

Transforming the Learning Culture: Partnership Working for a Sustainable Scotland

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**TRANSFORMING THE LEARNING CULTURE:
PARTNERSHIP WORKING FOR A SUSTAINABLE SCOTLAND**

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Foreword - Professor Sir Neil MacCormick



As media of communication, human languages - natural languages - are of the first importance.

Physical and electronic media, snailmail and email and the rest of them, all presuppose language competence as the basis of communication. When we think of 'transforming the learning culture', no point could be of greater importance. In the year of the largest-ever expansion of the European Union, its salience is yet more obvious. Nine new languages become official languages, including four Slavonic, two Baltic and two Finno-Ugric, with Bulgarian, Rumanian and Turkish already waiting in an ante-room.

One of my saddest MEP tasks this year was to remonstrate with the University of Glasgow concerning closure of the department of Slavonic and East European Studies. 2004 is no year to close down on Slavonic Studies anywhere, least of all in a University with a long and distinguished track record. Thankful for small mercies, I report that Slavonic has been saved as one language group within a regrouped Department of Modern Languages.

Not by particular fault of one among many resource-starved universities, we in Scotland retreat from languages at the very time when advance is called for. 'Smart Successful Scotland' will seem neither smart nor successful the more resolutely monoglot its citizens choose to be. Language competence is diminishing when it needs to be growing. At all levels, our educational

system prostrates itself before the false gods of technology - no, not false gods, but incomplete ones. The mechanical and electronic media matter, but the message needs language and the customer's language is vital to the seller.

E-commerce is a growing reality, and so is e-learning. In such a context, possession of the English language is indeed a great asset. But especially in consumer transactions, the remedies available will be consumer's home-country remedies. We cannot remain complacently unfamiliar with other lands and other languages.

Any reflection on media must also linger on the dire condition of our Press. There is diminishing, not increasing, coverage of Europe and beyond-Europe in Scotland's press, and throughout the UK Press the same dire condition largely prevails. Ignorance of the EU is a fertile breeding ground of hostility to it. The amount that MEPs can do for good and for ill has hugely increased with every step towards extended co-decision in the law-making of the European Union. But constituents who have no idea what MEPs can do, far less what they actually do, are in no position to hold MEPs to account. This is representative democracy deprived of effective accountability, notwithstanding MEPs' best efforts to keep in touch with the folks back home.

What then are the transformations our learning culture urgently needs to undergo? I would urge most strongly that, beyond improved linguistic competence, everyone needs some awareness of the EU's constitutional order - the one it has now under the Nice Treaty and its predecessors, and the one it will acquire when or if the new

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Draft Constitution is signed, ratified, and brought into force.

That involves an understanding of what the Commission and Council are and what they are supposed to do. Likewise, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice. It also requires an idea of how the single market works, and the legal domains such as environmental law, consumer protection law and employee protection law where the Union also legislates.

Persons armed with such knowledge are in a position to judge what use they can make of their MEPs. They can tell when it is useful to get MEPs to take issues up with the Commission and to engage with the Council of Ministers directly or through MPs, MSPs and domestic parliamentary pressures. The professional lobbyists know all this already. They exercise considerable influence. It should be more easy for

citizens to be their own lobbyists. Some do the job very effectively already, but in general MEPs and the European Institutions do their business concealed by a fog of citizen-ignorance.

In contributing a foreword to the present set of studies from the vantage point of a nearly-ex MEP on his way back to professorial employment in Scotland, I am in a good position to see some transformations we ought to achieve.

22 June, 2004.

Professor Sir Neil MacCormick served in the European Parliament from 1999 to 2004 as a Scottish National Party MEP. From September 2004, he resumes duties in Edinburgh University as Regius Professor of Public Law, and as the holder of a Leverhulme Personal Research Professorship dedicated to the study of 'Law, State, and Practical Reason'.

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Introduction

On 27 and 28 April 2004, Scottish Colleges of Further Education presented their work and expertise in Scotland House Brussels. The event was organised by the Association of Scottish Colleges and their members, the Scottish Executive and Scotland Europa.

The purpose of the event was to highlight the contribution of the college sector to lifelong learning in Scotland and to innovation and sustainability in local businesses.

The event clearly demonstrated the contribution Scottish colleges are making to:

- cross-sectoral partnerships both in Scotland and Europe; and
- European funded projects contributing to sustainable economic development and social inclusion.

Six colleges gave “showcase” presentations on their work with business and enterprise to the wider business membership of Scotland

Europa and to key players from the institutions and other regions of the EU.

The Scottish colleges confirmed their interest and enthusiasm for developing new and wider European partnerships.

The event also included debates on future EU funding for regional cohesion and education/training.

The Association of Scottish Colleges (ASC) is the policy and representative voice of Scotland's colleges. If you would like to know more about further education in Scotland we can provide information and briefings or put you in touch with individual colleges.

