src Southern Regional College

College Development Plan (CDP)

2023-2024

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary

This College Development Plan (CDP) sets out the activity to be undertaken by Southern Regional College (the College) for the 2023-2024 Academic Year and has been endorsed by the Colleges Governing Body.

LEGAL STATUS

Northern Ireland Further Education (FE) colleges are required, under Article 20 of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, to produce and publish annual business plans (College Development Plans).

The six FE colleges (collectively the FE sector) are Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) and a key delivery arm of the Department for the Economy (DfE). The FE sector is unique in that it has a dual mandate, taking a pivotal role in generating a strong and vibrant economy through the development of professional and technical skills, increasingly at higher levels, and by helping employers to innovate; and supporting social inclusion by providing those with low or no qualifications, or who have other barriers to learning, with the skills and qualifications needed to find employment and to become economically active

The Further Education sector is the main provider of professional and technical education and training in Northern Ireland and has a key role to play in raising the skill levels in the region and in supporting the new 10X economic vision. The College is one of the largest education providers in NI and has a strong local and national reputation and maintaining a quality brand is essential for the College's success in attracting students and positively developing external relationships, and is well placed to provide learners, employers, and the local community with a wide range of education and training opportunities, delivering outstanding quality in teaching, training, and business support, not just within Northern Ireland but nationally and internationally.

Our Vision to be the provider of first choice for professional and technical education and training in the region – prized by individuals and employers, is based on the desire to provide relevant and meaningful vocational learning opportunities delivered through quality and innovative teaching, which is informed by effective quality improvement planning.

This vision is delivered through our mission, values, and strategic priorities.

Our Mission is to positively transform lives through meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences.

The delivery of our mission is underpinned by a series of core values which help define the culture of the College and are used as the final arbiter in our internal processes and external relationships, as well as the interaction between staff and learners.

Our Core Values are:

- PUTTING LEARNERS FIRST
- WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE MORE
- STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

The College seeks to help establish a context of progressive and effective management and help build an appropriate working and learning environment for the community that we serve. Students are treated as mature individuals and are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning experience and to play an active role in decisions that affect them.

In addition to providing the best possible learning experiences, students are given every opportunity to develop personal and social skills so they can derive the maximum benefit from their College experience. This includes access to skills competitions, employability, work experience, work related challenges and projects, participation in student mobility programmes and an increasingly effective students' union.

The future demand for skills is particularly relevant to Colleges across Northern Ireland as the NI skills barometer highlights that delivering on Northern Ireland's economic potential will require a significant uplift in the number of people undertaking professional and technical qualifications.

Average Annual labour market supply gap by qualification level 2020-30
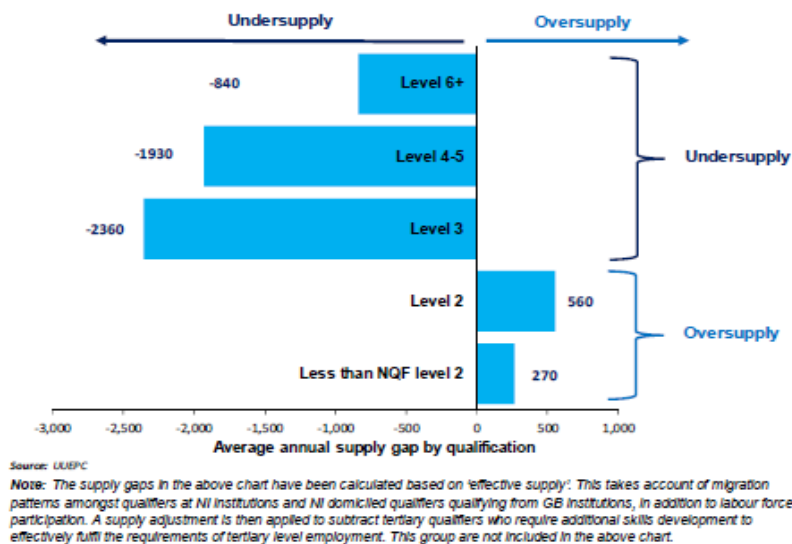
Figure 1

The demand for skills in NI will outstrip supply but the nature of the skills gap varies across NQF levels. The largest supply gaps are likely to emerge in the mid-tier skills levels across most subject areas, linked primarily to a supply issue. NQF level 4-5 qualifications represent only 7% of the overall supply of labour from the education

system. The skills barometer suggests that addressing this undersupply could be met by either increasing the course offering and participation in mid-level qualifications at FE or increasing the number of apprenticeships which achieve at least mid-level qualification.

The College aims to address three important areas through its curriculum offering and business support activities:

- economic development through the provision of courses designed to meet the needs of the local and regional economy particularly in priority sectors;

- personal development through opportunities for further study and learning at all levels in preparation for working life and into retirement; and

- social development, allowing people from different community backgrounds to participate on a wide range of courses at all levels.

It is in this context the College has developed an action plan for 23/24 to successfully deliver on the following strategic aims:

The activities in the CDP demonstrate the College's contribution to fulfilling the aspirations within the Northern Ireland Draft Programme for Government (PfG) and DfE strategies including Graduating to Success, Further Education Means Success, Industrial Strategy for Northern Ireland, Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland – Skills for a 10x Economy and the Northern Ireland Skills Barometer.

2. Strategic Context

Executive's draft PfG Outcomes Framework

Of the nine strategic outcomes included in the PfG's draft Outcomes Framework, the College supports the following draft outcomes:
- We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.
- Our children and young people have the best start in life.
- Everyone can reach their potential.
- Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral.

Strategies / Priorities / Policies

The College is a key delivery partner in taking forward:

DfE's - 10X Economy, Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland - Skills for a 10X Economy, 10x Delivery Plan 2023/24 Trade and Investment for a 10X Economy, and Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland – The Path to Net Zero Energy

Review of the Further Education Delivery Model

The Department for the Economy agreed the following priorities for the FE Sector:
1. Improve the value for money provided by the sector through increasing enrolments and reducing costs;
2. Ensure the FE Sector is more clearly focused on delivering against the Department's objectives; and
3. Ensure the FE Sector has the necessary capacity and agility to respond to the changes in the economic context.

3. Financial Performance / Position (Apr 23 – Mar 24)

The table below sets out the college resource and capital requirements of £34.358m for 2023/24.

	PROGRAMME / ACTIVITY					
	Further Education	**Higher Education**	**Apprenticeships / Traineeships**	**Business Development**	**Social Inclusion**	**Other**
	All Levels up to Level 3 not under any of the succeeding categories	Level 4-6	Programmes up to Level 3 including AppsNI; Traineeships; Skills for Life and Work; TfS	InnovateUs; Skills Focus; Assured Skills Academies; Flexible Skills; International Programmes; Innovation Voucher Scheme	Access NI; Essential Skills; ESOL; College Connect; Skill Up; NI Prisons Service; VEP; Princes Trust; UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Skills Competitions
Direct Teaching Costs - Pay	8,326	3,349	5,140	1,322	3,839	25
Direct Teaching Costs - Non Pay	951	362	853	195	698	38
Non-Direct Costs*	8,875	3,378	4,293	327	3,123	26
Total Delivery Cost	**18,152**	**7,089**	**10,286**	**1,844**	**7,660**	**90**
Non-Grant in Aid Income	(1,607)	(2,990)	(4,521)	(513)	(2,111)	0
Net Requirement	**16,545**	**4,099**	**5,765**	**1,331**	**5,549**	**90**

Includes total support service/non-front-line activity overheads apportioned based on delivery hours. 🖳

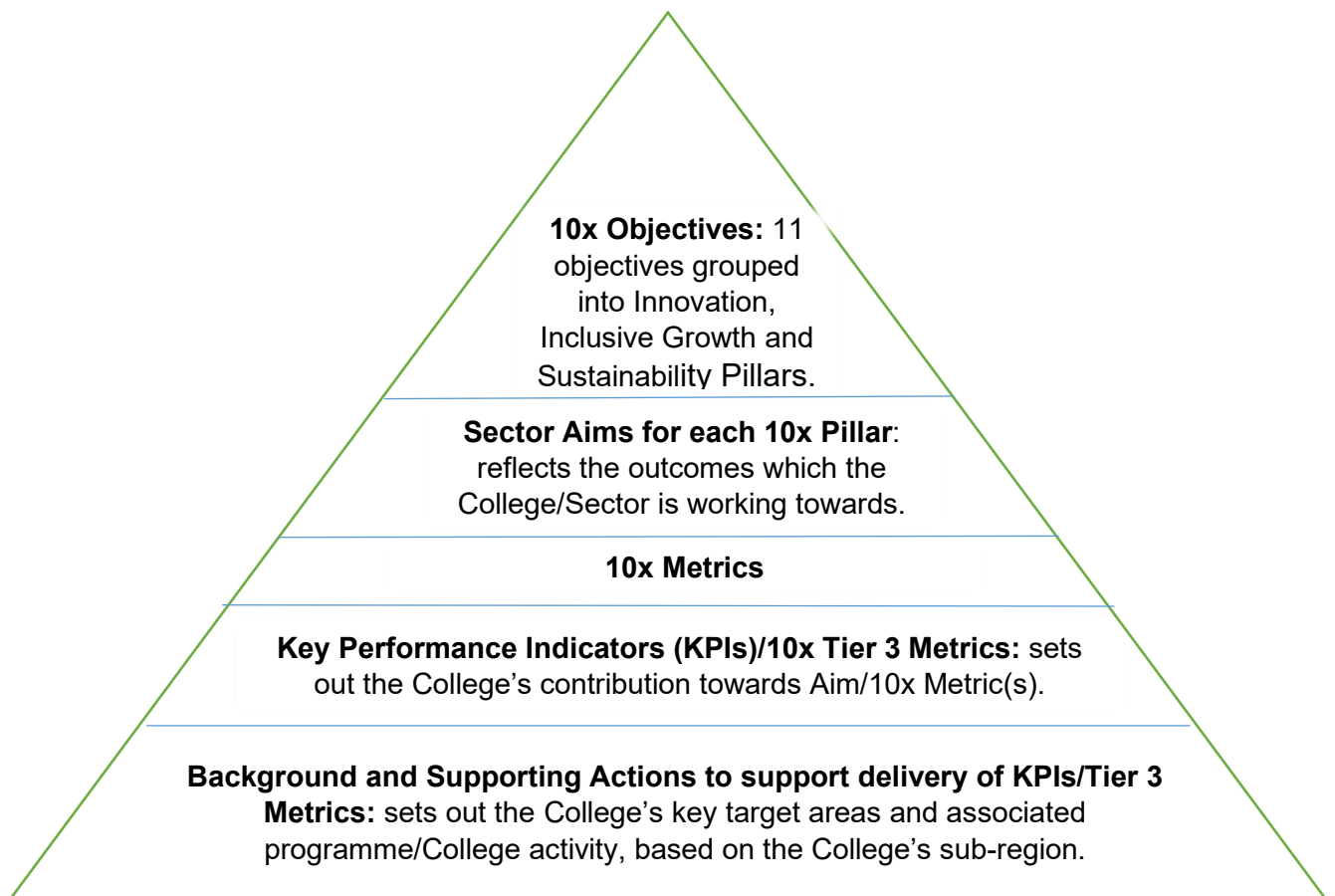| **TOTAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENT (£000's)**	**33,378**

Capital Expenditure	1,190
Capital Receipts	(210)
Net Capital Requirement (£000's)	**980**

4. 2023/24 College Planned Delivery

a. Setting the Scene

In support of the Strategic Context, the College takes into account the College profile and Sub-regional Operating Context to prioritise resource utilisation to areas of greatest need.

