and platforms and positive relationships between apprentices and assessors.

Key actions identified: College managers should implement strategies for apprenticeship achievement; College staff should be supported to ensure arrangements on quality; ensure everyone evaluating in same manner; all staff and managers should adhere to class start and break times; managers should ensure all apprentices receive consistent high-quality induction, and work-based assessors and tutors should work more collaboratively. An action plan will be brought to the next LTQC.

Student Association Report Q3

Main activities were highlighted from the report, with verbal updates on activities since the report submission. The Vice Chair noted that Conner Skipsey has resigned from the role of Student Vice President, and the Committee noted thanks to Connor for his contribution.

2024-25 SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement College Sector Benchmarking Report

Members received a summary of the report and noted that Ayrshire College's completion rate was 1%-2% below the SFC target of 50% for 2024-25. The aim is to achieve this completion rate for the 2025-26 survey which is currently open for completion. The data has been analysed for each curriculum area and any areas for improvement will be identified and actioned by each Curriculum Quality Manager and Head of Department. Higher Education Full Time is currently 6% below the sector average. It was agreed that further analysis will be carried out by the College's Quality department and Curriculum Quality Management to identify areas of improvement. This analysis will be shared at the next LTQC meeting.

Performance Dashboard

The Committee received an update and overview of performance information, noting that FE Full-Time, HE Full-Time and HE Part-Time are all currently above target. FE Part-Time is slightly below target however only by a small margin.

The total number of credits is currently on track to achieve AY 2025-26 target.

Student Support Funds Update

The Committee were updated on the utilisation, demand, and operational performance of the College's student support funding streams for the 2025–26 academic year to date. The data indicated strong progress toward full utilisation of available funds, stable application demand across several key areas, and continued operational improvements in processing and systems development.

Employer Engagement and Innovation Report

The Committee were advised on the overall updated position for the Employer Engagement & Innovation Department. The Committee welcomed the positive report and noted the report as presented.

Internal Audit Report - External Communications

The audit report provided a strong level of assurance over the College's external communications methods. One low-level recommendation was raised where it is recommended that the College enhance the Website Management Procedure and Guidance document by introducing clearly defined roles, responsibilities, escalation routes, and compliance requirements, and by establishing a regular review and update process. An update on actions will be given at the next LTQC.

Internal Audit Report - Student Voice

The audit provided a strong level of assurance over the College's student voice arrangements. No recommendations were raised.

Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register

The Committee approved the Strategic Risk & Opportunities Register for submission to the Board of Management noting that further consideration will be given to the Curriculum risk.

8. Proposal

The Board is asked to receive and note the report and review any areas escalated by the Committee to the Board.

9. Resource Implications

No further resource implications require to be noted.

10. Consultation

LTQC Chair, LTQC Vice Chair and Board Governance Adviser.

11. Conclusion

The full Learning Teaching and Quality Committee meeting minutes will be brought to the next Board of Management meeting for information following their approval at the next Learning Teaching and Quality Committee meeting.

Brian Green
Vice Chair, Learning Teaching and Quality Committee

Title of Meeting: Board of Management

Date: 26 March 2026

Title: Committee Chair's Report – PIFCo Meeting
10 March 2026.

Purpose: To Inform, update and alert the Board of Management to any areas of escalation raised at Board Committee level.

Recommendation: The Board is asked to receive and note the report and review any areas escalated by the Committee to the Board.

1. Executive Summary

To provide the Board of Management with a summary of significant items considered by the People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee (PIFCo) in advance of the approved minutes being submitted to the June Board meeting.

The Chair requests the Board to note:

- The improved operating budget forecasts.
- The ongoing engagement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to seek clarity on funding allocations, the revised funding model, and the unresolved CDEL/RDEL treatment.
- The ongoing actions to support continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes.

2. Strategic Objectives

This paper supports our Strategic Ambition through helping fulfil our strategic objectives to deliver outstanding experiences, to be the partner of choice and to play a key role in enabling the future. This is demonstrated by the further planned actions, monitoring and reporting detailed, along with the agenda items as described within this quarterly report.

3. Associated Risks

There is a risk that the Committee could fail to demonstrate fulfilment of the requirements of its Terms of Reference if it does not update the Board of Management, resulting in a failure to evidence compliance with governing legislation and regulation, and the Board's governance requirements.

4. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An impact assessment is not applicable given the subject of this paper.

5. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

1. Background

The People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee Meeting took place on 10 March 2026.

2. Current Situation

The Committee considered, noted or approved the following:

- **College Financial Regulations Annual Review**

The Committee reviewed and approved the updated Financial Regulations.

- **People Strategy Quarterly Update Dashboard**

Members were updated on the people dashboard with up-to-date workforce data for staff absences, development, recruitment and health, safety and wellbeing.

- **2026-27 Budget Update**

Members noted the College's updated financial position for 2025-26 and 2026-27, including the improved operating forecasts and the remaining gap to a balanced 2026-27 budget, and approved the update for submission to the Board of Management

- **SAI Aerospace Training Ltd Report**

The Committee were provided with an update, noting operational progress toward full operational delivery, completion of key staffing appointments and strengthened governance arrangements. Members endorsed the planned further governance session with College Committee Chairs, SAI Chair, Managing Director & College Executive, aimed at finalising business planning, reporting expectations; & clarification of roles and responsibilities. Members requested continued monitoring and reporting of key dependencies affecting SAI's transition from start-up to full operational delivery, including facilities readiness, key staffing transitions, and international licensing and market development activity.

- **Digital Update Report**

Members were provided with an overview of the strategic direction, key achievements, operational improvements and priorities that underpin the College's digital transformation and risk management agenda.

- **Management Accounts as at 31 January 2026**

The Committee were provided with a summary of the College's financial position with an outline of the key variances. Members reviewed and recommended the Management Accounts as of 31 January 2026 to the Board of Management for approval.

- **Sustainability Framework and Climate Change Report**

The Committee commended the approach being taken by the College and approved the Sustainability Framework for implementation, and endorsed continued monitoring and optimisation of energy, water and waste performance.

- **Strategic Risk & Opportunities Register**

The Committee reviewed and approved the Strategic Risk & Opportunities Register for consideration and approval to the Board of Management.

3 Proposal

The Board is asked to receive and note the report and review any areas escalated by the Committee to the Board.

4 Resource Implications

No further resource implications require to be noted.

5 Consultation

Chair PIFCo, Vice Chair PIFCo, Board Governance Adviser.

6 Conclusion

The full PIFCo meeting minutes will be brought to the next Board of Management meeting for information following their approval at the next PIFCo meeting in June.

Matthew Wilson
Chair, People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee
26 March 2026

Title of Meeting: Board of Management

Date: 26 March 2026

Title: Committee Chair's Report – ARC & Meeting 17 March 2026

Purpose: To Inform, update and alert the Board to any areas of escalation raised at Board Committee level.

Recommendation: The Board is asked to receive and note the report and review any areas escalated by the Committee to the Board.

1. Executive Summary

To provide the Board with a summary of significant items considered by the Audit and Risk Committee meeting in advance of the approved minutes being submitted to the next Board meeting in June 2026.

The Chair requests the Board to note:

- The strong level of assurance provided from the two recent internal audit reports, plus the external audit update.
- The endorsement of the outcome of the 2026 review of the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor.
- The extension of the current Internal Auditor contract to 31 July 2027.

2. Strategic Objectives

This paper supports our Strategic Ambition through helping fulfil our strategic objectives to deliver outstanding experiences, to be the partner of choice and to play a key role in enabling the future. This is demonstrated by the favourable audit reports, along with the agenda items as described within this quarterly update report.

3. Associated Risks

There is a risk that the Committee could fail to demonstrate that it was fulfilling the requirements of its Terms of Reference because it has not updated the Board of Management, resulting in a failure to evidence compliance with governing legislation and regulation, and the Board's governance requirements.

4. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

An impact assessment is not applicable given the subject of this paper.

5. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

1. Background

A meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting took place on 17 March 2026.

