

JOHN WHEATLEY COLLEGE

***COLLEGE ETHOS
SESSION 2011/2012***

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General Purpose

- 1 John Wheatley College intends to provide a comprehensive and high quality further education, lifelong learning and vocational training service for the communities and businesses which it serves. It also seeks to introduce opportunities for local residents to progress to study, on both a full and a part-time basis, for qualifications in Higher Education (both in the College, elsewhere in the City and in the Metropolitan Glasgow area).
- 2 The College also intends to provide a customised service to provide specific training for industry and commerce at commercial rates or to potential students in receipt of Individual Learning Accounts.
- 3 The College will seek to respond, through its annual Plan, to the Corporate Objectives of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the most recent strategic guidance received in respect of Lifelong Learning and Further Education from the Scottish Government. It will also seek to respond to the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy (and its associated Skills Strategy) as well as its strategy for the development of Community Learning and Development (CLD) planning.

A Commitment to De-Centralised Provision and Outreach

- 4 Whilst avoiding wasteful duplication of resources, the College seeks to provide a comprehensive service within easy reach of its potential learners. This will require the use of a range of premises which are available in the different population centres in its catchment area.
- 5 The pursuit of this policy will result in the College utilising premises owned or controlled by community groups, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Community Health Partnerships and Local Housing Organisations, Voluntary Organisations, Glasgow City Council Education and Social Work Services, Glasgow Life, Glasgow Regeneration Agency local economic regeneration initiatives and other organisations involved in local Community Development.
- 6 The College regards its outreach programme as a key resource in broadening the base of participation in post-compulsory education and training but recognises that this de-centralised provision raises significant issues related to the quality of its services and the progression opportunities available to its students. This is an important element in its mainstream provision. The College also seeks to be a vehicle for contributing to the achievement of Social Justice for residents within its catchment area.

- 7 Current College plans, which are formally consulted on with community representatives through local Community Planning and Community Engagement structures, continue to seek to address these issues.

A Commitment to the Priority of the Needs of the Service Users

- 8 The College will seek to ensure that it maintains adequate information related to:
- a) the demographic trends which apply within its catchment areas;
 - b) the needs of local public and private sector employers for a trained workforce;
 - c) local labour market intelligence and national employment trends;
 - d) the unemployment rates and the structure of the labour force which apply in its catchment areas;
 - e) other social and economic trends which can be identified in the communities served by the College in East Glasgow;
 - f) the strategies which are adopted by the local Community Planning Partnerships and by Glasgow's Regeneration Agency to tackle social exclusion and to promote local social and economic regeneration; and
 - g) the priorities established in local learning plans and the priorities of both the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership and of Glasgow's Economic Commission.
- 9 The College conducts an annual review of the local labour market and plans its vocational education and training programme within this context. It will continue to seek to consult both formally and informally with all appropriate brokers of interest capable of informing the College's strategic and operational planning processes. Its provision will seek to balance the interests of local employers and learners.
- 10 Similarly, the College will seek to identify the adult education needs of the communities that it serves within the context of the local Community Learning and Development Action Plan (now incorporated in the East Glasgow Learning Theme Plan). This will involve collaboration with Glasgow Life and other agencies capable of articulating community needs to ensure that the College provides appropriate educational programmes to meet these requirements.
- 11 In all cases, the College's programmes will be "learner centred" and primarily planned for the potential benefit of its students. The College's Board has