To align with 10x Economy, the College Planned Delivery has been set out to show the College's contribution to 10x as follows:

10x Objectives: 11 objectives grouped into Innovation, Inclusive Growth and Sustainability Pillars.

Sector Aims for each 10x Pillar: reflects the outcomes which the College/Sector is working towards.

10x Metrics

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)/10x Tier 3 Metrics: sets out the College's contribution towards Aim/10x Metric(s).

Background and Supporting Actions to support delivery of KPIs/Tier 3 Metrics: sets out the College's key target areas and associated programme/College activity, based on the College's sub-region.

In-year College Development Plan Progress Reports tracking *'how well'* the College is performing will be provided to the Department for the Economy. The Department for the Economy will publish reports on performance against 10x objectives demonstrating if *'anyone is better off'*, along with progress reports on the 10x delivery plan 2023/24.

b. College Profile for 2023/24

Southern Regional College is one of the largest education providers in Northern Ireland, straddled between the two council areas of Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon and Newry, Mourne & Down in the southern part of NI. With approximately 20,000 students enrolled annually and over 900 members of staff, our core purpose is to link individuals to work, assisting them in finding a job, keeping a job and getting a better job.

Following a £100m investment, the new landmark campuses in Armagh and Banbridge opened their doors in September 2020, each boasting cutting-edge facilities led by experienced and skilled professional staff. In addition to these 2 campuses the College operates from 3 campuses in Lurgan, Newry and Portadown, with community provision also offered across the region. The College continues to implement its Estates Strategy and is reviewing options to progress the planned campus at Craigavon to replace the existing Lurgan and Portadown campuses in addition to progressing with innovative plans to expand the existing East campus in Newry.
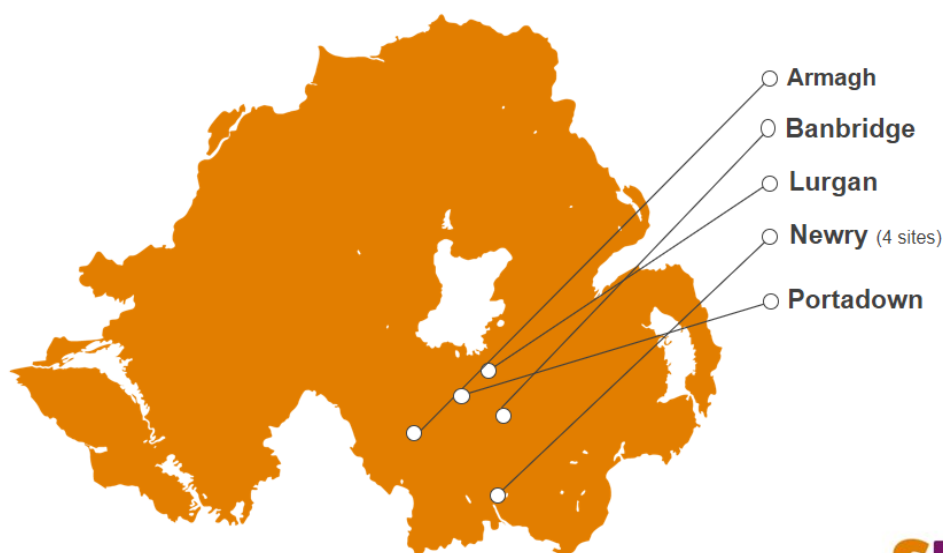
www.src.ac.uk

At the College the learner is at the heart of everything we do. We provide a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive learning environment, delivering first class education and training to positively transform lives through meaningful and enjoyable experiences. Our range of Matrix and Autism Accredited student support services are dedicated to helping students before, during and after their time at the College.

The courses at the College cover almost all subject areas and include full-time and part-time academic and vocational qualifications at various levels for pre-16, post-16 and 19+ (adult) options. Programmes range from recreational

hobby courses, through to degree and master's level qualifications, in addition to Apprenticeships at Further and Higher Level.

The College delivers to over 4,000 full-time and 7,800 part-time learners annually, and works with over 90 community and voluntary groups, covering over 1,500 square miles within the southern region.

The College remains committed to supporting local post-primary schools in the delivery of the Entitlement Framework (EF) at Key Stage 4 and Post-16. The EF aims to guarantee all school pupils greater choice and flexibility by providing them with access to a wide range of learning opportunities suited to their needs, aptitudes, and interests, irrespective of where they live or the school they attend. The College plays an important role in providing access to a wide range of vocational learning opportunities that would not otherwise be available to pupils in local schools.

In 2022-23, the College maintained excellent levels of engagement with 25 schools across the 4 Area Learning Communities within the region.

School Partnership

Year	Enrolments
18/19	2931
19/20	2699
20/21	2540
21/22	2863
22/23	2974
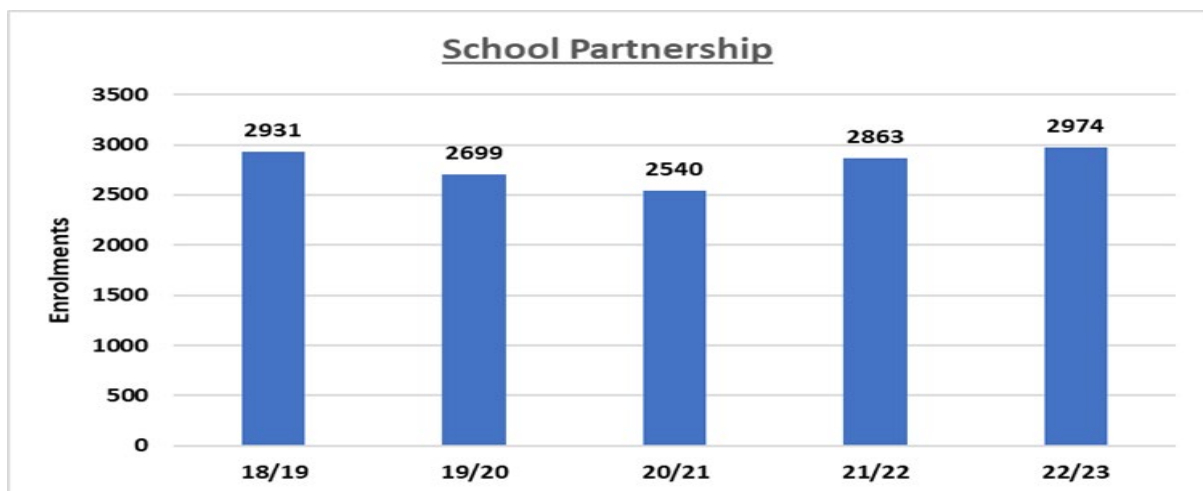
In our bid to continue to build a strong educational future and focus, the College has established an impressive portfolio of industry links on local, regional, national, and international scales. The Faculties within the College continue to nurture relationships with employers, public bodies, awarding bodies and the local area learning communities to ensure that the College's provision remains relevant and inclusive.

The College has developed the following seven strategic priorities which are delivered through an annual action plan and set out the practical means through which we will create an entrepreneurial, creative environment where all our staff, students and clients are encouraged and supported to fulfil their potential.

1. **Provision of a high-quality learning experience through a relevant and meaningful curriculum.**

   "To place the College at the heart of lifelong learning within the region in order to strengthen economic and workforce development, to enhance social cohesion and to advance individuals' skills and learning"

2. **Support economic growth and innovation through flexible business support solutions.**

   "To support local and regional economic development through the provision of flexible business services and training solutions aimed at improving the competitiveness and productivity of new and existing businesses."

3. **Inspired people and Organisation Development.**

   "To be a high performing College through the recruitment, development and deployment of a highly skilled and well-motivated staff."

4. **Effective Governance and Financial Management.**

   "To continue to provide effective corporate Governance and ensure that the College operates within a robust system of internal financial management and control. "

5. **Provision of a safe and stimulating environment.**

   "To create an environment that inspires learners to achieve their potential."

6. **Increased International Links.**

   "To promote an outward and forward-looking College through the development of international links supporting staff, students and knowledge exchange"

7. **Creating a sustainable inspired College.**

   "To use our position as an education and training provider to inspire and promote a sustainable culture in everything that we do."

In the 22/23 FE Leavers Survey 51.2% of level 1-3 students went into employment and 30% continued with their studies at the college highlighting the opportunities that the college provides at level 4-6 to support career progression.

Given the challenging environment the college operates in, it is notable that the college enrolled 17.4% of all sector enrolments[1]. Student performance has remained stable

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[1] Annual FE Sector Activity NI Bulletin.

across a 5-year period with retention increasing by 2%, achievement decreasing by 1% and overall student success increasing by 0.7%.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	Achievement 2022-23	%		Achievement 2021-22	%
Further Education Full time	1,243	82%		1,572	84%
Part time	7,695	81%		6,473	84%
Higher Education Full time	110	87%		123	91%
Part time	680	76%		653	75%
Work Based Learning TFS/AppsNI	1,155	91%		971	89%
Essential Skills	1,071	56%		1,178	57%

(source EBS)

In the academic year 2023/24 the College maintained its position as the top UK College in World Skills UK competition with college students winning 5 Gold, 3 Silver and 4 Bronze in professional and technical areas such as Beauty Therapy, Automation, Mechatronics, Professional Cookery, Social Care and Science.

The college achieved success at the CITB Skills Training competition winning two golds and one bronze. As a result of the College's excellence in delivery of the Higher-Level Apprenticeships in Applied Industrial Science the college was awarded formal accreditation status from The Royal Society of Chemistry, the only Further Education College within Northern Ireland to achieve this accolade.

Other college achievements include:

- The Organisational Development Team were shortlisted as finalists at the CIPD NI HR awards in the category of Best Learning and Development/Organisation Development Initiative in December 2023;

- The Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment team were shortlisted as finalists in the Best Marketing/Communications Team category at the Irish Education Awards.