2. Current Situation

The Committee considered, noted or approved the following:

- **Internal Audit Reports**
Financial Regulations Compliance, plus Non-SFC Income were both reviewed with the report giving a strong assurance outcome with no recommendations.
- **Draft 2026-27 Internal Audit Plan**
The proposed programme of audit activity aligns with the College's strategic risks and provides targeted assurance across key financial, operational, curriculum and governance areas. The Committee endorsed the Draft 2026–27 Internal Audit Plan.
- **Internal Audit Progress Report**
The Committee were updated that progress is all on track to allow for completion on time as planned, and there are no issues or concerns.
- **External Audit Update**
The Committee were updated on the key considerations for planning the 2025–26 External Audit, outlining the implications of the 2026 FEHE Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), which introduces significant changes to revenue recognition, lease accounting and narrative reporting requirements.
- **Assurance Map Update**
The Committee noted, reviewed and approved the proposed next steps for incorporation into the new risk software.
- **Digital Update Report**
The Committee received an update of the strategic direction, key achievements, operational improvements and priorities that underpin the College's digital transformation and risk management agenda.
- **Rolling Audit Action Plan**
The Committee received an update on the recommendations made by both the internal and external auditors.
- **Strategic Risk & Opportunities Register**
The Committee reviewed and recommended the Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register for approval to the Board of Management.
- **Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Auditor**
The Committee reviewed the report and confirmed they were content with the outcome of the review of effectiveness of the Internal Auditor as presented.

- **Internal Audit Service Contract Extension**

The Committee were presented with the annual review of the effectiveness of the College's internal audit service and the available options for securing internal audit provision beyond the current contract period. The Committee agreed the most appropriate procurement route to ensure continuity, value for money, and strong alignment with the College's governance and assurance needs.

3. Proposal

The Board is asked to receive and note the report and review any areas escalated by the Committee to the Board.

4. Resource Implications

No further resource implications require to be noted.

5. Consultation

Chair & Vice Chair ARC, Board Governance Adviser.

6. Conclusion

The full Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes will be brought to the next Board of Management meeting for information following their approval at the next ARC meeting.

Jane Grant & Michael Ross
Chair & Vice Chair, Audit and Risk Committee
26 March 2026

**Minute of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee Meeting
Held via Microsoft Teams at 4pm on Thursday 27 November 2025**

Present:

Alison Sutherland	Chair LTQC
Brian Green	Vice Chair of LTQC
Jane Grant	Non-Executive Board Member
Gillian Longmuir	Non-Executive Board Member
Michael Ross	Non-Executive Board Member
Iain Shearer	Non-Executive Board Member
Chris Boyce	Elected Member, EIS/FELA
Lisa Keggans	Elected Member, UNISON
Darcie Hamilton	Elected Member, Student President
Marko Prorocic	Elected Member, Professional Services Staff
Connor Skipsey	Elected Member, Student Vice President
Janette Steel	Elected Member, Curriculum Staff
Angela Cox	Principal, Ex-officio

In attendance:

Sara Rae	Vice Principal, Skills and Enterprise
David Davidson	Vice Principal, People, Performance and Transformation
Alan Ritchie	Vice Principal, Finance and Infrastructure
Gavin Murray	Assistant Principal, Skills and Innovation
Alistair Rodgers	Director of Enterprise Development
Doreen Wales	Assistant Principal, Student Experience & Quality Enhancement
Hilary Denholm	Board Governance Advisor
Katelyn Kilbride	Executive Assistant (Minutes)

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

Alison Sutherland, Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no Declarations of Interest presented.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jennifer Anderson, Assistant Principal, Skills and Innovation, Jason Currie, Non-Executive Board Member and Gayle Watson, Co-Opted LTQC Board Member.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 04 September 2025 (Paper 1) (C/P)

The minutes of the meeting held on 04 September 2025 were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Jane Grant

Seconded: Angela Cox

3.1 Action Tracker (Paper 1a)

The Committee noted that there were no outstanding actions.

4. Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Strategy Update (Presentation)

Chris Boyce entered the meeting.

Sara Rae introduced the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy presentation and Doreen Wales and Gavin Murray updated the Committee on the following:

- Provided a progress update on the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy 2024–27, confirming objectives are generally on track.
- Highlighted improved attainment rates for care-experienced and vulnerable students, with sector-leading outcomes and ongoing focus on closing completion gaps.
- Reported significant investment in digital learning, including increased use of AI and VR, and wider engagement with virtual learning environments.
- Noted all curriculum teams' participation in professional development and peer review, with new resources and evaluation processes underway.
- Confirmed strong student engagement through established Class Ambassador models and regular feedback mechanisms, with high overall satisfaction rates.
- Outlined continued support for student wellbeing, including targeted mental health workshops and curriculum integration of health and wellbeing topics.
- Detailed employer and industry engagement in curriculum design, expansion of micro-credentials, and new partnerships to enhance job pathways.
- Reported positive destinations for leavers exceeding targets, with ongoing collaboration to further improve outcomes.
- Shared financial highlights: business engagement income and surplus ahead of forecast, with new employer partnerships and programme developments.
- Noted achievements in apprenticeship provision, external awards, and strategic developments in areas such as offshore wind and enterprise initiatives.