- produced a Learning and Teaching Strategy which seeks to define the philosophical and pedagogical approaches the College would expect its staff to deploy. Of necessity, this 'live' document requires periodic review. The College undertakes to do this on an annual basis and to make the current version of the strategy available to all staff on its intranet.
- 12 The College will continue to develop objective pre-entry guidance for potential students even if that means they are referred to other establishments where the provision is considered to be more appropriate to the achievement of their personal goals. Similarly during the period of this plan it will seek to develop further its student support services and its progression guidance provision. It will also seek to improve still further its relationship with Skills Development Scotland and with other specialist organisations which provide specific guidance for students with learning difficulties.
 - 13 The College will provide all learners with Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). These will be individually negotiated with each learner and they will realistically reflect their personal aspirations and learning goals and targets. These ILPs will be revisited periodically during a learner's time at the College. This will enable the adjustment of plans to take account of individual progress or will permit additional assistance to be provided to those whose progress has failed to meet their expectations. The College will seek to provide support at appropriate times to learners who are experiencing difficulties. It will have high expectations of all learners and will seek to challenge each student during their time at the College, It will, over time, seek to use ILPs as a means of assessing the 'value-added' which is provided by the College's activities for individual learners.

A Commitment to Quality Enhancement and Innovative Teaching Methodologies

- 14 The College will seek to teach in a learner-centred manner and to provide, wherever possible, realistic simulations of current vocational practice or access to appropriate and relevant work placements.
- 15 The College will always be prepared to re-assess its teaching methods in the light of learner evaluation of its provision, the conclusions of current educational research or the recommendations of HM Inspectorate of Education (made in both college reviews and aspect reports). In addition it engages an external consultant to provide an annual Evaluation of the Learning Experience. The College is committed to responding to the challenge questions posed by this process.
- 16 The College upholds the notion of "academic freedom" for its teaching staff and those who manage its teaching services. Its guidance for staff on Academic

Freedom has been approved by the Board of Management and is included as an appendix to the College's Learning and Teaching Strategy.

- 17 The College will continue to seek to use nationally recognised indicators of quality to assess the relevance and the effectiveness of its full-time and other programmes. However given the context of educational disadvantage in its catchment areas the Board will seek to advance methods which are also capable of assessing the 'value added' by the College's provision. The Board of Management considers such approaches essential if the achievements of its learners and its staff are to be adequately recognised. As a consequence it will continue to press the SFC to adopt such approaches in defining the quality of provision made by colleges and in the methodology used to allocate, in future, grant-in-aid to the Sector. It believes that such research should be an immediate priority for SFC. It will continue to seek to monitor and publish, as required by funding bodies, information related to learner achievement and success rates, learner progression rates and other indicators of client satisfaction as part of its annual reporting.
- 18 Furthermore, it will seek to respond to other national initiatives designed to assure or enhance the quality of provision in further education and vocational training. The College will continue to use the SFC/HMIE quality framework as a basis for self-evaluation and will respond to SFC's arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement. It will also seek to have appropriate monitoring systems in place to meet the requirements of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and other appropriate awarding bodies.
- 19 In addition, the College will seek to sustain its commitment to the Department for Employment and Learning's *'Positive about Disabled People'* Programme. It will also seek to develop still further its commitment to the professional and personal development of its staff within the *Investor in People (iIP)* framework.
- 20 The College will seek to implement the Board of Management's Environmental and Sustainable Development Strategy. This will include a routine assessment of the curricular opportunities for the promotion of environmental issues and sustainable development as part of local planning procedures. These priorities will be reflected in the sustainability arguments made in support of applications for grant assistance from European Structural Funds.

A Commitment to Ethical Principles of Curriculum Design

- 21 The College will continue to offer an appropriate and adequate programme of Non-Certificated Courses. The purpose of this provision will be to facilitate access to more formal provision for unconfident learners and to provide bespoke training to meet the specific needs of local small to medium sized enterprises (in