- The External Engagement and International Affairs Team were also shortlisted at the Irish Education awards for The Best Erasmus Programme;

- The Student Services team were a finalist and a Commended College in the AoC Beacon Awards for the RCU Award for Support for Students;

- The Estates Team (along with McAdam Design) was Highly Commended in the Most Innovative Public Sector Project - Newry Higher Education and Innovation Centre in the prestigious Digital Construction Live Awards 2023;

- In 2023 the college won Apprentice of the Year.
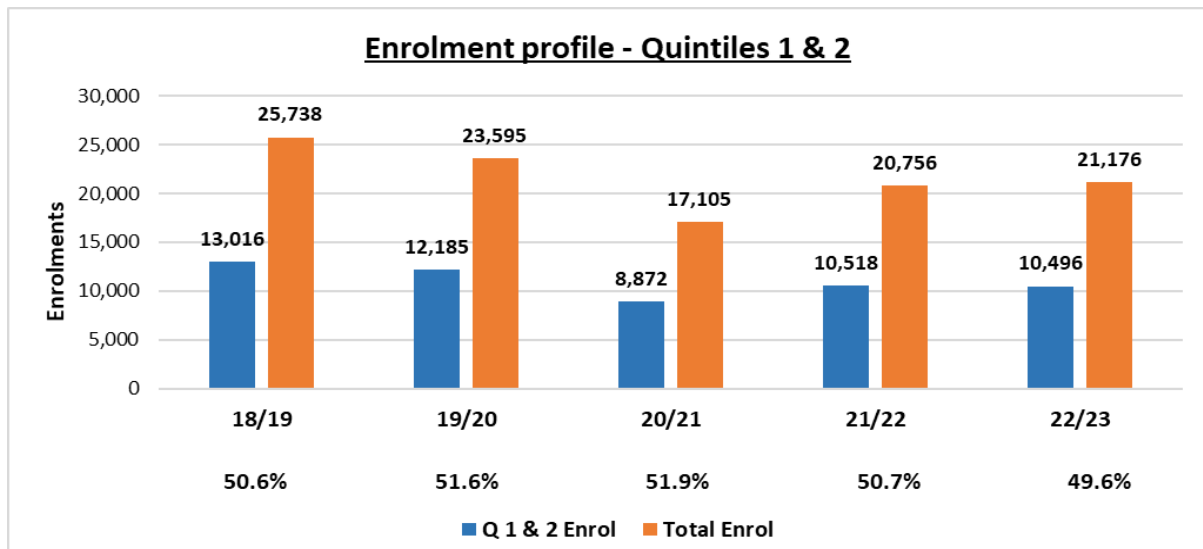
Population Profile

The region served by the College also has some of the most deprived super output areas (SOAs) across Northern Ireland. College curriculum offer aims to serve the needs of the wider community across Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and the South Down and South Armagh regions of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Of the top 100 most deprived SOAs 15 sit within the region served by the College, these are listed as follows:

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	**Newry, Mourne and Down**
Woodwille 1	Crossmaglen
Drumgask 2	Drumgullion 1
Court 1	Creggan
Callan Bridge	Daisy Hill 2
Annagh 2	Ballybot
Drumgor 2	Silverbridge
Drumnamoe 1	Forkhill 2
Church	

Table 1

Students living in areas falling within quintiles one and two, account for 49.6% of total enrolments (55.8% male, 44.2% female).

Enrolment profile - Quintiles 1 & 2

	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Q 1 & 2 Enrol	13,016	12,185	8,872	10,518	10,496
Total Enrol	25,738	23,595	17,105	20,756	21,176
	50.6%	51.6%	51.9%	50.7%	49.6%

The College remains committed to widening participation of those who face significant barriers to education and training including those economically inactive, those with learning difficulties and disabilities, those from under-represented groups in society and those not in employment, education, or training (NEETs).

The latest NI seasonally adjusted unemployment rate (the proportion of economically active people aged 16 and over who were unemployed) for the period July – September 2023 was estimated at 2.1%, a decrease when compared with the same period in 2022, when the unemployment rate was 2.7%. There are an estimated 20,000 young people (16–24) who are not in employment, education or training, which represents a local NEET rate of 10%, in line with the UK rate.

From a skills perspective, outcomes from compulsory education are getting better and the overall skills profile of the workforce continues to improve. This is undoubtedly positive, but significant disparities remain in outcomes, particularly for those living in the most deprived communities. The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) highlights that, in the most deprived communities, up to 60% of the workforce have low or no qualifications. For comparison, the same statistic in the best performing area is 11%.

We remain committed to delivering tailored programmes for young people with social and behavioural problems who have had a poor educational experience to date and for whom progression to full time education and training is not yet appropriate.

The College will continue to partner with other agencies including Clanrye Training Services to support a coherent regional offer at entry and Level 1 thus maximising the use of public resources.

In 2022/23 the College achieved 98.9% (Excluding Essential Skills) of its full-time enrolment target and 100.9% of our part time enrolment target.

Total Enrolment				
		Target	Actual	% Target
Level 0-7	Full time	3,932	3,887	98.9%
	Part time	15,109	15,248	100.9%

The College is committed to working with the Department for the Economy and the other regional Colleges to introduce a new Vocational Education and Training system (VET), that includes the well-established apprenticeship pathway and a non-employed pathway based on the new Traineeships and Advanced Technical Awards.

The development of this non-employed pathway is central to the strategic positioning of Further Education Colleges in the wider NI educational ecosystem.

The development of the Traineeship as the main full time offer at Level 2 for young people combined with the evolution of the Advanced Technical Awards at Level 3 offer learners a quality vocational ward that is based on the needs of industry. This includes both knowledge and skills development, embedding of softer or transversal skills and a mandatory period of work-based learning. These awards are based on a new pedagogy delivered through Project Based Learning.

The establishment of this new non-employed pathway aims to:

- Provide a quality training programme valued by industry;
- Simplify the vocational offer;
- Rationalise the use of vocational qualifications used across Colleges;
- Allow seamless transition to and from corresponding apprenticeships;
- Differentiate the vocational offer from that offered by schools.

The College's curriculum portfolio covers a wide number of vocational areas offering progression pathways from entry level through to level 5 and above. We recognise that the vocational or professional and technical qualifications landscape is both complex and often confusing. The evolving VET system through apprenticeships and the non-employed vocational pathway will increase the opportunity for transferability and progression for the learner by providing flexible sideways movement as well as longitudinal progression for learners to higher level study or sustained employment.

The qualifications reform programme and the out-workings of the traineeship and apprenticeship strategies will take time to generate a wider understanding and acceptance of this simplified vocational system of learning in Northern Ireland.

Progression Pathways
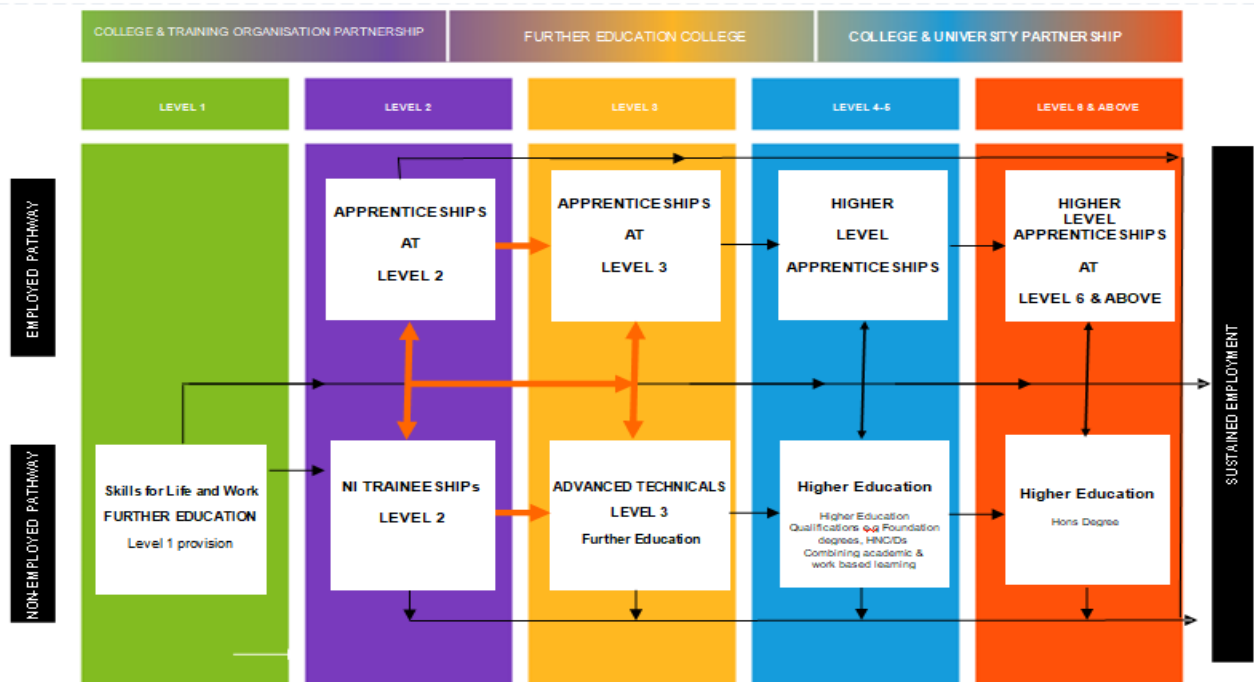
Curriculum Progression Pathways

Sustainable Practice

The United Nations has set a number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which recognise that ending poverty and other societal barriers go hand in hand with other strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and support economic growth while tackling climate change and protecting our environment.

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) accord is the international university and college sector's collective response to the SDGs. As an education and training organization, we recognise our responsibility in promoting sustainable practice. The College will continue to progress this during the new academic year.

The College will adapt a whole college approach to sustainability through which we will evidence our actions against these goals.

Industry Profile

The College serves two council areas – Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC) and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) and is recognised by both councils as a strategic partner in supporting local economic development. There are over 18,000 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses within the southern region. Both councils report an aging population and a decline in the 16-64 working age population in their respective districts therefore putting pressure on businesses to attract and retain talent. Firms are turning to increased investment in technology and councils are trying to engage the economically inactive to address the skills shortages.

In a recent employer survey conducted by ABC Council (December 2022), 67% employers stated their ability to attract skilled and experience workers was decreasing, with 50% stating their ability to attract entry level workers was declining. A recent economic outlook for NMDDC (September 2023), highlighted that the key considerations for the council area included an increased focus on driving productivity twinned with the supply of key employee and managerial skills. It also pointed to the

need to attract more females, disabled people and older workers to enter the labour market to address the changing world of work.

NISRA[2] employee earnings statistics published Nov 2023 noted the median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees ("weekly earnings") in April 2023 was £641, an increase of 7.4% from £597 in 2022.

In real terms (that is, adjusted for inflation) weekly earnings in NI decreased by 0.3% over the year to April 2023, which is the second consecutive real terms decrease, following the largest annual decrease in real earnings on record last year (3.7%).

Approximately 11% of all jobs in NI were 'low-paid'. Although this was a record low, it was the joint highest proportion of the 12 UK regions.

The gender pay-gap for all employees (full-time and part-time combined) in NI was 7.8% in favour of males in 2023. Median annual earnings for full-time employees in NI were £32,900 in 2023, lower than the UK median of £35,000.

The College is committed to working closely with employers from these sectors to ensure the curriculum meets their needs through Apprenticeships, Higher Level Apprenticeships, and upskilling programmes. Typically, the College engages with 1,000+ businesses annually for Apprenticeships and business support solutions.


The College's Business Support & Innovation (BSI) plays a major role in identifying and responding to the needs of local business and industry, supporting increased engagement with businesses with a particular focus on supporting non-innovating businesses to innovate and for innovative businesses to collaborate.

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[2] https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/economy-and-labour-market/Employee-earnings-NI-2023.html

Through the delivery of our 3-year commercialisation strategy our Business Support and Innovation unit will work cohesively with Curriculum to meet the needs of industry, ensuring an economically relevant, responsive curriculum.