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The Changing Face of Lifelong Learning in Scotland

Colleges of Further Education (FE) are the lynchpin of Scotland's system of lifelong learning. Today just under 1 in 10 Scots come to college to improve their skills, knowledge, understanding and experience. The main aim is employability but courses also serve the personal goals and social needs of individuals.

There are 46 colleges right across Scotland, with many local learning centres and facilities for distance and online learning for ease of access. Over 90% of the population of Scotland live within thirty minutes of an FE college campus. In 2002/03 there were 489 895 enrolments and the college sector has a total turnover of over £500m (€722m) per annum.

There is a great deal of diversity in the size, range of courses, and student community of the colleges. The majority of colleges are based within the central belt from Glasgow on the west coast to Edinburgh on the east coast. There are 10 colleges in Glasgow and 4 in Edinburgh. But there are also colleges in the Highlands and Islands and in the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway, with innovative developments such as the University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute, and the Crichton Campus in Dumfries shared with 2 universities.

The strengths of the Scottish system, widely recognised across Europe and elsewhere in the world, are:

- the unitised curriculum, based on modules and units;
- the recognition of credit and previous attainment, including informal learning;

- multiple routes and points of entry (progression and articulation); and
- a variety of modes and location of the learning (accessibility).

One relatively new development within Scotland which is causing a great deal of interest in the education world is the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The SCQF makes clearer the relationships between qualifications. It clarifies entry and exit points and routes for progression within and across education and training sectors. It also maximises the opportunities for credit transfer.

Scotland is particularly proud of welcoming to its country asylum-seekers and all those seeking lifelong learning and employment. The First Minister of Scotland, Jack McConnell, has initiated a programme entitled the "Fresh Talent Initiative" which encourages people to consider coming to live and work in Scotland, as well as supporting efforts to retain indigenous people who wish to begin, or to further, their careers in this country.

A number of the colleges collaborate with others within Europe, either as part of a European programme or in bilateral programmes (either actual or virtual) for exchanges between students and between staff.

There are many direct benefits of additionality and collaboration which the EU funded Programmes bring to Scotland. These include better facilities and services for learners and employers, better planning, innovation and monitoring of projects and, of course the exchange of students and staff. Underpinning such funded

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programmes is the need to show education for sustainability as a horizontal theme.

There has been an interesting change over the past decade in the profile of students within the college sector. 85% of enrolments are now part-time (including distance and e-learning) and over 60% of students are aged 25 and over, with an average age of 29. 80% of those completing courses are moving into employment or more advanced study. We are proud of the fact that 60% of Scots entering higher education for the first time do so in a Further Education College.

Educational policy in Scotland is fully devolved to the Scottish Parliament and is the responsibility therefore of the Scottish Executive, but the UK Government is still responsible for employment law and social security benefits, including the New Deal for the unemployed. The college sector gets most of its recurrent grant for teaching and student support and some capital grants from the Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFEFC).

The recent letter of guidance to colleges from SFEFC encourages colleges to support the Scottish Executive's commitment to sustainability by providing education for sustainability for all students.

The Association of Scottish Colleges (ASC), which represents the colleges across Scotland, is a non-government organisation (NGO) which is paid for by member subscription. The ASC team works at a strategic level, representing the interests of the colleges and their work.

Colleges will remain at the forefront of lifelong learning, making a major contribution to employability, economic development and social inclusion. In the long term our aim is that 1 in 5 of the Scottish population will have the chance to study in a college on a continuing basis. European connexions are an important and growing component of this ambition.

Tom Kelly, Chief Executive of the Association of Scottish Colleges

Working in Partnership - A Business Perspective

While technology and access to finance are critical to the success of every business, in the end it is people that make or break any venture, and drive forward innovation and growth. Let's be honest, in Scotland we face particular skills challenges, with our biggest city, Glasgow, having the worst economic activity rate of any city in the UK. Merely bringing the Scottish employment rate up to the British average would mean an extra 45 000 people in work and deliver a 2% boost to GDP.

A recent report by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Future Skills Scotland highlighted the impact of these high rates of economic inactivity on the small business sector. Based on interviews with 3 700 small businesses, the report confirms anecdotal evidence on the difficulty of recruiting staff, with employers classifying more than two-thirds of all vacancies as "hard to fill". Worryingly, this is not usually due to skills shortages per se, but a shortage of applicants due to the benefits trap, lack of jobseekers and job characteristics.

Genuine skills shortages – where applicants lack the skills necessary to do the job – are surprisingly rare, affecting around only 1 in 25 workplaces. More common than shortages, are skills gaps – where an employee is judged not fully proficient at their job – which affect 1 in 6 of all Scottish workplaces.

Despite the very real problems caused by the highly-publicised shortfall of skilled tradesmen, most skills shortages and gaps are due to deficits in "soft skills" such as customer handling, oral

communication and problem solving. It is the lack of these more human skills – which employers now regard as core – and literacy and numeracy problems which are causing businesses most concern.