A copy of the presentation will be shared with the minute.

5. Student Association Report Q2 (Paper 2) (P)

Darcie Hamilton and Connor Skipsey highlighted the main activities from the report and verbally updated the Committee on activities since the report submission.

The Committee noted activity in relation to:

- The launch of LGBT+ lunch clubs in Kilmarnock and Ayr campuses.
- The International Men's Day Campaign which focused on the tagline 'You okay mate?'
- The 16 Days of Action Campaign which aims to end gender-based violence.
- 'Reclaim the Night' event hosted by local authorities which the Student President will be attending as a keynote speaker.
- The Class Ambassador recruitment has resulted in a total of 269 ambassadors across the College.
- The first survey of the year has concluded with a positive response rate. The 'Pulse Survey' was introduced to reduce the lengthy survey format and avoid survey fatigue.

- The Ayrshire College Student Voice Audit has been an opportunity to showcase current processes, and the initial report has been returned without any issues.
- The Student Association are working closely with Hope by the Roadside to implement pastoral support Ayr and Kilwinning campuses.
- The Student Association have also established a partnership with Andy's Man Club.
- Angela Cox queried recent engagement with the NEXUS, specifically for Modern Apprentices. Darcie Hamilton noted a decrease in engagement however reassured members that action is being taken to encourage use of the platform. Sara Rae highlighted the opportunity for the Student Association to engage with Team Leaders within the Work-based Learning Team.

The Committee welcomed the report and noted informative updates.

6. 2025-26 Pulse Survey Analysis (Paper 3) (P)

Doreen Wales provided an overview of the 2025-26 Pulse Survey analysis.

The committee noted the following:

- The Pulse Survey was introduced this academic year as a method for collecting student feedback.
- The first survey was conducted in October over a two-week period and was promoted across multiple platforms.
- A total of 620 responses were received.
- 98% of students reported feeling welcome on their first day.
- 73% of students reported being able to apply for and get their student funding on time which has increased by 3% from AY 2024-25.
- Overall, feedback was positive.
- The next pulse survey will focus on learning, teaching, and assessment.
- Increasing response rates remains an ongoing priority.

7. Final 2025-26 Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (Paper 4) (P)

Doreen Wales provided an update on the report and the committee noted that the draft version was initially presented at the September meeting, and the action plan component of the report has since been finalised.

The completed report and action plan will be submitted to the Scottish Funding Council week commencing 1st December 2025.

The Committee were satisfied with the document pending a change to the title on the front cover of the report to reflect the following 'Ayrshire College Self Evaluation and Action Plan AY 2024-25.'

Members approved the report for submission to the board for information.

8. 2024-25 Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model Contextual Commentary and Case Studies (Verbal) (P)

Doreen Wales provided a verbal update on the 2024-25 Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model Contextual Commentary and Case Studies report.

Recent guidance from the funding council indicates that, following the quarter 4 engagement meeting with the outcome manager, the college will compile this report. The report will then be reviewed by the outcome manager and, if satisfactory, signed off by the principal, with returns expected by mid or end of January 2026.

Sara Rae will confirm whether the Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model Contextual Commentary and Case Studies require board approval prior to submission.

The Committee welcomed the update.

11. Performance Dashboard

Sara Rae provided an overview of the Performance Dashboard:

The Committee noted:

- FE full-time student retention remains on track.
- FE part-time student retention has slightly decreased however a significant number of students are starting courses in January. The current figure is only 1.5% below target.
- All other areas are on or above target.
- The current credit figure is 96,000 and the target figure for the year is 111,000.
- The credit tracker suggests that the College will achieve the credit target.

13. AOB

No other business noted.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 05 March at 4.00pm at Kilwinning Campus.

