

## **Education Scotland Update - May 2017**

### **1.0 New Quality Arrangements**

- 1.1 New quality arrangements for the college sector have been introduced and 2016/17 is seen as a year of development to introduce the new processes and to allow colleges to support changes through training and awareness raising.
- 1.2 The framework will be built around quality indicators based on 4 overarching principles
- Leadership and Quality Culture
  - Delivery of Learning and services to support learning
  - Outcomes and impact
  - College capacity to improve (not graded)
- 1.3 Colleges will be required to self-evaluate and grade the 3 principles on a 6 point scale from excellent to unsatisfactory annually and to ensure they have sufficient evidence to support the grade. College HMIs will work with the colleges throughout the year to support and advise on evaluation activities, training and sources of evidence. The college will then prepare a report and an Annual Enhancement and Scrutiny Activity Schedule (AESAS) by October 2017. It is planned that these will be published in December 2017.

### **2.0 Tailored College Review May 2017**

- 2.1 On the evidence of the need to improve retention and attainment, especially in some FE programmes, the college invited ES to carry out a two day review of selected curriculum areas. Areas selected by the college were:  
Sport; Science; Computing; Business, Management and Administration;  
Additional Support for Learning
- 2.2 A team of external reviewers and a Student Team Member (STM) carried out nearly 40 classroom observations, reviewed college reports and had meetings with staff and students. The STM had discussions with 130 students across all 3 campuses. Whilst we are still awaiting the written report, verbal feedback summarised the findings as following:

#### **Strengths**

Observation of strong classroom teaching, engaged students who are motivated and enjoying their learning; staff with good industry experience; good examples of the use of technology to support learning; assessment practice being used effectively; good examples of team teaching; students find staff very helpful and approachable; wider student services very effective;

wide range of programmes providing breadth and depth; positive feedback on the benefits of the college's Developing Learning and Teaching programme

### **Areas for Development**

Evaluation of L&T not well developed in some areas; missed opportunities for sharing L&T practice and cross campus engagement; whilst lots of mechanisms for student feedback exist, it may be getting lost and effectively acted upon; recruitment and progression decisions may lead to poor retention and attainment; need to create space for **all** staff teams to have dialogue around performance and improvement – not focus on compliance

- 2.3 The key point highlighted by ES is that our learning and teaching is good – but to improve retention and attainment we should create the space for curriculum teams to 'own the performance' of their programmes and not be driven by compliance to follow process and procedures. We need to create the conditions to allow teams to reflect upon the critical factors affecting the learner journey – and make changes to improve.

Initial discussion has taken place with Curriculum APs about enhancing our evaluation process and using a day in June to get cross campus teams together focusing on the issues that will actually make an impact to improving retention and attainment.

### **3.0 Next Steps**

- 3.1 The college will use the evidence gathered to refine and improve evaluation activities with the aim of creating effective conditions for staff teams to discuss, reflect and set clear actions for performance improvement. The continuing focus will be on improving the key stages of the learner journey that impact on retention and attainment. The establishment of a new Quality Standards Group will help to sharpen this focus.