These recruitment difficulties and skills deficiencies are having a significant impact on the performance of many small Scots firms. Employers report that customer service, the development of new products, and quality standards are all suffering as a result. Even in areas such as Glasgow, employers are struggling to attract and retain the quality staff they need to expand and grow their businesses.

So how do we overcome these skill deficits and ensure that everyone in Scotland is equipped to take advantage of the opportunities to work and learn?

The FSB has been arguing for changes to compulsory education for some time, but the further education sector obviously has a key role. The Scottish Executive's own research shows that too many children are falling behind early on in secondary school, so more support needs to be provided at that stage. It is almost certain that the cohort of children struggling in S1¹ and S2² are the group who are at the root of employers' grumblings about skills deficits as most of the recruitment problems and skills shortages reported by employers are in the lower skilled sectors. Somehow we need to keep these children engaged with the education system, and allowing them

¹ First year of secondary school. Pupils are approximately 12 years old.

² Second year of secondary school. Pupils are approximately 13 years old.

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access to vocational education through local colleges in S3³ and S4⁴ may be one way of achieving this.

We also need to effect some kind of culture change, to end the perception that vocational subjects are inferior to academic ones, and that further education is simply the destination for those who “fail” to get into university. That’s why the drive to boost skills levels should not be about shoving ever greater numbers into an already bloated university sector. Surely the skills employers need can just as readily be learned at college as at university.

By engaging with those currently out of the labour market, and building skills and self-esteem, the further education sector can play a key role in increasing the percentage of the population in work. Equally, this applies to the growing number of asylum-seekers who pass through Scotland or settle here permanently. Equipping these people with the language skills and professional or technical accreditation they need for work is an essential part of ensuring we make the most of our human capital. Many small businesses are now looking to recruit asylum-seekers to fill their skills shortages and our members are not slow to tell us about their skills and attitude to work.

However, while new courses like Modern Apprenticeship have been welcomed by employers, a common complaint is that many apprenticeships and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) do not really prepare college graduates for the realities of the world of work, and working in high pressure environments such as restaurant kitchens. There is also the added

pressure on colleges to keep courses up-to-date with the latest working industry standards and practices and equipment.

Research also shows that there are a number of barriers to training in SMEs, with businesses with more than 25 staff being twice as likely to train regularly as firms with less than 5 employees. The most obvious of these is cost, so it is vital that all training has a tangible and positive impact on business productivity if we are to encourage more training in the SME sector. The expense of upskilling is compounded by the problems caused in very small businesses by the absence of an employee for the duration of the course, so any module must be as brief as possible but as comprehensive as is necessary. It’s clear that employers also favour delivery of training in the workplace as much as possible and developments in ICT can only accelerate this trend.

Hopefully, the Business Learning Account being piloted at the moment will help overcome the financial constraints upon small businesses and encourage greater take up of training, and engage more employers with local training establishments and colleges.

In the end it all comes down to communication. The only way we will ensure an appropriately skilled and able workforce is by ensuring effective dialogue between local businesses, schools, colleges, universities and other relevant bodies, such as Local Enterprise Companies, Learndirect and the Sector Skills Councils.

*Niall Stuart
Deputy Head of Press & Parliamentary
Affairs
Federation of Small Businesses
Scotland*

³ Third year of secondary school. Pupils are approximately 14 years old.

⁴ Fourth year of secondary school. Pupils are approximately 15 years old.

Improving Access to Learning Opportunities – ‘It’s Child’s Play’

The objectives of the EU funded project ‘It’s Child’s Play’ are to develop and raise the skill levels within the Childcare Sector, improve the levels of quality and service, and to also increase career opportunities for existing and new employees. To work in the Childcare Sector, employees will be required to have relevant qualifications to enable their employers to register with the Scottish Social Services Council.

The project gives open access to free training to those in a traditionally low paid sector where continued employment is insecure. It will increase the number of qualified staff, expand opportunities for training and therefore encourage career progression. Open access will also assist in the development of an efficient, flexible labour market and encourage diversity amongst the workforce.

These aims are supported by all key agencies associated with Childcare in the Scottish Borders region – specifically the Scottish Borders Childcare Partnership, Children’s Plan, Community Plan and New Ways Strategy.

In relation to economic regeneration and social inclusion the project addresses a number of strategic priority themes. Many Borders businesses require the support of childcare provision to enable them to recruit appropriate staff and skills, which is driving the high demand for quality childcare in order to ensure children and young people have the best possible start in life. This project in essence is about helping everyone to reach their full potential.

**Borders College
BC Consultants**

The project aims to offer a range of qualifications to suit the needs of the sector. These include:

- Scottish Progression Award in Children’s Care and Play;
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) in Early Years Care and Education at Levels 2, 3 and 4; and
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Playwork at levels 2 and 3.

Candidates undertake an SVQ qualification in either Early Years or Playwork depending upon the age group of children they work with.

An integral part of the Vocational Qualification (VQ) programme is the delivery and achievement of ‘Core Skills’ which provides a full complement of learning options to develop job related skills which are fundamental to the development of generic life skills.