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published on College Website;

(P) – Paper will be published on the College Website;

® – Paper is reserved, because it contains data or information of a personal nature, which is restricted by legislation, or because it contains commercially sensitive information, and will not be published on the College Website

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Minute of the People, Infrastructure and Finance Committee
Hybrid meeting held at Kilmarnock Campus and via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday 18 November 2025

Present:

Matthew Wilson	Chair
Tracey Dalling	Vice Chair
Alicia Clyde	Non-Executive Board Member
Jason Currie	Non-Executive Board Member (From Item 5)
Angela Cox	Principal, Ex-Officio
Darcie Hamilton	Elected Student President
Lisa Keggans	Elected Member, UNISON
Janette Steel	Elected Member, Curriculum

In attendance:

Sara Rae	Vice Principal – Skills and Enterprise
David Davidson	Vice Principal – People, Performance and Transformation
Alan Ritchie	Vice Principal – Finance and Infrastructure
Martin Hammond	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Brad Johnstone	Director of Digital Infrastructure (up to Item 7)
Barry Morton	Head of Facilities (up to Item 8)
Hilary Denholm	Board Governance Advisor
June Northcote	Executive Assistant (Minutes)

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

Tracey Dalling, who chaired on this occasion, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Liz Walker, Chief Financial Controller, Gillian Brown, Strategic People Partner and Darcie Hamilton, Elected Student President.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 09 September 2025 (Paper 1) (P)

The minute was approved as an accurate account, pending the following amendment:

Page four, section seven, bullet point one *“Progress is being made on the development of a new NRPA at national level, with negotiations ongoing involving Unison, Unite, GMB and EIS-FELA”*.

Proposed: Alicia Clyde

Seconded: Angela Cox

3.1 Action & Decision Log (*Paper 1a*) (*P*)

The Committee noted all previous decisions and completed actions.

4. Matters Arising

Supreme Court Ruling on Gender (16 April 2025)

David Davidson provided an update following the Supreme Court ruling on gender. It was noted that, in the absence of legislative guidance, the College was, in the first instance, reviewing areas of priority such as inclusive changing areas and accessible toilets. Those present noted the challenges faced due to issues which may arise.

Martyn's Law – Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

David Davidson advised that whilst Scottish Government guidance was awaited, the College were putting procedures in place, to ensure compliance with the requirements of law.

There were no further matters arising out with those detailed on the meeting agenda.

6. Infrastructure Strategy Annual Review (*Presentation*) (*P*)

Alan Ritchie updated members on the College's Infrastructure Strategy 2024–27 which had set out a vision to maximise asset utilisation, enhance digital and physical environments, minimise environmental impact, foster collaboration and strengthen cybersecurity. The strategy was structured around six core objectives, each supported by targeted initiatives and performance metrics. Updates were provided on the six objectives by Barry Morton for the estates infrastructure and by Brad Johnstone on digital infrastructure.

Committee members noted:

- Progress is generally on track across objectives.
- Some areas require further data refinement and external engagement.
- The commendable ethos of the College, as it continues laying strong foundations for future business cases while remaining committed to continuous improvement, sustainability and digital transformation.

The Committee noted the content of the update as presented.

B Johnstone left the meeting at this point.

8. Annual Procurement Report 2024 – 25 (*Paper 4*) (*P*)

Alan Ritchie updated members on the College's Annual Procurement Report 2024-25.

Members were asked to review and approve the report for publication.

Committee members noted:

- The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 (PRA) requires any public organisation, which has an estimated annual regulated¹ spend of £5 million or more, to develop a [Procurement Strategy](#) and then review it annually. They are also required to publish an Annual Procurement Report (APR) which summaries how the organisation has performed in its procurement activities and in the delivery of the strategic objectives set out in its strategy.
- This Annual Procurement Report for Ayrshire College covers the period of 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025 and is the eighth report published by the College.
- Ayrshire College's procurement expenditure for 2024-25 was **£7,517,451**, up **42%** from 2023-24 with much of the increase in delivery the College's digital transformation programme and from the setup of SAI Ltd, which is Ayrshire College's forthcoming commercial aviation venture, with **£6,200,210 (82%)** of procurement expenditure under contract.

Decision PIFCo35-D02: Members reviewed and approved the Annual Procurement Report 2024 - 25 for publication.

15. AOB

Following recent meetings of the Scottish Government Public Audit Committee, Alan Ritchie expressed a note of caution due to possible financial instability, as a consequence of the unprecedented governance issues within the sector.

No other items of business were noted.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 10 March 2026.

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published on College Website;

(P) Paper will be published on the College Website;

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¹ 'Regulated' procurements are those with an estimated value equal to or greater than £50k (≥ £12,500 per annum over a four-year contract period excluding VAT) for goods and services (or £2,000,000 excluding VAT for a public works contract).