The following infographics highlight the number of employees upskilled each year by the College, the types of business engaged with and the areas of support and expertise within the Colleges Business Support Unit.
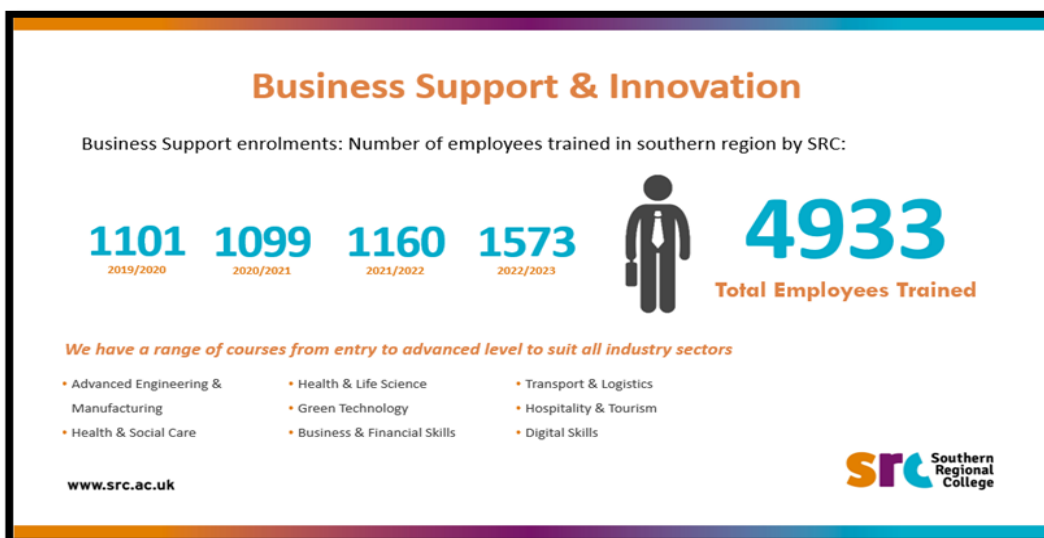
(Data Source: EBS)

BSI continue to successfully engage with industry with 92% clients that responded, confirming they were satisfied (86% of whom were very satisfied).

Innovation	
Aim – 1	**To increase the number of businesses in Northern Ireland engaging in innovation activities.**
10x Metrics	• **Number of R&D companies** • **R&D companies by (employee) size, ownership, location, sector** • **FTE of R&D workforce (Business)** • **Number of Innovation Driven Enterprises (IDEs) (subject to data availability)** • **Number of innovative active firms** • **Innovation accreditation**
KPI 1.1	**To deliver 121 no. innovation-based projects in SMEs in the 2023/24 financial year.**

Background:

The 10x Economy strategy places an emphasis on a "Decade of Innovation" and a focus on bringing our small businesses along with us on this escalator of change. Changes in technology and manufacturing are at the fore of the strategy as well as developing a culture that embeds and champions innovation and design thinking. The Business Support & Innovation (BSI) unit specialises in a range of knowledge transfer and support services to encourage innovation activities amongst SMEs. A team of innovation specialists, housed within the unit, exclusively work with SMEs offering a flexible and reliable service. Depending on the sector and size of the company, the College's Business Support and Innovation centre is able to offer interventions on a progressive basis as the company develops and grows - referred to as the "innovation escalator".

BSI's innovation pillar aligns to the 10x delivery plan, by placing innovation at the heart of the College's business support offering. The College aims to promote an enhanced culture of innovation and to encourage and facilitate innovation activities within local businesses through the following targets.

Planned Activity:

- Deliver 90 InnovateUs projects to support SMEs.
- Deliver 10 Innovation Voucher projects to support SMEs.
- Deliver 20 Innovation Boost projects to support SMEs.
- Deliver 1 x KTP project to support local SME.

Innovation	
Aim - 2	**To meet the skills needs of businesses in Northern Ireland to support increased business productivity and growth.**
10x Metrics	• **STEM graduates** • **Number of R&D companies** • **R&D companies by (employee) size, ownership, location, sector** • **FTE of R&D workforce (Business)** • **Number of Innovation Driven Enterprises (IDEs) (subject to data availability)** • **Number of innovative active firms** • **Innovation accreditation** • **High growth businesses**
KPI 2.1	**To deliver tailored training programmes to 380 no. of businesses in 2023/24 financial year.**
KPI 2.2	**To deliver 33% of tailored training courses at L2+ in Broad STEM related subject areas in 2023/24 financial year[3]. This includes Skills Focus and Skill Up.**

Background:

BSI is committed to local workforce development, upskilling and lifelong learning and has an appropriately skilled and qualified team in place who engage with businesses of all sizes to support their efforts to attract, retain and develop the talent and skills necessary to increase business productivity and growth. This is done through a range of employee upskilling programmes – both through funded support and full cost recovery. The business development team proactively engages with local industry to ascertain their needs and put appropriate solutions in place. The team offers a high level of customer service to all clients and provides the gateway to college services for all business and industry clients.

The BSI team works closely with faculty colleagues to advise on industry demand thereby ensuring curriculum aligns with industry need. The team also actively participates in local skills and employability fora as well as other relevant business support networks and steering groups. The College aims to meet the skills needs of local businesses by achieving the following targets.

Planned Activity:

- Deliver accredited training L2+ to 180 businesses through Skills Focus, confirmed budget £380k.
- Deliver accredited and bespoke training solutions to 40 businesses through Full Cost Recovery *(including council funded projects)*

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[3] Includes Skill-Up and Skills Focus.

- Deliver 10 x Productivity Booster projects to support SMEs.
- Engage with 150 businesses through the delivery of themed workshops and seminars in areas of emerging technology and innovation.
- Deliver 1658 enrolments through upskilling programmes to industry and individuals.
  - o Assured Skills 22
  - o Skills Focus 385
  - o Skills Up 822
  - o Full Cost Recovery 429

KPI 2.3	**To complete 2 no. Academies in 2023/24 financial year.**

Background:

To address talent acquisition challenges faced by local businesses, the College is committed to promoting the Assured Skills Academy programme in the southern region. There are over 60% businesses in the region reporting difficulties with attracting and retaining skilled and qualified staff, so the Assured Skills model is an effective solution to addressing this issue.

For the 2023-24 year, the College will address this KPI by achieving the following target.

Planned Activity:

- Deliver 1 x Fintech Analyst academy.
- Deliver 1 x Business Operations academy.

Inclusive Growth -	
Aim - 3	**Creating a culture of life-long learning - Providing access to FE[4] and HE in FE[5], to those furthest away from the labour market and those with low or no formal qualifications.** **Encourage learners to progress to achieve higher industry relevant qualifications and employment.**
10x Metrics	• **Proportion of the working age population with qualifications at Level 2 and above or Level 3 and above.** • **Economic inactivity** • **Proportion of population aged 25+ who have engaged in education or training in the last 13 weeks.** • **Proportion of the population (16+) with no digital skills.** • **Women in narrow STEM - proportion of enrolments in narrow STEM.**
KPI 3.1	**To increase the number of individuals from 10,753[6] in 2021-22 to 10,986 (plus 435 ES = 11,421) in 2023-24 academic year, equating to an 1.5% increase.**
KPI 3.2	**To increase FE retention rates[7] from 92.9% in 2021-22 to 95% in 2023-24 academic year.**
KPI 3.3	**To increase FE achievement rates[8] from 90% in 2021-22 to 92% in 2023-24 academic year.**
KPI 3.4	**To increase HE in FE retention rates[9] from 86% in 2021-22 to 89% in 2023-24 academic year.**
KPI 3.5	**To increase HE in FE achievement rates[10] from 89.6% in 2021-22 to 91% in 2023-24 academic year.**

The College's curriculum offer aims to serve the needs of the wider communities of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and the regions of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The College is committed to working in partnership with stakeholders including local Schools, Councils, Community and Voluntary sector through neighbourhood renewal areas and through Labour Market Partnerships. The College remains committed to supporting local post-primary schools in the delivery of the Entitlement Framework (EF) at Key Stage 4 and Post-16. The College is the largest provider of delivery for the EF

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[4] Up to and including Level 3.

[5] At Level 4 and above.

[6] As Per the FE Sector Activity in Northern Ireland Bulletin

[7] As Per the FE Sector Activity in Northern Ireland Bulletin: The percentage of final year regulated enrolments completed by students.

[8] As Per the FE Sector Activity in Northern Ireland Bulletin: The percentage of final year regulated enrolments completed by students who achieve a qualification.

[9] As per footnote 4 above.

[10] As per footnote 5 above.

across the sector and is currently engaged with 25 schools across the 4 Area Learning Communities within the region with 2,974[11] enrolments 22/23.

The total community enrolments for 2022-23 was 1,396[12] students.

The College has developed a number of targeted projects to tackle social deprivation, through the provision of innovative tailored training opportunities to meet the needs of marginalised groups and disadvantaged individuals. In 2022-23, five projects, funded by DfC, were delivered to residents living within the five NRAs in Armagh, Brownlow, Lurgan, Newry and Portadown. A total of 284 residents were recruited for the College training through NRA projects.

The College will continue to progress on the action plan as lead for Life Sciences Curriculum HUB and will support the other Hubs in the FE Sector, Digital IT, Engineering, Health & Social Care, Construction, Hospitality & Tourism and Entrepreneurship.

The College is fully committed to supporting widening access and participation at all levels and across all curricula offered across the region. The College's Curriculum Strategy highlights the importance of creating greater choice through a range of blended learning solutions and delivery modalities.

The College continues to progress with is planned roll out of its pilot programme aimed at addressing the lack of young people at key Stage 4 who are undertaking software development or coding.

The College provides extensive pastoral support for learners including various academic support services, such as mentoring, student activities, workshops, online resources, libraries and learning resource centres. The Student Engagement team have continued to engage with a range of external stakeholders such as the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP), the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT), Education Authority (EA) Youth Service, community groups and a range of support organisations to share expertise and resources.

Planned Activity:

- The College aims to enrol 489 Trainees across 16 vocational areas for 2023-24
- The College aims to enrol 753 students on Advanced Technical awards across 6 priority vocational areas.
- The College aims to enrol 308[13] full time higher education students and further 446 Higher Level Apprenticeships with local companies.
- The College aims to enrol 1,400 plus learners as part of its community outreach plan.

Specific targets include improving the retention rates on the following programmes:

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[11] Data source: College EBS Enrolment Report 22/23
[12] Data source: College EBS Enrolment Report 22/23
[13] Includes enrolments under Skill-Up

- *Business - To improve final retention from 64% to 70% and Year on Year Retention from 67% to 70%*
- *L3 Ext Dip in CCLD - To improve year on year retention Lurgan from 48% to 60% and Armagh 63% to 66%*
- *L3 HSC Ext Diploma - To improve year on year retention in from 71% to 75%*
- *L3 Applied Science - To improve level 3 year on year retention from 57% to 65% %*
- *Level 3 Advanced Technical in Computing – To improve retention from 51% to 75% %*
- *Level 3 Performing Arts - To improve retention from 60% to 80% %*
- *Level 3 Engineering - To improve final retention from 75% to 85% %, in year retention from 91.2% to 92% %*
- *Level 3 Construction - To improve final retention from 66% to 85% % & in year retention from 80% to 92% %*

To increase FE achievement rate from 90% in 2021-22 to 92% in 2023-24 academic year.

- *Improve achievement in L2 CCLD Lurgan from 62% to 70% and L3 in Lurgan from 58% achievement to 70%*
- *Improvement achievement in L3 Business from 78% to 80%*

To increase HE in FE retention rates from 86% in 2021-22 to 89% in 2023-24 academic year.