The comprehensive package of training offered to every candidate includes:

- highly qualified personal assessor support;
- workbased assessment;
- tutorial support;
- self-study packs; and
- CD Rom and on-line learning materials, information and guidance.

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Tutorial groups are held in a range of local venues, specifically to overcome access issues which prevail in rural areas such as the Scottish Borders. These are flexible, address the underpinning knowledge aspect of the VQ and allow candidates the opportunity to meet, share ideas, values and good practice.

The project also supports 'Developing Effective Leaders and Managers through e-learning' another Borders College ESF funded project — which makes available an online infrastructure in addition to learning materials for core skills and higher management training at Level 4. ICT training is also available, allowing candidates the opportunity to access the CD Rom specifically designed for this project, further supporting those located in remote areas.

A range of short courses have been developed to introduce the concepts of Management and Professional Development Training in Childcare settings to managers and supervisory staff. This development work now illustrates a clear progression route from Level 2 through to Level 4.

The interactive CD Rom 'It's Child's Play' has been developed by BC Consultants Childcare Team and produced by a local company – Big Sky

Studio. It was developed to provide an innovative approach to the delivery of underpinning knowledge for VQ candidates which would engage and interest the learner. The content of the CD Rom allows anyone interested in child related learning to make full use of this new medium of self-study.

To assist students in accessing online learning, free ICT training was made available in email and the internet. These courses were delivered at a number of the Borders College Outreach Centres again to reduce the burden of travel for those in remote areas.

A copy of 'It's Child's Play' was given to all Borders College and BC Consultants students at the commencement of their training who road tested the CD Rom prior to it's launch.

This European funded project has given students the opportunity to access training that otherwise would have been unavailable or prohibitively expensive. It has raised the profile and quality of Childcare provision within the Borders Region, provided a clear progression route and career path for students, and developed learning materials which otherwise would have been cost prohibitive for the College to create.

The Employment Team

The European Unit was established around 10 years ago, primarily to access EU funds and to develop and deliver EU funded vocational training programmes within the college. The team has grown over the last three years from 3 to 21 members of staff. We now offer a wide range of employability services and access other sources of funding.

We currently support the training and employment needs of over 1000 students and 200 companies and target activities at the following sectors:

- Business, Finance, Call Centre, Travel & Tourism, ICT, Multimedia, Engineering, Creative Industries, Childcare & Education, Beauty & Hairdressing, Hospitality, Nursing, Social Care, Science and Construction.

Overview of services:

- Group Workshops, One to One Tailored Support, Work Experience Placements, Recruitment Agency, Careers Advice and Guidance, Counselling, Aftercare, Creating new employment opportunities with employer subsidies and training grants, Funding to improve the employability of young people.

Key Themes of the ESF Team:

- New Project Creation; Innovation; Accessing Funding; Project Management; Strategic Development; Partnership Working, Responding to Local Needs.

James Watt College Employment (European) Unit

- Administration; Monitoring and Evaluation; Financial Record Keeping; ESF Claims.

Employability Activities amount to around £5m (€7m) per annum of which £2.4m (€3.5m) comes from external funding applications.

The Employment Unit - Local Benefits

The Unit is recognised as the “regeneration” side of the college and works closely with other economic development agencies and local economy initiatives. We are identified as project developers and “money magnets” (for our sins!) and are often approached for help and involvement with other local project ideas and applications.

Within the local area the college is increasingly being recognised as the springboard to employment opportunities. Our local communities have high levels of unemployment and low levels of job creation yet our annual employment outcomes for students are in excess of 50% with a further 30% going on to higher level training.

The annual external funds we secure have enabled the college to grow activities and increase student numbers in a period of limited mainstream funding.

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General Information

- James Watt College is the largest college in Scotland with the widest range of courses available;
- It is based primarily in Inverclyde and North Ayrshire in the West of Scotland;
- Over 22 000 students enrolled in full time, part time, day release, short courses and Open Learning;
- The college has a wide-ranging and diverse student population with students from all over the world ranging in age from 14 to 80;
- The college operates significant EU funded programmes; and
- Work extensively in partnership with others.

Project Pathways to Sustainability – Showcasing Good Practice in Project Progression

Dundee College was established as a further education institution in 1964, its purpose to provide essential education and training for the local population and local industries. In its 40 years it has served its community well and has contributed to local economic and social development. In recent years this contribution has been assisted by European funding which has helped to strengthen the work of the College. The College has considerable experience in the management and delivery of a wide range of EU funded projects. However, finding a coherent pathway in the development and progression of project activity has been a challenge. Incorporating a pathway approach into project management has now become an essential feature of Dundee College project work. Successful use of the model offers a significant contribution to sustainability of the local economy.

The model requires that project management and delivery should not be seen in isolation but instead as a part of a continuous process in which the College works in partnership. By creating a pathway of projects which progress one after and upon the other, each drawing upon the outcomes of one to inform the next, Dundee College has maximised the support of EU funding and strengthened the partnerships upon which such projects depend. As with all colleges we have a commitment to high quality training. Successful growth and sustainability within the city means success for the College. For this reason partnership is a high priority for us and it is our strategic aim to improve the sustainability of the emerging but

Dundee College

vulnerable sectors and the College itself.