- recognition that, in the West of Scotland, over 70% of training for the small business sector is, by necessity, uncertificated). The College will continue to urge the SFC to accept the legitimacy of these approaches in catchment areas such as East Glasgow. During session 2011/12 the College will seek to ascribe a Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level to all non-certificated programmes.
- 22 The College will ensure that its programmes are specifically designed to meet the requirements of local and national employers. It will, whenever appropriate, seek to introduce specific Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) endorsed by the SQA and industry lead bodies (such as Sector Skills Councils). However, it notes that recent research indicates that less than 20% of employers define the needs of their workforces in terms of N/SVQs. The College will seek to respond, where possible, to the priorities identified by Glasgow's Economic Commission and those included in the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy (and associated Skills Strategy).
 - 23 The College will seek to ensure that all full-time courses of study include elements which develop transferable core skills in communication, numeracy, information technology, working with others and job seeking skills in an integrated way. This is in response to repeated requests from employers' organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) for such skills (a view also reinforced recently by the findings of Future Skills Scotland and by the SFC's 'Learning to Work' reports). In addition, the College will require courses to contain elements which will enhance and improve the learning and study skills of participants. This will include the provision of additional support for the development of information handling skills. The College is also committed to the inclusion of induction, guidance and learning support as an integral part of its services for learners.
 - 24 Induction procedures will continue to take account of prior learning and knowledge obtained through experience and as a consequence it will seek to ensure that no student will be required to repeat, unnecessarily, programmes or portions of programmes of study. The College will also take steps to ensure that learners who enrol late will also have an adequate opportunity to undertake an appropriate induction programme.
 - 25 Access and Access to Access courses will be designed to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to sustain a student's progress in higher education. Increasingly general programmes of study will be designed to permit other students to consider progression into higher education at a future date.
 - 26 Furthermore, the College will seek to provide a limited range of part-time and full-time advanced courses which permit articulated progression into programmes of

- higher education available in other FE/HE establishments or meet the needs of those in employment requiring certification of higher level skills. These courses, which are liable to be provided within a Professional Development Award (PDA) and a Higher National Certificate (HNC) framework, will also be designed to incorporate, whenever possible, the above principles of curriculum design. It will seek to co-operate (where necessary) with other colleges and Higher Education establishments in Glasgow and the metropolitan Glasgow area to achieve this objective.
- 27 John Wheatley College endorses the principles of “a Curriculum for Excellence” (CfE) - the national curriculum review. It seeks to enable all learners to become: successful learners; confident individuals; responsible citizens; and effective contributors. The College’s Programme Planning processes ensure that the aims of CfE are embedded in all new programmes approved by the College. Its Curriculum Review processes also seek to ensure that the aims of CfE are addressed in all programmes and particularly seek to recognise the approaches taken to develop skills for citizenship and for employability. The Individual Learning Plan, used with all learners, enables learners and staff to set, review and reflect on targets that relate to the development of confidence, and skills for citizenship, enterprise and employability as well as certificated units of learning.
- 28 The College is committed to providing opportunities for young people to engage in vocational education and lifelong learning. It provides an extensive range of school-college partnership programmes and has also developed its youthwork strategy within the context of the Curriculum for Excellence in order to support progression from informal to formal learning.
- 29 The College seeks to provide a range of programmes for young people in need of *More Choices and More Chances* (MC²) and in response to the *Lifelong Partners* strategy. It adopts, wherever appropriate, the *Skills for Work* programmes which have been nationally developed and designed within the Curriculum for Excellence framework to prepare school pupils for progression to employment or vocational training.

A Commitment to Improving Access and Equality of Opportunity

- 30 The College will continue to seek to improve further both physical and academic access to the College.
- 31 The College has sought to ensure physical access for disabled students exists at all of its sites. To demonstrate the access available the College has contracted with DisabledGo to conduct a survey of the College and to provide a related website entry (at www.disabledgo.com). It will, whenever possible, seek to view, within the terms of the Board’s Inclusive Learning Policy, students with additional

learning needs as participants in its 'mainstream provision' (always recognising that there may be circumstances when specialist programmes will be necessary to provide specific support). This policy will be the cornerstone of the College's response to the statutory obligations imposed by the Equality Act 2010.