Specific targets include improving the attrition rates on the following programmes:

- *Hair and Beauty Management from 74% to 80% and Year on Year retention from 74% to 80%.*
- *HND Music from 57% -80%*
- *HND Media from 70% -85%*
- *FD Computing from 73% - 90%*

To increase HE in FE achievement rates from 89.6% in 2021-22 to 91% in 2023-24 academic year.
- *Hair and Beauty Management from 45% to 70%*
- *OU Health Care Practice - maintain at 95%*
- *FDeg Counselling from 86% to 90%*
- *L5 Diploma in Accounting from 69% to 75%*
- *L5 Digital Marketing, Advertising and Communication (DMAC) from 64% to 75%*
- *HND Business from 65% to 75%*
- *HND Media attrition rate from 67% to 70*

KPI 3.6	**9,671 of individuals enrolled who are furthest away from the labour market and/or with low or no formal qualifications in 2023/24 academic year.**

Background:

In 2022-23, the College continued to deliver quality Further Education and Training, Higher Education and Higher-Level Apprenticeships (HLAs) catering for 21,176 learner enrolments. The College has an External Engagement Team who play a significant role in addressing the education needs of those living in areas of greatest deprivation and helping people and communities to overcome inequality and disadvantage in education and training. The College's curriculum strategy aims to provide a relevant and fit for purpose curriculum to service the needs of the wider community across the Southern Region, which includes 15 of the top 100 most deprived areas (in Northern Ireland). The External Engagement team is committed to widening participation of those who face significant barriers to education and training including those economically inactive, those with learning difficulties and disabilities, those from under-represented groups in society and those not in employment or training.

The College will aim to deliver the objectives of the Widening Participation Plan (WAPP), prioritising provision in areas of significant deprivation, and engaging with Key Stakeholders to seek opportunities for funding to provide education and training opportunities in these areas as part of the wider community planning process.

In 2022-2023, the Community Team worked in partnership with approximately 100 community and statutory organisations and groups covering over 1,500 square miles to ensure the College identified and met their needs. Many of these organisations or groups are in areas of economic disadvantage or rural isolation and the College actively utilises the space these organisations or groups have as a community outreach centre enabling the College to provide education and resources at the heart of a community.

To support students with special educational needs, the Community Teamwork with residential care homes and day care providers across the southern region, to address issues experienced by residents including isolation, encouraging social interaction, as well as enhancing skills and increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

As a means of supporting diversity and social inclusion, the College helps many local people in overcoming barriers to learning by providing flexible delivery methods which enables them sample vocational learning, supported placements opportunities and gain qualifications to help them progress to the next stage in their career.

Through DfC projects in 2022-2023, the Team successfully enrolled 284 residents onto training programmes, providing industry recognised qualifications or licenses to upskill and improve employability. These training courses have enabled 20% of these residents to achieve employment. The remaining 80% achieved their qualification to support entry into the labour market.

To enable hard to reach learners to access courses the College provides a regional wide newsletter (mail drop), advertising details of Further Education courses available in local community venues and college campuses; a community newsletter updating residents

on locally focused training programmes and a direct up-to-date link to all community educational programmes and support via the College community Facebook and website.

Going forward, the continued fiscal pressures and the review of the People and Places Strategy is likely to lead to further reductions in the level of support across the community at all levels, to support delivery. The budget uncertainty has left a challenging space from April to June 2023, this coupled with the new Labour Market Partnership provision focusing on addressing the economically inactive has meant that the External Engagement team has had to refocus its efforts to ensure the continuation of funding to support those farthest from the labour market.

The College has successfully pursued a number of funding streams to support delivery for 23/24 which are detailed below:

- Secured £227,068 for 5 DfC projects for the 2023/24 academic year, to widen participation in education and training programmes for people who are economically inactive and face social exclusion. This is a decrease of £151,370 due to the DAERA, Community Renewal and Seaflag funding ending.

- Secured funding from DLUHC under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to the value of just over £3 Million to deliver a new and innovative employability project with the Clanrye Group, Women's Aid and Community Advice Newry Mourne Down to provide training, employment and wraparound support for economically inactive people aged 16 plus to reduce job related barriers, develop skills, achieve qualifications, enhance employability and quality of life with a view to progressing to employment /self-employment.

- Secured £2.2 Million from Northern Ireland Office as part of New Deal Fund to provide a Skills, Training and Employment Programme. This is a collaborative six College proposal targeted at those who face barriers to fully engage in skills and education opportunities (Women Returners, those with a disability, unemployed individuals aged over 25 and young people that are NEET's). The programme will provide a support training opportunities and support for 12 – 36 weeks duration that will include job coaching, work sampling, level 1 and 2 interventions.

Planned Activity[14]:

- To achieve 9,665 enrolments, 5194 individuals from Quintile 1 and 2 in 2023/24 academic year.

- To achieve 2,670 enrolments, 1100 individuals declaring a disability/long term health problem in 2023/24 academic year.

- To achieve 3,611 enrolments, 2,292 individuals on Entry Level and Level 1 Programmes (including 435 Essential Skills) in 2023/24 academic year.

- To achieve 299 (including 86 Essential skills enrolments) enrolments, 140 individuals on Step Up in 2023/24 academic year.

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[14] It is acknowledged that enrolment activity in the below measures may be counted in more than one metric.

- To achieve 695 enrolments, 695 individuals on Targeted Programmes[15]

- To achieve 550 enrolments, 250 individuals on ESOL programmes in 2023/24 academic year

KPI 3.7	To increase % of women in narrow STEM related subjects from 21% in 2021/22 to 23% in 2023/24

Background:

In 2021/22 the college enrolled 2,182[16] students in Narrow Stem and of those 21% were female. In terms of overall achievement, 24% of students achieving Narrow Stem related subjects were female.

Planned Activity[17]:

Achieve STEM reaccreditation by September 2024 and develop marketing strategy from September 2024 onwards, detailing the STEM provision in the following areas of the Curriculum with a specific focus on female recruitment in:

- Biology
- Sport Sciences
- Psychology
- Mathematics
- Engineering
- Geography
- Computing

Inclusive Growth	
Aim - 4	Upskilling and reskilling learners to progress in life-long learning and to meet employer skills needs through provision of focussed training, providing the skills and qualifications necessary to secure employment.
10x Tier 2 Metrics	• Proportion of the working age population with qualifications at Level 2 and above or Level 3 and above. • Economic inactivity by gender, age, disability, MDM • Proportion of population aged 25+ who have engaged in education or training in the last 13 weeks.

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[15] College Targeted Programmes (excluding Step Up and Skills for Life and Work) include Employ Me and PEACE programmes.

[16] Data Source: FE Sector Activity in Northern Ireland Bulletin

[17] Each programme will be required to recruit a minimum class size of 14 with a focus on recruiting female students.

KPI 4.1	**To upskill/reskill 2843 no. of individuals on training programmes in 2023/24 academic year.**

Background:

Key Programme Areas/College activities in support of the above KPIs:

The College offered a wide range of courses aimed at meeting the needs of individuals and employers, including the delivery of qualifications ranging from Level 0 to Level 3 on the National Register of Regulated Qualifications.

Advanced Technical Awards

In line with the introduction of Traineeships NI, the Advanced Techs provide a non-employed progression route for learners and other school leavers on completion of key stage 4 education. The Advanced Tech will become the primary full-time product offered by Colleges at Level 3. During 2023-24 the College will continue to offer the Advanced Tech Award in six areas as listed:

- Applied science
- Engineering
- Information Technology
- Health and Social Care
- Business and Finance
- Construction and Built Environment

Traineeships

The College remains committed to the Level 2 Traineeship NI programme as the only qualification to provide prospective students progression into further study or employment. The NI Traineeship has a dual purpose. Firstly, to provide learners with a solid foundation of skills, experience and qualifications that are recognised and valued by employers and relevant to opportunities in today's labour market. Secondly, to provide learners with broad-based knowledge and skills as the basis from which they can access future opportunities for employment or further study at a higher level.

Introduced in 2020/21 the college now offers provision across 18 professional technical areas.

In 2023/24 the college successfully implemented the following Level 2 qualifications.

- Hairdressing
- Health & Social Care
- Child Care
- Information Technology

Development of the remaining 14 programme areas is underway in line with the quality assurance model that has been developed to secure the implementation of the Level 2 programme and the college will implement these new qualifications as they are approved by the Regulator.

AppsNI

The college will continue to extend its range of professional and technical apprenticeship programmes across Level 2 and 3. Currently the portfolio spans across 39 PT Areas. The college's commitment to the Apprenticeship programme is defined in the Curriculum Strategy 2020-25 and the College Development Plan, both of which are focused on delivering the new VET system and 10X.

The College has experienced significant growth in the enrolments to Apprenticeships since September 2021, with a 144% growth in new enrolments at Level 2 and 7% growth in enrolments at level 3, across 15 different programmes. The level 3 Electrotechnical Apprenticeship is considered the College's flagship programme recruiting 118 Apprentices in September 2022 and 127 Apprentices in September 2023. Level 3 growth is expected to grow over the forthcoming years given the increased growth at level 2.

HLAs,

Higher Education (including higher level apprenticeships). Our current and future higher education curriculum has been informed by a number of external influencers including local council employability and economic development plans and priority higher level skills identified through the skills barometer. The development of new higher education courses both mainstream and degree-based apprenticeships is aligned to the sub-regional needs set out through the Skills Barometer. The College will continue to strengthen its partnerships with higher education providers including the Open University and Dundalk Institute of Technology to increase flexibility and widen our offering to meet local and regional needs both now and in the future. Over the last 5 years the College has introduced a number of new higher-level apprenticeships at Level 5 in:

- Digital Marketing, Advertising and Communication
- Accountancy
- Technical Design and Manufacturing (Mechatronics)
- Chemical and Industrial Life Sciences
- Hospitality and Tourism with specialism
- Cloud Computing, Analytics and Security for Industry
- Sports and Exercise

The College continues to work through the relevant sectoral partnerships and curriculum HUBs in the planning and development of new higher-level apprenticeships. The College is committed to continuing to partner with other regional colleges through the joint development of new provision and consortia validation proposals with local universities. The College is currently leading such engagement in the development of a new Level 6 Accounting Technologist programme in collaboration with BMC, The Open University and Technological University Shannon. This development will offer progression pathway for students completing the Level 5 ATI diploma and higher-level apprenticeship in accounting and will potentially create the first all island apprenticeship recognised in both jurisdictions.

Plans for 23/24 include:

Skill Up, Ignite Your Skills, tailored training programmes

Over recent years the College's Business Support and Innovation (BSI) Unit has increased the range of support services to businesses beyond the delivery of courses and training programmes. The College's Business Engagement Strategy encompasses a variety of activities to include Innovation, technology, and knowledge transfer services in tandem with the traditional skills development and training portfolio on offer. The BSI Unit will continue to use a range of earmarked funding initiatives including the Skill Up and Ignite your Skills to support individuals in the southern region.

Skills Competitions, WorldSkills

Competitions are used across the College to raise standards in training to world-class levels. As well as building on a student's technical skillset, they are given the opportunity to develop their professional and personal skills. This begins with local intercampus based competitions leading to selection for regional and national competitions. The College's local intercampus competitions also extend to students from the SPP, reinforcing the aim of achieving excellence in all areas of skills training. The College's commitment to skills competitions is demonstrated through participation in local, regional, national, and international competitions across many vocational areas. College students also engage in several other activities including enterprise, sporting, voluntary work, and fundraising events. 2022-23 and 23-24 have been outstanding years of competition success for the College with the College topping the leader board at the WorldSkills UK competition for 2 consecutive years.

Turing

The Turing funded mobilities provide students with the opportunity to develop new skills in areas such as IT, environmental sustainability and gain vital international experience that is aimed as boosting their employability. The College remains committed to Turing in 2023/24 and beyond.