This development took place in the context of a city experiencing quite considerable change. Dundee is Scotland's fourth largest city and the College is incidentally also Scotland's fourth largest with 25 000 students and 750 staff. We are a large and influential organisation in the region. Sectoral change has brought unemployment and social deprivation to the city. 10% of the adult population in Dundee is unemployed. We have the unenviable record of the highest level of teenage pregnancy, single parent households, early school leavers with no qualifications and a literacies deficit – with 20 000 adults in Dundee reckoned to have literacies needs. However, there are several new emerging sectors within Dundee which have evolved as a result of the activities of the two Universities within the city and a large teaching hospital. The principal sectors are Biotechnology and Creative and Cultural Industries which include dance, digital media and computer games technology. It is with these developments in mind that Dundee College created its pathways to sustainability model.

The pathway model can be seen as a continuum of activity and learning. At each stage of the pathway 4 core elements inform our progress. Although essential in their own right for each

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individual project they serve to inform subsequent projects.

The elements are:

- Planning;
- Partnership;
- Review; and
- Progression.

Planning

In planning every project compatibility with College, local and national strategic objectives is always ensured. The systems and procedures used need to be clearly defined and established at the outset, these include project management systems, use of work packages for activity, compliance and tracking systems. Planning ensures that projects do not develop in isolation and can be drawn in to a pathway.

Partnership

What is different in this pathway model is the reliance upon partnership. In the construction of the pathway we draw heavily upon partners both within the management team of the project and within the SME network we serve. Throughout the years we have learnt from each other and have come to trust and rely upon each other and share our goals, objectives, systems and lessons learnt in an open and frank way.

A knowledge of partners' organisations, their policies and planning patterns has enabled us to identify commonalities which can be taken forward together to subsequent projects. Fundamental to our success has been the sharing of experiences and systems which we can adopt and build on together.

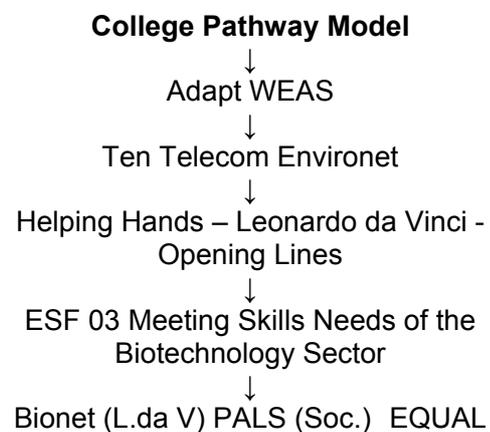
Review

While review is part of any project we use it as part of our pathway. By reviewing and analysing at each stage as part of an iterative process we can maximise the strengths of partnership as a source of new developments. Review and analysis ensures and encourages individual partners to keep track and helps to bind the partnership.

Progression

We do not see projects and the partnerships upon which they depend in isolation. They are instead the springboard for new projects. Although this model might be seen as cyclical with review at regular interim stages it nevertheless takes the pathway forward and closer to our overall goal.

The model can be illustrated by taking one specific pathway which began in 1998 and relates to a succession of environmental projects.



The process began with **ADAPT Waste and Energy Awareness Raising in SMEs**. The project had 14 partners, 5 Member States. Its key message to companies was “Environmental Sense Makes Business Sense”.

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From this partnership emerged:

- Systems and procedures which we continue to use;
- Working with SMEs using a 'bottom up' approach; and
- Recognising the needs of SMEs regarding training (work-based, easy access to learning, bite-sized chunks of learning, bespoke provision, flexible approach).

This project led directly to the next environmental project.

Ten-Telecom Environet

This emergent project aimed to create a learning and information portal (Ecotool) focussed upon environmental issues and requirements for SMEs. Basically this arose from what we knew and had learned in the preceding project. The SMEs in the project were drawn from the network created in the previous one. They were willing to participate because of our reliability and the trust built-up over the life of the first project. Similarly, project management partners were almost the same group, but the core was extended to include additional associated partners.

What emerged from Environet was the expressed need in companies for on-line training and for companies to connect "B 2 B" i.e. to network for mutual benefit.

This result in 2 linked Leonardo da Vinci projects involving 3 of the original partners UK, Sweden and Netherlands.

1. Helping hands – sharing environmental best practice between 2 networks of SMEs, one from Scotland and one from Sweden.
2. Opening lines – a study visit by trainers focusing on the use of VLEs

and online learning and supporting networks.

What emerged was the realisation that we needed in Dundee to move from generic training and SME networking to the identification and addressing of sector specific needs which were emerging locally i.e. Biotechnology sector.

The next stage of our pathway then was an ESF Objective 3 project – **Meeting the Skills Needs of the Biotechnology Sector**.