- 32 The College will never seek to discourage any learner from embarking on a programme of study by virtue of their age, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership or disability. It will reinforce this principle by means of its Equality Policies, Schemes and Action Plans and by providing appropriate opportunities for staff to develop appropriate skills to meet this aspiration. The College will periodically review the progress made against its equalities agenda and action plans in these respects. The outcomes of these reviews will be reported to either the Board of Management or an appropriate Standing Committee. It will also seek to ensure that the College complies with the provisions of Equalities Legislation as it applies to both learners and staff. It will continue to develop an equalities ethos and to review annually its equalities agenda through its equalities schemes and action plans in order to analyse its impact.
- 33 It will seek to ensure, by means of sensitive and objective pre-entry guidance, that learners are able to make informed choices about the suitability of particular courses on their own behalf.
- 34 The College will seek to provide appropriate levels of induction, on-going guidance and learning support to assist learners with their studies. It will use Individual Learning Plans for this purpose. Furthermore, it will provide opportunities for both adults and young people to develop basic skills in a variety of educational or vocational contexts. It will, when necessary, deploy an appropriate range of assistive technology, to support students with specific learning difficulties.
- 35 The College has an absolute commitment to the Lifelong Partners and Learning for All agendas. It will provide school-link and community-based Further Education programmes which facilitate the progression of young people and adults into the College's 'mainstream' provision. This is likely to continue to involve the judicious use of non-certificated provision as a means of:
 - a) providing access to certificated courses;
 - b) developing basic skills;
 - c) supporting local small businesses with customised training to meet their specific needs; and

- d) developing community capacity or supporting the activities of local voluntary organisations.

During session 2011/12 the College will seek to ascribe a Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level to all non-certificated programmes. Similarly, it has a mission to sustain and develop both formal and informal links with higher education establishments and to promote still further the concept of access within new fora established by the Scottish Funding Councils for this purpose. The College's access programme will continue to focus on the provision of opportunities which target groups currently under-represented in both further and higher education.

- 36 The College will actively participate with others in the Further and Higher Education Sectors in all developments which are likely to achieve the extension of access which are compatible with its key strategic principles and its ethos.
- 37 The College has recognised the growing numbers of asylum seekers and migrant workers now residing within its catchment areas. It seeks to provide English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) opportunities for these communities to support their development as citizens and their progression in learning and employment.
- 38 The College will also continue to take the necessary steps to include in its Annual Reports specific reference to the generic and specific provision made for students who require additional support to learn. It will continue to review its Disability Statement in the light of the conclusions of these reports and guidance from its Inclusive Learning Working Group. It also seeks to discharge fully its statutory obligations in respect of all equalities legislation.
- 39 The College will continue to produce an Annual Equality and Diversity Report for the consideration of its Board of Management. This document will seek to assess the impact of its equalities agenda, policies, schemes and action plans.

A Commitment to Customer Care

- 40 The College is committed to engaging learners in its quality processes and to enabling staff to take account of learner feedback in their curriculum planning.
- 41 The College will continue to welcome comments and complaints about its provision, services and accommodation. It will seek to use such direct feedback to modify and improve still further the standard, quality and responsiveness of its service to its learners and other clients.

- 42 The College Commendations and Complaints procedures take due cognisance of the role of the Public Services Ombudsman, and of any recommendations from that organisation as to how these might be improved.
- 43 The College is committed to refining further its Charter which defines the standards of service which learners might expect from the College and its staff. It will seek to involve the College's Students' Association in this process.