Supporting Actions/Planned Activity:

Individual Training Programme	Planned Activity
Advanced Technical Awards	**753**
Traineeships	**489**
AppsNI	**1155**
HLAs	**446**
	2843

- Support 14 learners through participation in Skills Competitions in 2023/24 academic year.
- Support 16 learners through 1 Turing programmes in 2023/24 academic year.

Sustainability	
Aim – 5	To address the skills needs of the future workforce in green industries through upskilling and reskilling learners in support of a net zero economy in Northern Ireland.
10x Metrics	• Employment in the low carbon and renewable energy economy • Turnover in low carbon and renewable energy economy
KPI 5.1	In 2023/24 academic year, to develop curriculum and train staff for delivery on green sustainable skills in 2024/25 academic year.

Background:

Business/Industry Areas for Development

The Sustainability Programme content developed will include a cross-sectoral, common, introductory strand that will form the foundation of knowledge for all businesses and will include topics such as:

- Understanding the different terminologies and their relationship to each other – Sustainability, Green Technology, Net Zero, Embodied Carbon, Circular Economy etc.

- UN Sustainable Development Goals & Economic Strategies – breaking down the strategic goals at local, national and international levels to show relevance and impact that can be achieved through changes to business practices

- Pathways to Success – Opportunities to review business strategies and processes, assess goals, implement available tools and develop roadmaps
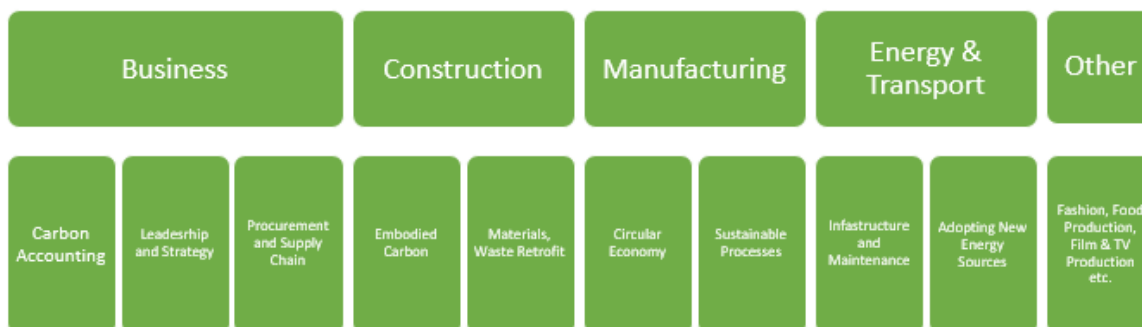
This will set the scene with businesses and individuals, ensuring a core foundational knowledge prior to moving into business and industry specific areas.

Each college is leading on a designated area, developing accredited provision at level 2 and at higher levels where possible. Figure 1 below indicates the range of areas where curriculum is required.

Planned Activity:

To improve the level of awareness and understanding of climate change through the delivery of formal training course to 30% of College staff in 23/24.

Working collaboratively, the six Further Education colleges will develop a suite of Sustainability modules and short courses that support skills and knowledge transfer across every industry. The suite of materials will build a foundational resource, beginning at level 2 and work up to sector specific skills at higher levels, developing pathways throughout. When accredited the content can be used to support individuals through Skill Up, businesses through Skills Focus, as well as the wider student base, including apprenticeships, where sustainability modules and units can be incorporated into curriculum delivery.

The sector has established a Task and Finish group to discharge this project during the 2. The T&FG have adopted a three-phase approach; research, content development and accreditation and are meeting regularly and working through a project implementation plan.

The Sustainability Programme content developed will include a cross-sectoral, common, introductory strand that will form the foundation of knowledge for all businesses. the College will develop content for modules at levels 2, 3 and 5 aligned to specific industry sectors as agreed with sector colleagues.

Creating a Sustainable Inspired College is one of the College's strategic aims and we have recently signed up to the SDG Accord and have committed to reporting annually on the progress we make in contributing to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Reports from all signatory institutions are collated to provide a summary report of how both the Higher and Further Education sectors are contributing to the SDGs globally which is presented each year to the UN High Level Political Forum. The College aims to use our position as an education and

training provider to inspire and promote a sustainable culture in everything that we do. To help us achieve this we have three underpinning objectives namely:

- To develop and support a sustainable workforce.
- To embed the UN Sustainable Development Goals in all aspects of college life and to provide students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote sustainable development.
- To embed sustainable practice in all aspects of college operations.

Our Sustainability Goals

Our Sustainability Goals outline our aspirations for the forthcoming year informed by the findings within our annual SDG Accord Report. Progress against our goals is monitored at each Sustainability Working Group meeting.

1

Engage students with the Sustainable Development Goals through Teaching and Learning by:

- Raising student awareness of SDGs within the context of their course
- Exploring ways in which the SDGs can be further highlighted and promoted within the curriculum
- Exploring ways to effectively and accurately map where and how the SDGs are embedded within the curriculum

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

2

Raise awareness of sustainability and the SDGs across the College by:

- Establishing and maintaining a Sustainability SharePoint resource for staff
- Roll out Sustainability and Environmental training for College lecturing and support staff
- Incorporating Sustainability as part of the SRC Corporate Health & Wellness events
- Working collaboratively with the Student Union to increase engagement

4 QUALITY EDUCATION | 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

3

Take climate action by:

- Replacing the College Carbon management plan with a new Sustainability plan for all sections of the College to ensure we have an integrated road map for achieving carbon neutrality
- Sourcing Carbon Literacy training for staff
- Ensuring sustainable procurement practices are embedded in our procurement policies, procedures and guidelines
- Collaborating with key regional stakeholders on the climate emergency

13 CLIMATE ACTION | 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

4

Build partnerships for the SDGs by:

- Consolidating our existing partnerships
- Establishing new partnerships

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Sustainability Report

Page 5

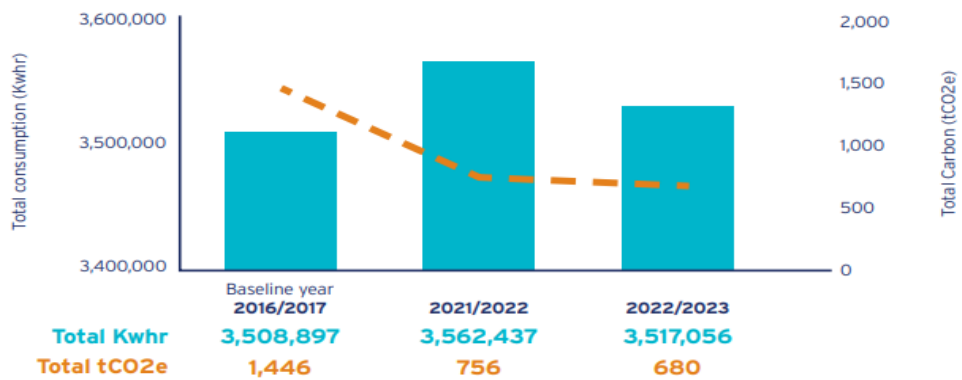| Sustainability	
Aim - 6	**To deliver against the Public Body reporting duties of the Climate Change legislation delivering an energy efficient and sustainable estate.**
10x Tier 2 Metrics	• **Energy Related Green House gas emissions** • **Energy efficiency indicators** • **Circular Economy**
KPI 6.1	**In 2023/24 academic year, establish a baseline position for the College.**
KPI 6.2	**In 2023/24 academic year, establish the key actions to improve/maintain energy efficiency.**

Background:

The College has in place a 10-year Estates strategy which provides details of the College's strategic intent with regard to the development and maintenance of its estate. This strategy will be regularly updated to reflect the changing environment within which the College operates, and in particular strategic priorities will be reviewed in line with the corporate and financial planning processes.

The College has been reporting utilises consumption since 2017 as part of the Energy Management Strategy and Action Plan for Central Government to 2030. The Action Plan sets a 30% Consumption reduction to 2030, based on a 2016/2017 base year. When measured against a 2016/17 baseline year our total 2022/23 heating consumption has reduced by 7%, whist our carbon emissions have decreased by 16% as we moved from high oil consuming campuses to more energy efficient buildings and heating methods. Further planned upgrades of the estate through Major Capital Projects and Minor works will assist heating consumption reduction and reduce our carbon footprint.

Since 2017, 100% of our electricity supply has been procured from green, clean, renewable sources which supports the decarbonisation of our estate. Overall, there has been a 53% reduction in carbon emissions from electricity. In addition, our small but powerful solar panels at Armagh and Banbridge have generated over 120,000 kwhr of electricity since installation.

Our Energy Consumption

Total heating consumption in kWhr and carbon emissions in tCO2e

	Baseline year 2016/2017	2021/2022	2022/2023
Total Kwhr	7,500,371	7,359,201	6,969,815
Total tCO2e	1,735	1,624	1,465
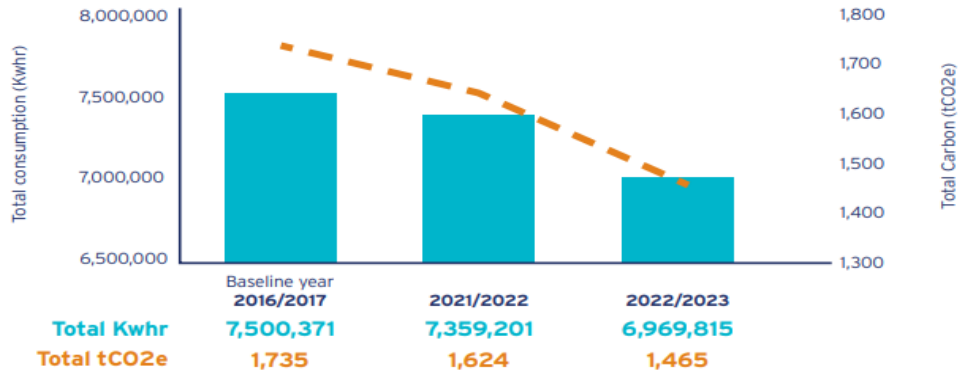
Total electricity consumption in kWhr and carbon emissions in tCO2e

	Baseline year 2016/2017	2021/2022	2022/2023
Total Kwhr	3,508,897	3,562,437	3,517,056
Total tCO2e	1,446	756	680

Initiatives to reduce consumption & improve our carbon footprint

LED Lighting
We have invested £1.1 million in energy efficient LED lighting upgrades in Newry East, West and Greenbank with further upgrades planned for Portadown and Lurgan.

Automated Meter Reading
Automated meter reading technology has been rolled out across the estate to enable reading of real time utility data to improve reporting and reduce consumption.

Boiler upgrades
New energy efficient boilers have been installed in Newry West and Newry Model.

Electricity
We procure our electricity from 100% green renewable sources which supports decarbonisation of the estate.

Electric Vehicles
The College fleet has been upgraded to include three fully electric cars.

Electric Vehicle Charging
Electric vehicle charging is available for staff and students at Armagh, Banbridge, Newry West and Greenbank. We plan to expand the roll out to Portadown and Newry East.

Waste
In partnership with RiverRidge, we recycle or generate an energy source from at least 97% of our waste. Waste Derived Fuel created from our waste heats industry such as Belfast Harbour Estate.

Water
Grey water harvesting is used at Armagh to flush all toilets and urinals, reducing mains water consumption.

Supporting Actions/Planned Activity:

Apply for £500k towards minor works projects[18] in 2023/24 financial year contributing towards a sustainable College estate.