**Minute of the Audit and Risk Committee
Held by Hybrid Attendance at Kilmarnock Campus
Tuesday 02 December 2025**

Present:

Jane Grant	Chair
Michael Ross	Vice Chair
Brian Green	Non-Executive Board Member
Gillian Longmuir	Non-Executive Board Member
Chris Boyce	Elected EIS-FELA Staff Member (Item 2 onwards)

In attendance: (Item 2 onwards)

David Davidson	Vice Principal, People, Performance & Transformation
Hilary Denholm	Board Governance Advisor & Minutes
Brad Johnstone	Director of Digital Infrastructure
Sara Rae	Vice Principal, Skills & Enterprise
Alan Ritchie	Vice Principal, Finance & Infrastructure
Liz Walker	Chief Financial Controller
Siobhan Hamilton	Wbg – Internal Auditor Manager
Andy Reid	Azets – Director, External Auditors (Item 1 only)

1. Meeting with External and Internal Auditors (6) without staff members

In accordance with the Committee's terms of reference, the Committee held a meeting with Internal and External Auditors without management in attendance. The purpose of this meeting was to provide the Auditors with the opportunity to present their views on the College and management.

External and Internal Audit both advised that there were no material issues or concerns raised in this regard, and that good collaborative working and quality information had helped achieve the audit plan completion.

The Chair and the Committee members thanked the Auditors for their contribution and welcomed both the positive feedback put forward and level of assurance provided.

The External Auditor, A Reid left the meeting at this point and staff members and attendees joined the meeting.

2. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

There were no Declarations of Interest presented.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Marko Prorocic, Elected Professional Services Staff Member.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 16 September 2025 (*Paper 1*) C/P

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Michael Ross **Seconded:** Brian Green

ARC Action & Decision Tracker (*Paper 1A*) (P)

The Committee noted all previous decisions and actions were completed.

5. Matters Arising

There were no other outstanding matters arising from the minutes.

6. 2024-25 Freedom of Information Annual Report (*Paper 2*) (P)

S Rae highlighted the main points from the report to the Audit and Risk Committee to provide assurance that the College is meeting its statutory obligations under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and related regulations.

The Committee was asked to note the content of the report and consider whether the Internal Audit Plan requires to be reviewed.

The Committee noted:

- The College achieved a 100% on-time response rate to FOI and Environmental Information Requests (EIR) in 2024-25, improving from 95% in the previous year. This reflects strengthened internal tracking and information gathering processes.
- There was a decrease in total requests (33 in 2024-25 vs. 39 in 2023-24), with a significant drop in EIR requests, suggesting reduced public concern over environmental issues. However, the College continues to monitor areas like RAAC in buildings and environmental management for potential risk recurrence.
- The profile of stakeholder requestors shifted, with more requests coming from private companies (24%) and fewer from unions and the Scottish Parliament. This may indicate changing stakeholder interests or increased external scrutiny, which could introduce new reputational or compliance risks.
- Salary and staff information remain high-interest areas, with requests focusing on principal's salary, staff earning over £50k and staff departures. These topics are sensitive and require careful management to mitigate reputational and compliance risks.
- The report identifies ongoing risks in environmental compliance and the handling of sensitive staff data. The Audit and Risk Committee was advised to keep these areas under scrutiny and consider whether the Internal Audit Plan required review.

Decision: ARC50-D01 - The Committee considered that no adjustments were required to the Internal Audit Plan and approved the report for publication to the Board of Management.

7. 2024-25 Complaints Annual Report Paper 3 (P)

S Rae highlighted the key movements, trends and areas of concern for the Audit and Risk Committee from this report which compared the 2024-25 and 2023-24 Annual Complaints Reports. The analysis covered overall complaint volumes, resolution performance, complaint categories, sub-category trends and notable risks or emerging issues.

The Committee was asked to note the report findings and consider whether any adjustments to the Internal Audit Plan are required in light of the trends and risks identified.

The Committee noted:

- The 2024-25 Complaints Annual Report demonstrates the College's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement in complaints handling.
- The College has seen a notable increase in the total number of issues and complaints received compared to the previous year, rising by 14% and 8% respectively. Despite this, performance in early resolution and timeliness has improved, with a higher proportion of complaints resolved at Stage 1 and within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) target timescales.
- While the proportion of upheld or partially upheld complaints has decreased slightly, the overall increase in complaint volumes highlights the importance of maintaining robust processes and adequate resources to manage future demand.
- The College remains compliant with all legislative requirements for complaints handling, and the publication of this report reinforces its commitment to openness.
- Continued focus on staff training, communication, and operational improvements will be essential to sustaining positive trends and addressing emerging challenges.