A Commitment to Staff Involvement

- 44 John Wheatley College values its entire staff and is committed to extending their professional skills and knowledge. It recognises that they have a vital contribution to make to the development of the College's provision and the quality of services it can provide. It will, by means of its career development review processes, seek to enable all staff to define their personal future training and professional development needs within the overall framework of the College's future priorities.
- 45 The College actively seeks to continuously improve its communication with staff and will again review its communications strategy in light of the most recent management restructuring.
- 46 The College will seek to inform staff of developments which are proposed within its portfolio of courses and to involve them directly in both the College's strategic management and operational planning processes. The College will continue to conduct systematic staff career development reviews linked to appropriate continuous professional development (CPD) activities for all grades of staff. These reviews, when aggregated, will inform the priorities of CPD programmes for all members of staff. The College will also seek to continue to develop opportunities for teaching staff to undertake appropriate work placements to gain up-to-date experience of current industrial/commercial practice.
- 47 The College is aware of the importance of internal communication and will, by means of involvement in periodic staff conferences (or Quality Days), regular school meetings, curriculum and project team meetings, and in the College's committee structure seek to disseminate information to staff and encourage their participation in establishing the key goals and strategic objectives of the establishment. Similarly it will continue to produce a regular newsletter to inform staff of new developments within both the College and the Sector.
- 48 Staff will also continue to be encouraged to participate in improving the quality of the College's provision and services by having access to the resources necessary to initiate their own projects which address priorities which may not have been recognised by senior management. In addition they will continue to

- be able to participate in quality audits undertaken as part of the College's continuing commitment to external endorsement of its quality standards and arrangements.
- 49 The College will seek to evaluate the impact of staff and continuous professional development initiatives by systematic means. It will seek assess the improvements in the learner experience which result from its professional development and infrastructure investment programmes.
- 50 The Board of Management and the College's strategic management team, are both committed to the dissemination of information to staff and to explaining the factors which drive and determine institutional priorities and the allocation of resources to individual schools or projects.
- 51 The Principal will continue to meet periodically representatives of recognised trades unions and other professional organisations to receive comment about the College's development priorities and to pursue other issues of common interests and concern under the auspices of both the informal and formal College's Joint Consultative Committees (JCCs). The JCCs will operate within Recognition and Procedures Agreements (RPAs) which are periodically reviewed. The agenda and minutes of this Committee will continue to be made widely available to facilitate communication. This will include reference, as a matter of routine, to the Board's Personnel and Staffing Committee.
- 52 The College will continue to seek to revise all of the Board's key Human Resources policies to ensure they meet or exceed legislative requirement and best practice. The review of policies will be undertaken in consultation and with the involvement of stakeholders. The College will work in partnership with recognised Trade Unions and external partners and policies will be benchmarked against external sources to explore new and innovative model employment policies for the College. These developments are seen as being essential to the achievement of a 'modernised' service.
- 53 The College's Board approved, in May 2010, a Staff Governance Framework which establishes the principles through which these commitments will be achieved. This development codified the College's current practices and sets out a formal statement of expectation in these respects (which will, from time to time, be reviewed to reflect changes in the College's strategic and operational environments).

A Commitment to Collaborative Working

- 54 The College is committed to the establishment and maintenance of the widest possible network of partnerships and collaborative ventures which support its

- mission, the interests of its learners, the quality of its services and the effectiveness of its provision. This network will involve partnerships with the private and public sectors, local and central government, local social and economic initiatives and appropriate voluntary organisations.
- 55 The College is fully committed to the strategic objectives of the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership and contributes to the Community Planning Partnership structures in Glasgow's East Centre and Calton, and Shettleston, Baillieston and Greater Easterhouse Community Planning areas.
- 56 In addition the College expects to play a central role in other strategically important collaborative ventures within the Further Education Sector in Glasgow. It expects that this will include the Federation of Glasgow Colleges as well as the Clydenet Broadband Project led by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), and the West of Scotland Colleges' European Partnership (WOSCOPE). It will have extensive links with Glasgow City Council through its Education and Social Work Services departments and through Glasgow Life (which is now responsible for the Community Education Service in Glasgow) and City Building. It will also seek to develop further the College's partnerships with local Secondary Schools and with the North East Glasgow Community Health Partnership.
- 57 The College will continue to engage with Scotland's Colleges as that organisation takes forward the work previously undertaken by the Association of Scotland's Colleges (ASC), the Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU) and COLEG (the College's Open Learning Exchange Group).
- 58 The development of the new library and flexible learning services at the Bridge provides a specific example of the College's commitment to working collaboratively. This was identified by HMLe, in 2010, as an example of sector leading innovative practice in respect of development of a shared service approach to the provision of learner support. The College provides flexible learning support for all users (students and public) of the new shared facility while "buying back" library services from Glasgow Life (who provide the collocated public library service). This approach aims to ensure that service users most easily obtain the widest range of quality services while at the same time ensuring best value for public expenditure.