While this project did not involve the transnational partners we used acquired management and procedural systems and working in collaboration with the SMEs previously involved.

More recently this project has developed into another Biotechnology project **Training for Growth in the Biotechnology Cluster**. This has allowed us to deliver the training identified in the previous project and thereby assist in the sustainability and increased competitive ability of those companies.

The pathway continues. We have succeeded in securing Leonardo da Vinci project funding for **Bionet** – a project designed to bring together human resources and training managers of biotechnology SMEs in Scotland and Denmark to explore new training approaches and to strengthen the emerging network of companies locally and transnationally.

Still in the development phase is PALS - Partnership approaches to Learning Solutions – (the acronym reflecting the friendship within the partnership and our commitment to this partnership approach). In a similar fashion to the Brussels showcasing event we propose

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to facilitate a series of workshops in 6 Member States, taking out the message of partnership working and sharing good practice through the illustration of a range of projects and approaches. Finally we are in discussion with a number of potential and existing partners to plan a submission in the second round of EQUAL.

Conclusion

Partnership is then the foundation of the pathway to sustainability. At the heart of all our activity rests the concept of sound partnership – at different levels, each linking with others horizontally and vertically. Benefits to participants on the pathway are numerous. For SMEs, there have been training solutions, environmental improvements, cost effective sharing of training resources, new ideas and new business and support networks. For the College we have improved our profile locally, achieved our strategic goals, offered focussed and meaningful training, gained wider vision and exposure to new methodologies. As far as EU funding requirements are concerned this approach has helped to meet targets regarding sustainability, social inclusion, provided common solutions to pan-European issues, sharing of best practice, mainstreaming and roll out and finally strategic encouragement of

partnership activity. We have achieved improved sustainability for all those participating.

We have then learned much from our pathway approach. We understand much better how to work with SMEs. We now know that SME beneficiaries in any EU funded project must be involved as an active partner throughout. The 'bottom-up' approach works. We learnt at an early stage that deliverers of training cannot develop curriculum and training content without the expressed input of sectors and companies.

We now look for organic progression. Projects should always grow, evolve and adapt. At the outset we did not envisage the extent and volume of current project activity. We are not the product of a rigid 5 year plan but rather the far stronger result of organic project development.

At the heart of this pathway model is the creation and progression of partnership. This too has been organic. It is something to be worked at and nurtured. In summary, the project pathway model has contributed to improved sustainability – locally, nationally and transnationally. Our partnerships have indeed played a significant part in the transformation of the learning culture.

Energy Efficiency in the Workplace - An Online Learning Approach

Stow College has a strategic commitment to sustainable development. As part of its wider commitment to providing knowledge and awareness about sustainability, courses in energy efficiency were developed by partnership working with the Scottish Energy Efficiency Office, to meet a growing need to help businesses and public sector organisations meet their targets to reduce emissions. Partly financed by European Union Structural Funds, these were subsequently developed as online courses, to enable the college to meet demands for distance learning.

The Scottish Energy Efficiency Office

The Scottish Energy Efficiency Office (SEEO), part of the Scottish Executive, is the main provider of energy efficiency and environmental advice to business and the public sectors in Scotland. Its role is to promote resource efficiency in the business and public sectors by encouraging the take up of energy efficiency and environmental management good practice and by helping Scottish business be smart and successful and.... sustainable.

SEEO focuses on resource productivity for business, through effective energy and waste management in both industry and the public sector. Its key selling messages to business are important drivers such as resource efficiency, improved profitability, and enhanced competitiveness. This is done through delivery of simple, practical support.

The SEEO's primary audience are the 300 000 Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Scotland. The

**Stow College
Scottish Energy Efficiency
Office**

SEEO has developed an effective team of Regional Business Managers based in 6 locations across Scotland who provide outreach to this audience and the public sector. In addition to the tried and tested methods of reaching companies, SEEO develops partnerships, such as the one with Stow College, to develop courses that promote the business benefits of energy efficiency and waste minimisation.

The partnership with the Scottish Energy Efficiency Office has been of particular value to the college enabling courses in energy auditing as well as energy efficiency to be developed. Stow College gratefully acknowledges the help and support it has received from SEEO.

Developing Energy Efficiency in the Workplace units

Stow College recognised that for energy management campaigns to be fully effective there needed to be specialised training which raised awareness and understanding of how an individual could contribute to energy efficiency. Support was also needed for those middle managers and supervisors who might be involved in the operational delivery of energy management strategies.

Working in partnership with the SEEO two new units were written and accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Each is worth one credit and represents forty hours of learning.

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The National Certificate unit 'Contributing to Energy Efficiency in the Workplace' seeks to raise awareness about the need for energy efficiency. It makes the link between energy use and global climate change. It explores what an individual can do to contribute to energy efficiency both at home and in the workplace. In doing so it aims to raise awareness about the need for business efficiency. Alternative sources of energy are discussed. Barriers to action and how these might be removed are also considered.