In 2023/24 academic year, establish a baseline position for each College campus.

In 2023/24 academic year, establish key actions to improve/maintain energy efficiency of College campuses.

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[18] Includes Invest to Save Funded projects.

5. Key Challenges/Constraints

The below table sets out the key challenges/constraints towards achievement of 2023/24 planned delivery set out in section 4 above.

Risk	Potential Impact	Mitigating Actions
Failure to ensure the financial stability of the College	- Inability to deliver college objectives - Inability to maximise funding opportunities - Reputational Damage - Fraud - Financial loss	Prepare and deliver annual budget and forecasts which facilitate meeting DfE year-end target and maintaining an appropriate cash balance.
Inability to evolve to prevent and respond effectively to Cyber security/ICT failure	- Data Breach, - Damage to reputation, - Financial Loss incl fines, - Disruption of Business - Operations	Increased network resilience, awareness training and testing of staff response, and regular testing of system security and application of patches.
Inability of the College to recruit and maintain an appropriately skilled workforce	- Inability to deliver strategic objectives - Inability to deliver quality curriculum. - Inability to maintain quality curriculum delivery - Increased labour turnover - Reputational damage - Financial loss	Continue to review College actions to address the recognised causes of the risk and enable the College to respond to an increasingly competitive and changing market.
Inability to deliver College Estate Strategy	- Reputational damage - underspend, - estate not fit-for-purpose - inability to maintain quality curriculum delivery - negative impact on teaching and learning	The College will continue to review options to progress the Estate Strategy and will prioritise delivery based on available funding and strategic priorities.
Inability of the college to maintain sustainable student numbers	- Inability to deliver strategic objectives - Inability to deliver the College Curriculum Strategy and achieve targets. - Reduction in full time offer at both FE and HE - Reduction in full time offer at Level 3 Failure to retain students may lead to Reputational damage and increased scrutiny from external bodies - inability to deliver dual mandate - Reduction in income - Potential staff redundancies	Engage with stakeholders including DfE, awarding bodies and FE/HE sector to develop and promote offering. Monitor and report on development of programmes options.

Risk	Potential Impact	Mitigating Actions
Inability of the College to maintain the required regulatory and Health and Safety Standard to provide a safe working environment for our staff, students and members of the general public.	• Non-Compliance with H&S legislation Issue of prohibition notices by HSE for Health & Safety Breach • Prosecution by HSE Proliferation of accidents and incidents • Financial loss - downtime and claims • Reputation damage • Increased Complaints	Health & Safety manager in post supported by a Health and Safety Management committee and framework of reporting and controls.
Inability of the College to effectively ensure the safeguarding of students	• Increase in Student and Staff Health & Well-being referrals • Reduced Student Retention • Reputational damage • Inability to provide a quality student support service and innovative practice to address students' needs • Increase staff sickness/absence.	Established appropriate internal structures including Adult Safeguarding Champion, Designated Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Designated Officer and a College wide Safeguarding Team. Mandatory training for all staff in place with Regular reporting regime to SMT & GB.
Inability to respond effectively to Trade Union Industrial action	• Pay differentials • Budget constraints • Public Sector pay guidance • Non-functioning executive – absence of Minister • Reluctance of TUs to transform lecturing contract.	The College continues to assess the impact of the action on delivery and the requirement for action to address any lost learning. In terms of resolving the dispute, the Sector awaits communication from trade unions on proposals as well as details of their pay claim for 2023/24.
Failure to successfully administer and deliver Externally funded Programmes/ Projects	• Failure to Achieve project outcomes • Financial loss • Reputational damage	Implement a Governance Framework to ensure effective oversight, finance management and reporting on all external programmes / projects

The College has a Risk Management Framework in place including Corporate and Operational Risk Registers from which key risks are reflected. Strategic challenges/constraints affecting the Sector are highlighted with the use of 'Corporate Risk'.
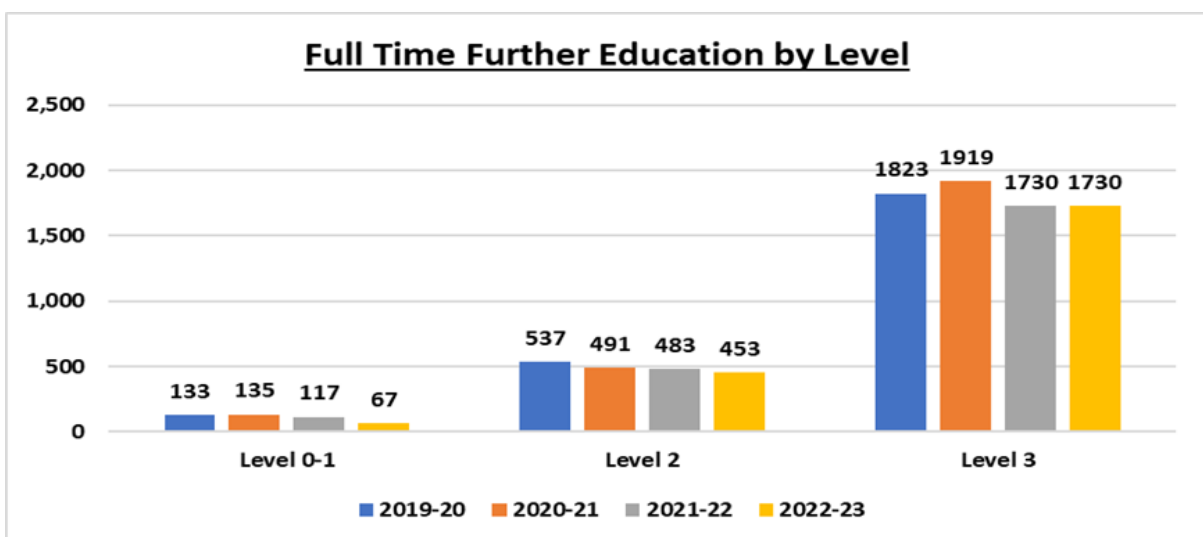
College Data Analysis

A.   Enrolment Trends (22/23)

The following tables show enrolments against target 22/23

NOTE: Source data for all the following tables is taken from EBS

Total Enrolment		Target	Actual	% Target
Level 0-7	Full time	3,932	3,887	98.9%
	Part time	15,109	15,248	100.9%

Further Education		Enrolments		
		Target	Actual	%
Levels 0-3	Full time	2,355	2,250	95.5%
	Part time	12,587	12,364	98.2%
	Total	14,942	14,614	97.8%

Full Time Further Education by Level

	Level 0-1	Level 2	Level 3
2019-20	133	537	1823
2020-21	135	491	1919
2021-22	117	483	1730
2022-23	67	453	1730

Higher Education		Enrolments		
		Target	Actual	% Target
Levels 4-7	Full time	322	275	85.4%
	Part time	1,484	1,378	92.9%
	Total	1,806	1,653	91.5%

Traineeships		Enrolments		
		Target	Actual	% Target
Levels 2	Full time	265	197	74.3%

Apprenticeships		Enrolments		
		Target	Actual	% Target
Level 2-3	Full time	987	1,157	117.2%
Level 4+	Part time	315	317	100.6%
	Total	1,302	1,474	

Essential Skills	Target	Actual	% Total
Age >=16 and <20	2,100	1,425	67.9%
Age 20 or over	550	414	75.3%
Total	**2,650**	**1,839**	

School Partnership
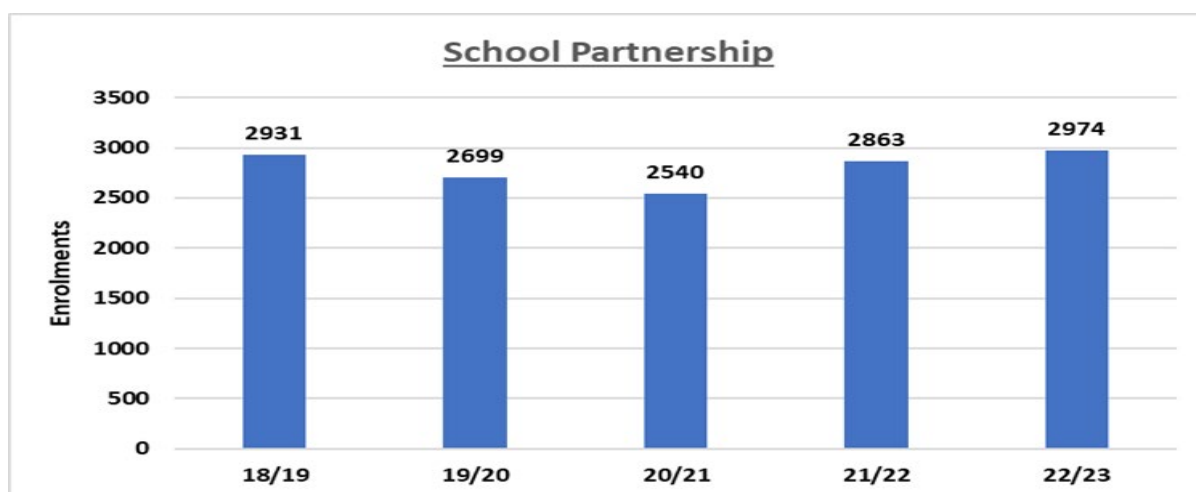
Table A2: All enrolments by age band and FE College (2016/17 to 2020/21)

FE College	Age Band	Academic Year				
		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Southern Regional College	19 and under	16,157	19,620	15,649	15,460	10,698
	20-24	2,669	3,105	2,369	2,160	1,804
	25 and over	8,408	8,601	7,986	6,712	4,459
	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0
	Total	**27,234**	**31,327**	**26,004**	**24,332**	**16,961**

Table A4: All enrolments by mode of attendance and FE College (2016/17 to 2020/21)

FE College	Mode of Attendance	Academic Year				
		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Southern Regional College	Full-time	4,616	4,556	4,338	4,120	4,041
	Part-time	22,618	26,771	21,666	20,212	12,920
	Total	**27,234**	**31,327**	**26,004**	**24,332**	**16,961**

Table A21: Regulated enrolments by sex, STEM indicator and FE College (2016/17 to 2020/21)

FE College	Sex	STEM	Academic Year				
			2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Southern Regional College	Female	Non-STEM	10,299	11,876	8,849	7,753	5,817
		Broad STEM	1,243	1,106	874	940	802
		Narrow STEM	645	616	535	462	451
		Total (Broad STEM plus Non-STEM)	**11,542**	**12,982**	**9,723**	**8,693**	**6,619**
	Male	Non-STEM	8,069	10,054	7,706	7,418	5,284
		Broad STEM	3,801	3,348	3,381	3,149	3,080
		Narrow STEM	2,522	2,307	2,098	1,966	1,830
		Total (Broad STEM plus Non-STEM)	**11,870**	**13,402**	**11,087**	**10,567**	**8,364**
	Total	Non-STEM	18,368	21,930	16,555	15,171	11,101
		Broad STEM	5,044	4,454	4,255	4,089	3,882
		Narrow STEM	3,167	2,923	2,633	2,428	2,281
		Total (Broad STEM plus Non-STEM)	**23,412**	**26,384**	**20,810**	**19,260**	**14,983**

B.   Performance

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	Achievement 2022-23		%	Achievement 2021-22	%
Further Education Full time	1,243	82%		1,572	84%
Part time	7,695	81%		6,473	84%
Higher Education Full time	110	87%		123	91%
Part time	680	76%		653	75%
Work Based Learning TFS/AppsNI	1,155	91%		971	89%
Essential Skills	1,071	56%		1,178	57%