Decision: ARC50-D02 - The Committee considered that no adjustments were required to the Internal Audit Plan and approved the report for publication to the Board of Management.

8. Internal Audit Reports

S Archibald highlighted the main points from both Internal Audit Report papers and the Audit and Risk Committee were requested to consider and note the two reports.

- **External Communications – Website Paper 4 (P)**

This audit reviewed the external communications methods adopted by the College to liaise with key stakeholders, and particularly the College website. The audit provided a strong level of assurance over the College's external communications methods.

One low level recommendation raised recommended that the College enhance the Website Management Procedure and Guidance document by introducing clearly defined roles, responsibilities, escalation routes, and compliance requirements, and by establishing a regular review and update process. The enhanced document would then require formal approval.

- **Student Voice Paper 5 (P)**

The Student Voice audit was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of current student voice arrangements in place at the College and assess the robustness of the governance structures in supporting its operation and strategic development. The audit provided a strong level of assurance over the College's student voice arrangements, and no recommendations were raised.

Discussion took place around the impact from student feedback, with real examples highlighted where changes and improvements had resulted. A more detailed report on the actions and impacts from student feedback will be presented to the Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee.

The Committee noted both the report's findings.

9. Internal Audit Progress Report Paper 6 (P)

S Archibald detailed the updated audit assignments plan, with phase 1 now completed, and future audit work plans for 2026 explained, setting out the scope and objectives of the work, allocating resources and establishing target dates for the completion of the work.

Each assignment plan will be agreed and signed off by an appropriate sponsor from the College.

Discussion took place around the use of the additional 4 days available now that they are not required for the EMA review. Committee members were asked for suggestions for their use including advisory, assurance mapping, an identified risk area, or roll over to the following year.

Action - ARC 50: A01 – Committee members to forward suggestions for the use of the additional time available to A Ritchie for further discussion with the Internal Auditor.

15. AOB

The minutes of the Joint ARC/PIFCo meeting held on 18 November will be circulated for approval.

There was no other business.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 17 March 2026, at Ayr Campus

P - Papers will be published on the College Website; R - Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial confidentiality or for reasons associated with data protection legislation; C/P - Confirmed minutes will be published on the College Website

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**Minute of the Joint Audit & Risk and PIF Committees – Financial Papers
Held by Hybrid Attendance at Kilmarnock Campus
Tuesday 18 November 2025**

These minutes were confirmed via email approvals in January 2026 from members, formally proposed by Brian Green and seconded by Angela Cox.

ARC Members Present:

Jane Grant	Chair
Brian Green	Non-Executive Board Member
Gillian Longmuir	Non-Executive Board Member
Chris Boyce	Elected EIS-FELA Staff Member
Marko Prororic	Elected Professional Support Staff Member

PIFCo Members Present:

Matthew Wilson	Chair
Tracey Dalling	Vice – Chair <i>From Item 6</i>
Alicia Clyde	Non-Executive Board Member <i>From Item 4</i>
Jason Currie	Non-Executive Board Member <i>From Item 2</i>
Janette Steel	Elected Curriculum Staff Member
Angela Cox	Principal, Ex - Officio
Lisa Keggans	Elected UNISON Staff Member

In attendance:

David Davidson	Vice Principal, People, Performance and Transformation
Hilary Denholm	Board Governance Advisor & Minutes
Sara Rae	Vice Principal, Skills and Enterprise
Alan Ritchie	Vice Principal, Finance & Infrastructure
Siobhan Archibald	Wbg – Internal Auditors
Adrian Koloziej	Azets – External Auditors

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all present to this joint Committee meeting, and everyone introduced themselves.

There were no Declarations of Interest presented.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate (ARC members & PIFCo members voting).

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Michael Ross (ARC Vice Chair), Darcie Hamilton (Elected Student President), Andy Reid (Azets External Auditors), and Liz Walker (Chief Financial Controller).

J Currie joined the meeting at this point.

Internal Audit

4. 2024-25 Credits / EMA / Student Funds Audit Reports (Paper 2) (P)

A Clyde joined the meeting at this point.