A commitment to a philosophy of Sustainable Development and to promote bio-diversity

59 The College accepts that its operations may have a detrimental impact on the environment. It will, however, take appropriate steps to minimise these possible effects.

60 The College's Board of Management has already approved a Sustainable Development Policy, and, in February 2010, a Climate Change Action Plan. The Sustainable Development Policy sets out the College's aspirations in respect of the introduction of more sustainable ways of operation and to promote biodiversity (to discharge, in particular, its new statutory duties which result from the Nature Conservation [Scotland] Act 2004). The Climate Change Action Plan sets out how the College will meet the challenge of global warming and how it will respond to new statutory obligations arising as a consequence of the Scottish Parliament's climate change legislation. The Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC) in Scotland considered this an example of "best practice". It has, in that context, been disseminated widely among the post-school education sectors in Scotland. In addition the College has adopted a sustainable Travel Plan as part of its estates strategy in order to minimise the impact of college-related traffic generation in respect of its operation.

61 The College's East End campus has been designed to include a range of new technologies which will significantly improve both its energy efficiency and its use of renewable resources. The College has utilised a design consultancy funded by the Carbon Trust to ensure that all such potential is fully exploited. As a consequence its new building includes:

- bio-mass heating systems;
- rainwater recycling;
- solar heating;
- air source heat pumps;
- high quality insulation (which exceeds the requirements of building regulations);
- active and passive energy efficiency systems; and
- photovoltaic cell power generation.

The campus has achieved a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating (one of the first in Scotland to reach that standard).

62 The College will also, as part of its Estates Strategy, continue to 'retro-fit' its buildings to improve their energy performance and reduce their environmental

- impact. This has already led to the installation of a wind generator and photovoltaic cells at the College's Easterhouse building and air-sourced heat pumps at both main buildings.
- 63 The College also anticipates that it will put in place appropriate Environmental Management Systems (EMS) which comply with the Acorn standard.
- 64 In addition to ensuring that its Estates are as eco-friendly as possible the College also intends to extend its commitment to sustainable development to the curriculum it offers. It contends that attendance at the College's East End campus will, in itself, be an educational experience for both staff and students. Its range of sustainable technologies will provide an introduction to new concepts (for many) in resource management. In addition the College will continue with an annual "sustainable development week" in which all teaching programmes will be expected to consider sustainable development aspects of their subjects.
- 65 The College will provide appropriate induction for all new learners and all members of its staff on the sustainable development philosophy and commitment to biodiversity which underpins its East End campus and the responsibility of individuals to work in ways which minimise the environmental impact of the College's operation.

A Commitment to the Highest Standards of Governance and Financial Management

- 66 As a publicly funded institution, the College is committed to exhibiting best practice in all aspects of corporate governance and to operating in an open and transparent way. It seeks to comply with all the provisions of the Combined Code, in so far as they apply to the further education sector, and its Board operates within the Nolan and Neil principles for standards in public life.
- 67 The College is also committed to the Government's Best Value agenda. It recognises the importance of delivering services in an efficient way and seeks to demonstrate the highest standards of financial management and that its activities provide value-for-money.
- 68 Governance arrangements are reviewed every year by the College's independent Internal Auditor and the Board of Management are also committed to reviewing their own performance using the 'On-Board', Langlands and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) frameworks.
- 69 The College is fully committed to Freedom of Information and makes all documents publicly available. It also maintains a register of interest for all Board members and Senior Staff which is updated regularly and is publicly available on the College Web Site. The College holds a public meeting each year and makes

detailed disclosures in respect of its governance arrangements in its Annual Report and Accounts.