Table 13:
Students achieving regulated qualifications by FE College (2016/17 to 2020/21)

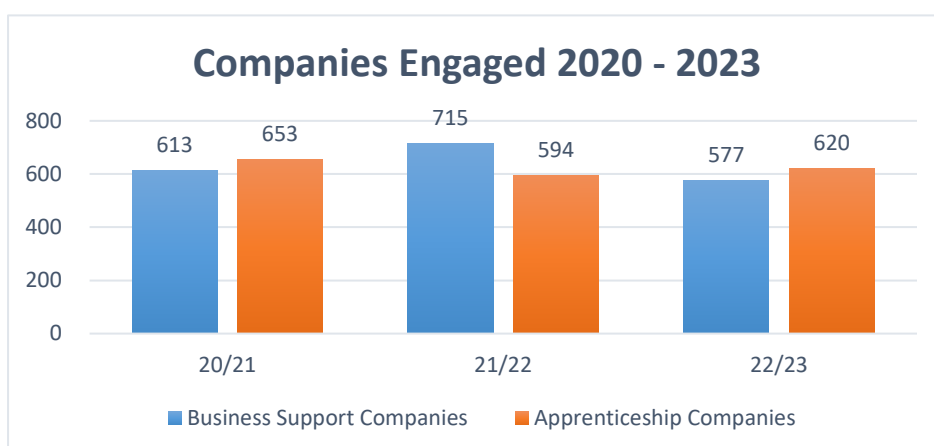| FE College	Academic Year				
	2016/17	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**
SRC	9,007	9,078	7,971	7,028	6,071
FE Sector Total	48,404	47,028	44,103	39,577	33,924

Source: Consolidated Data Return (CDR)

Notes:

For further details on definitions please refer to the metadata.

C. Business Support Unit

2022-23 Business Support Targets and Outcomes

Number of Business Engaged		
Support Area:	**2022-23 Target**	**Actual**
InnovateUs	80	100
Innovation Vouchers	20	9
Fusion/KTP/Co-Innovate	20	32
Skills Focus	180	133
Full Cost Recovery/Scheduled Training	40	54
Assured Skills	1	1
Skill Up (The Flexible Skills Fund)	10	13
Themed Workshops	150	235
TOTAL	**501**	**577**

https://www.src.ac.uk/business-support

https://www.src.ac.uk/assets/general/files/BSI-Commercialisation-Strategy-Business-Growth-Plan.pdf

https://www.src.ac.uk/assets/general/files/Think-Differently-Think-Opportunity-2023.pdf

nmd_lmp_23_24_action_plan_public_facing.pdf (newrymournedown.org)

ABC LMP Action Plan by Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council - Issuu

D. Student Destinations

Source: Learner Destinations Report.270123.docx

TRACKED DESTINATION	Number	
Total Number of SRC Students Tracked	2637	100%
Total Number of SRC Students Responses	2568	97.3%
Progressed to HE externally	370	14.4%
Progressed to HE internally	240	9.3%
Progressed to FE internally	326	12.6%
Progressed to FE externally	10	0.4%
Progressed to other SRC Courses	159	6.2%
Entered Employment	1317	51.2%
Seeking Employment	28	1%
Gap Year	71	2.7%
Repeating Year	40	1.5%
Other	2	0.07%
Other Training	5	0.2%

	June 2022 Leavers		June 2021 Leavers		% Increase/ Decrease
Total Number of SRC Students Contacted	2637	100%	2906	100%	- 9.2%
Total Number of SRC Students Tracked	2568	97.3%	2815	96.8%	- 8.7%
Progressed to HE Externally	370	14.4%	493	17.5%	-25%
Progressed Internally to HE	240	9.3%	242	8.6%	-0.9%
Progressed Internally to FE	326	12.6%	349	12.4%	-6.6%
Other SRC Courses	159	6.2%	121	4.3%	+24%
Entered Employment	1317	51.2%	1365	48.4%	-3.5%
Seeking Employment	28	1%	32	1.1%	-12.5%
Gap Year	71	2.7%	137	4.9%	-48.2%
Repeating Year	40	1.5%	58	2%	-31%
Other	2	0.07%	8	0.3%	-75%
External FE	10	0.4%	10	0.3%	-
Other Training	5	0.2%	-	-	-

E.   Student & Staff Achievement and successes, & competitions

College Achievements for 2022-23 are listed below:

- The College was awarded formal accreditation status from The Royal Society of Chemistry, the only Further Education College within Northern Ireland to achieve this accolade. This was awarded based on excellence in delivery of the Higher-Level Apprenticeships in Applied Industrial Science;

- The Organisational Development Team were shortlisted as finalists at the CIPD NI HR awards in the category of Best Learning and Development/Organisation Development Initiative in December 2023;

- The Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment team were shortlisted as finalists in the Best Marketing/Communications Team category at the Irish Education Awards.

- The External Engagement and International Affairs Team were also shortlisted at the same awards for The Best Erasmus Programme;

- The Student Services team were a finalist and a Commended College in the AoC Beacon Awards for the RCU Award for Support for Students;

- The College was certified as a Level 2 Disability Confident Employer by Disability Confident; a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain individuals with disabilities and those with health conditions;

- The Estates Team (along with McAdam Design) was Highly Commended in the Most Innovative Public Sector Project - Newry Higher Education and Innovation Centre in the prestigious Digital Construction Live Awards 2023;

- In October 2022 the College retained the Matrix Quality Award for Student Services.

- The College retained the Investors in People (IIP) Silver Award having gone through the IIP re-accreditation process in May 2022.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDING SKILLS COMPETITIONS

The College places great importance on the use of skills competitions to:

- bring learning to life and enhance core competences through simulated workplace practices;

- improve the quality and profile of vocational education;

- offer greater scope for creativity in teaching, training and learning techniques;

- build confidence and self-esteem; and

- provide meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences.

The College was **'Best in the UK'** topping the UK table by winning 5 Gold, 3 Silver and 4 Bronze medals (see below).

Competition	First name	Last name	Organisation	Employer/ associated organisa	Award A
Automation	Ross	Graham	Southern Regional College	R-Gen Robotics	Gold
Automation	Carter	McKnight	Southern Regional College	Randox	Gold
Automotive Refinishing	Oisin	McKerr	Southern Regional College	Porters Body shop	Gold
Beauty Therapy Practitioner	Mykenzie	Cartmill	Southern Regional College		Gold
Laboratory Technician	Rebecca	Liggett	Southern Regional College	Almac	Gold
Automation	Neil	King	Southern Regional College	Norbrook Laboratories	Silver
Automation	Sean	Treanor	Southern Regional College	Norbrook Laboratories	Silver
Health and Social Care	Hannah	Hillis	Southern Regional College		Silver
Culinary Arts	Annabelle	Hughes	Southern Regional College		Bronze
Electrical Installation	Conor	McDonnell	Southern Regional College	W.Nesbit Electrical	Bronze
Mechatronics	John	Doherty	Southern Regional College	Concrete Batching Systems	Bronze
Mechatronics	Jason	McVerry	Southern Regional College	Red Rock Machinery	Bronze

Top 11	Medal Points
Southern Regional College	28
New College Lanarkshire	26
City of Glasgow College	18
Grwp Llandrillo Menai	11
Pembrokeshire College	11
Coleg Gwent	11
Gower College Swansea	10
Trafford College Group	10
CAFRE	10
Coleg Sir Gar/Coleg Ceredigion	8
Coleg Cambria	8

Most notable student achievements in 2022-23 were:

- A higher-level apprentice studying Digital Marketing, Advertising, and Communications was awarded the Best Higher Level Apprentice Award at the Newry Chamber Employee and Team Awards in September 2022;

- A former NEBDN National Diploma Dental Nursing student was awarded The Most Invaluable Team Member Award at the Irish Dentistry Awards in September 2022;

- Team SRC competed at the Association of Hairdressers and Therapists UK Final in Blackpool with three top places awarded to the College students; first place in Fantasy Make up, First and third places in Men's Cut and Beard;

- Following on from WorldSkills UK success, two College students were named as UK WorldSkills competition squad members in February 2023. The two students will take part in the WorldSkills 2024 competition in Lyon, France;

- In March 2023, a level 2 Wall and Floor Tiling apprentice was awarded the Apprentice of the Year Award at the DfE annual Northern Ireland Apprenticeship Awards;

- In March 2023, a level 3 Wall and Floor Tiling apprentice was awarded the Montgomery Award for Excellence from The Worshipful Company of Tylers and Bricklayers' Craft Awards 2023;

- In May 2023, College students competed in the SkillBuild NI finals, securing twelve medals which comprised of four gold medals, four silver medals and four bronze medals. These successful competitors will represent Northern Ireland at the WorldSkills UK national finals; and

- A student studying the Media level 2 programme was a finalist at the Ulster Regional Banbridge Film Festival in the category of Audience Favourite Film Award.

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Staff Achievements for 2022-23 are listed below:
- A lecturer in Creative Arts and Digital Technologies launched her own art exhibition 'Memory Lane', which was on display at the Armagh Marketplace Theatre;

- A lecturer on the BA Degree in English and History secured a book deal in the field of Geocriticism and Literary Spatial Studies;

- The Principal and Chief Executive received the accolade of Outstanding Contributor to the Greater Newry Area at the Greater Newry Business Awards in June 2023; and

- A lecturer was announced on the shortlist for Tutor of the Year at the 2023 IAB Awards.

Worldskills Press Release - Nov 2023.docx

PR - SkillBuild 2023 National Results.docx

https://www.src.ac.uk/news/src-retains-best-in-uk-title-at-worldskills-uk-for-second-consecutive-year

https://www.src.ac.uk/news/ni-fe-students-named-as-being-among-uks-top-trade-apprentices

F.   Widening Access and Participation (FT HE)

https://deprivation.nisra.gov.uk/
https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/economy-and-labour-market/Employee-earnings-NI-2023.html

G.   Student and Staff Wellbeing / upskilling Activities

https://www.src.ac.uk/student-life/student-support/student-activities

During 2022-23, staff undertook professional development in several areas utilising a range of online delivery. Programmes included:

- 20 Lecturers completed the Certificate in Teaching, and 8 Lecturers successfully completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Further Education;

- 39 Full Time and Part Time Lecturers participated in the College's bespoke induction programme;

- The College used the JISC Framework to capture the digital capabilities of staff and students. During the last year 115 staff and 298 students engaged with this activity. The data from these tools will be utilised to plan, prioritise and review actions and will feature in key actions within the Digital Strategy;

- 355 staff attended an online Microsoft specialist CPD on use of Microsoft Teams, PowerPoint and OneNote session and the follow-up Microsoft session on 'Enhanced and Inclusive Teaching and Learning with Surface, Microsoft Teams and OneNote'. The Microsoft sessions were aimed at further complementing e-Educator modules;

- 10 staff are currently working towards Senior/Fellowship of Advance HE;

- 13 staff have completed assessor training and 6 staff have completed the verifier course;

- The Safeguarding team attended the following training during 2022-23;

  o ASIST training was attended by 11 Safeguarding staff in October 2022;

  o Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Refresher Training was attended by the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers in January 2023;

  o Keeping Children and Adults Safe: Training for staff and volunteers was attended by 18 Safeguarding staff in February 2023; and

  o Online Internet Safety training was attended by 19 Safeguarding staff in May 2023.