The Higher National Certificate unit 'Promoting Energy Efficiency in the Workplace' explains the need for energy management by analysing how energy is used and how inefficiencies arise. It seeks to give practical skills in organising a campaign for improving energy efficiency including an analysis of the communications strategy that would underpin this. Methods of overcoming resistance to change are explored and sources of help and assistance researched.

These courses have now been successfully delivered to engineering students in Stow College; 'Promoting Energy Efficiency in the Workplace' has also been added to the course options available in Higher National Diploma (HND) Electronic, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. This aspect of course delivery has been part-financed by the European Social Fund from Strathclyde European Partnership.

Engineering student John Rodger said that it was illuminating to see the link between his actions and global climate change. He was sure what he had learned would be useful for any future employer, and that it had given him something to talk about in his communications class.

Indeed at Access level, the assessments for the unit 'Contributing to Energy Efficiency in the Workplace' were used to assess the communication skills unit, thus integrating assessments.

Working in partnership with Fife Council

As part of Stow College's support to business, this unit was delivered to employees of Fife Council and has been incorporated into their energy management strategy with further deliveries planned.

Staff awareness has been an important part of Fife Council's programme of efficiency. Iain Connelly, Facilities Manager said that The Energy Management Team within Service Support: Facilities had been working with other Council Services to achieve the overall efficiency targets. He added that Stow College had assisted us with the first successful delivery of its new energy efficiency course 'Promoting Energy Efficiency in the workplace'. This enabled Council staff to be offered an accredited course module which complemented the ever increasing portfolio of training and information courses available to Fife Council.

The benefit to Fife Council was very apparent at The Beacon Leisure Centre in Burntisland, which was the first Scottish organisation to be awarded the prestigious Green Tourism Award. The Manager, Angela Harris, said that a lot of hard work by the staff had gone into attaining environmental efficiency and receiving the award had given staff a big boost. Two of the Centre's staff were successful in completing the Stow College 'Promoting Energy Efficiency in the workplace' accredited course.

Stow College was keen to recognise the achievement of its students and

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awarded a special certificate to the first successful students. They received their certificates from Patricia Ferguson (MSP and Minister for Parliamentary Business) at a ceremony in Stow College on Friday 26 March 2004. Patricia Ferguson said that the Scottish Executive recognised the important role education and environmental issues played in developing a smart, successful sustainable Scotland. The partnership with Stow College created various qualifications that helped business and the public sector better understand the opportunities and benefits that could be achieved by better resource efficiency. These courses provided practical advice for any individual, within any organisation, on how this could be achieved. Patricia Ferguson expressed her delight at being able to highlight the important opportunity this offered for Scotland's future prosperity by attending the ceremony.

Online Learning Support for Business

In seeking to market the courses in energy efficiency and sustainability to the wider business community it was recognised that potential students might not be able to attend a face-to-face delivery in the college. European Union Structural Funds support was therefore gained from the Scottish European Social Fund Objective 3 Programme to develop and deliver online versions of these courses.

This involved a complete reappraisal as to how student learning could be facilitated via the medium of technology. Issues such as socialisation and student interaction also needed to be built into the student experience. A major problem for any on-line delivery was how to ensure authenticity of student assessment.

The college had previously transferred its TUC training to an online mode of delivery and this informed how the student learning was structured in the development of the energy efficiency courses.

It was recognised that the underpinning core skills such as report or essay writing, or using IT, were generic to any course and that support for these could be provided independently of the vocational content of any course. These competency building blocks were therefore designed to be accessed separately, as students felt the need. Indeed the Virtual Learning Environment itself had help sections which guided students in the use of the packages.

The knowledge, skills and competencies of the unit were laid down by the unit descriptor. The process of facilitating the student's acquisition of these online required a careful breakdown of what each outcome expected of the student and how this might be achieved. Different approaches had to be used to satisfy the needs of different learning styles. Providing written information was not enough. Opportunities for the student to research, explore issues, reflect, and record their experiences had to be built in. The 'voice' of the facilitator had to be embedded in the material presented to the student.

In writing material for these courses it was necessary to be very directive as to what the student was required to do. Signposting was very important and the clipart developed by the Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme was extremely useful for this purpose.

Another problem was how to compensate for the lack of socialisation which a classroom based delivery supplies. Discussion groups, chat rooms and email support from the tutor were

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built in to the online course. With a subject involving global climate change and energy management, videos were very much a feature of classroom delivery. This was solved by transferring them onto CD ROM for issuing to enrolled students. Obtaining copyright clearance was also necessary.

The success of a course is always judged by the demand for it. Stow College has had enormous interest in these courses both for their content and also for the availability of training that can be accessed where and when the student requires. As demand for this mode of delivery grows there is no doubt that the learning culture will be transformed in the future by e-learning. In developing online courses Stow College itself will be transformed. Its ability to reach a wider market both nationally and internationally can only

contribute to its sustainability in the long term.