The Joint Committee was presented with the 2024-25 SFC student activity audit report (credits), Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Student Support Funds audit reports as part of the year end audit reporting suite.

The Joint Committee was requested to note the content of the report and consider the report conclusions when considering the Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2025 (**Paper 5**).

As part of the 2024-25 Internal Audit Plan the internal auditors undertook audits of the following areas:

- a) **Credits** - Mandatory review of the SFC Credit (student activity) return
- b) **Educational Maintenance Allowance** - Mandatory review of the awarding and payment of EMA
- c) **Student Support Funds**- Mandatory review of the awarding and payment of Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) student support funds

S Archibald from wbg took the Committee through the content of each report, highlighting the work undertaken to arrive at the following conclusions:

Credit Audit Conclusion

“The College has reasonable procedures and controls over the collection of data for the credits return and assurance can be taken that the credits count for the College is not materially mis-stated. The systems used by the College are satisfactory. The College’s credit target for the academic year 2024/25, agreed between the SFC and the College, was 111,480. The Credits claimed for the year was 111,933, this was over the target.”

Educational Maintenance Allowance Conclusion

“We have examined the books and records of Ayrshire College, including evidence of checks of 5% of applications and payments, with a sample size appropriate to the total number of applications, and have obtained such explanations and carried out such tests as we considered necessary. On the basis of our examination and of the explanations given to us, we report that the information set out in these forms is in agreement with the underlying records. We also report that, in our opinion, the College used these funds in accordance with the SFC’s conditions and the principles of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) programme.

It was noted that following updated guidance there is no requirement to audit the Educational Maintenance Allowance area next year.

Action: ARC50 - A01: College to discuss alternative use of the EMA audit time and to bring suggestions to next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

Conclusion - SFC

“We have examined the records of Ayrshire College and have obtained such explanations and carried out such tests as we considered necessary. On the basis of our examination and of the explanations given to us, we report that the information set out in these forms is in agreement with the underlying records. We also report that, in our opinion, the College used these funds in accordance with the guidance issued by the Scottish Funding Council. We are satisfied that the systems and controls of the administration and disbursement of these funds are adequate. This resulted in a £19,115 underspend that will be returned to the Scottish Funding Council.”

Conclusion – SAAS

“We have examined the books and records of Ayrshire College and have obtained such explanations and carried out such tests as we considered necessary. On the basis of our examination and of the explanations given to us, we report that the information set out above is in agreement with the underlying records and in our opinion is in accordance with the relative statutory requirements. We are satisfied that the systems and controls of the administration and disbursement of these funds are adequate.”

Members noted the conclusions reached; that there were no recommendations from the prior year, and that the auditors did not make any recommendations in relation to 2024-25.

It was noted that these positive audit results, no recommendations and strong benchmarking results are all due to consistent hard work from the staff involved in supporting these audits.

Action: ARC50 - A02: Feedback and recognition of the consistent hard work resulting in positive audit outcomes to be passed back to the teams involved.

5. 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report (Paper 3) (P)

S Archibald presented to the Joint Committee the 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report as part of the annual assurance suite of reports. The Joint Committee was requested to consider the 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report.

The Internal Audit Annual report recorded the following overall opinion:

“We are satisfied that sufficient internal audit work has been undertaken to allow us to draw a conclusion as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the College’s risk management, control and governance processes. In our opinion, Ayrshire College did have adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage its achievement of the College’s objectives at the time of our audit work. In

our opinion, the College has proper arrangements to promote and secure value for money. Our fieldwork was carried out between November 2024 and September 2025, and we have not undertaken any further internal audit assignments at the time of this report.”

The 2024-25 plan included the delivery of nine assignments and was delivered as agreed and without amendment. The internal auditors raised two management recommendations during their 2024-25 review process, with no high priority recommendations.

As noted in the Rolling Audit Action Plan presented to the Audit and Risk Committee, the College maintains a record of the management recommendations raised by both the internal and external auditors. The progress to address these actions is reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Joint Committees considered the 2024-25 Internal Audit Annual Report.

Date of Next ARC Meeting – Tuesday 2nd December 2025, 4pm @ Kilmarnock Campus

Date of Next PIFCo Meeting – Tuesday 18 November 2025, 5pm @ Kilmarnock Campus

P - Papers will be published on the College Website; R - Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial confidentiality or for reasons associated with data protection legislation; C/P - Confirmed minutes will be published on the College Website

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