Partnership Working

Stow College recognises the benefits of partnership working and seeks to collaborate with partners at home and abroad. Previously it has had successful partnerships in Denmark, Hungary and Romania developing training in Health and Safety, Project Management and Sustainable Development, part funded by the European Union.

At home it provides customised training for private enterprise and the public sector. It is currently engaged in partnership working with SEEO and Scottish Environment Protection Agency. In doing so it aims to contribute to a smart, successful, sustainable Scotland.

The Mobile Learning Initiative (MOLI)

The Mobile Learning Initiative (MOLI) has, for the past year, been delivering ICT workshops and advice to SMEs in rural areas. It has been part funded through EQUAL, which is an ESF Community Initiative. EQUAL is an ESF Community Initiative which aims to promote new ways of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in relation to the labour market, through transnational co-operation.

The aim of the project is to increase the competitiveness of rural SMEs through the use of ICT.

This purpose built luxury coach is equipped with ten student workstations and an instructor station. All have access to broadband via a satellite connection. MOLI is also equipped with latest wireless technology, smart board, overhead projector and on board generator

To date, over 2200 people have benefited from ICT drop-in sessions and workshops. These have been delivered at over 150 locations across Scotland.

Background

At the end of 2002, Glenrothes College with the assistance of Dumfries & Galloway College and Scottish Enterprise National, devised a new project aimed at delivering ICT workshops to SMEs in rural Scotland based on a specific interest in increasing the reach of ICT training to rural areas. It was also recognised that rural SMEs were a specific target group who would benefit from becoming involved in the emerging broadband infrastructure across Scotland.

Glenrothes College

Project Aims

The project aims to break down traditional barriers – specifically distance to training centres and time commitment - to ICT training amongst rural SMEs, by taking the workshops to them. With these barriers removed, more clients

can participate, leading to more competitive businesses.

Working with local communities to get a broadband infrastructure in place has been a key strategic aim of the project, by supporting local broadband campaigns to hit 'trigger levels', increasing understanding of the broadband value proposition and stimulating demand for broadband infrastructure.

What have we done?

MOLI has been to 150 locations across Scotland from Stranraer to Peterhead and Fort William to Eyemouth. At each location, MOLI is set up and connected to broadband internet. Local business people are then free to come on board, participate in workshops and advice sessions.

Workshops and advice sessions have covered:

- e-security;
- e-learning;
- online tax issues;

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- computer networks;
- building websites;
- auditing website ;
- e-marketing;
- trading online;
- broadband;
- hardware and software maintenance;
- open source software.

At each location a presenter and local business advisors are present; giving delegates in-depth advice on ICT and broadband with a specific local focus. The business advisors were also able to answer a wide range of e-business questions raised by delegates.

The presentations have proved very popular with clients, who have been known to still be on MOLI discussing related issues an hour after the workshop has finished. It was discovered that a one-hour presentation was optimal in terms of ensuring maximum attendance and the success was such that soon several presentations had to be run on the same day, as word of mouth generated increasing interest within the local communities.

Impact

Increasing Competitiveness: By raising peoples understanding of ICT and helping them apply it in a business context; we have allowed beneficiaries to use ICT to their competitive advantage.

Raising awareness: As with much technology, there was initially a great deal of hype about broadband; what it

was and what it could or couldn't do for businesses. The business benefits of broadband were explained to client SMEs, correcting myths and misinformation.

Demonstrating broadband: Instead of clients only being able to listen to a presenter, they also have the opportunity to try out ICT, mobile technologies, and broadband in a live environment. This has had the effect of bringing the subject to life.

Understanding the technology: Clients have been informed of the different options for broadband infrastructure; including wireless, ADSL, satellite, leased line, cable, and powerline technology. This has enabled clients to make informed decisions about likely solutions available in specific locations.

Supporting local campaigns: Local broadband campaigns have benefited from live technology demonstrations and awareness raising workshops delivered in the heart of individual communities.

Demonstrating wireless technologies: Being able to use associated wireless technologies, such as tablets and PDAs, has provided clients with hands-on experience, and helped them to evaluate additional potential benefits to their businesses.

Delivering workshops locally: By taking the training to remoter areas, the project has engaged many SMEs who previously had not participated in the services offered by existing educational organisations. This outreach aspect to the training was much appreciated by clients who had busy working days.

Results

People working in SMEs are very busy, often not having time to travel distances to meet e-business advisors. By taking

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ICT training to them we have allowed access to advice for many beneficiaries who otherwise would not have been able to receive it.

MOLI has played a central role in rural areas, as part of a wider campaign to bring broadband to all of Scotland. People have become aware of the real value of broadband in places where it was not previously fully understood, promoting universal access to broadband technology.

A specific example of the effectiveness of the project was the visit to Ceres in Fife on 23 February 2004. The local campaign had been running for over a year, gradually moving towards reaching the trigger level for ADSL broadband. On the day MOLI visited, there were 124 existing registrations with a further 76 required to reach a trigger level of 200.

MOLI created a focal point for the local campaign for that day and, as a result of the momentum created by the Scottish Enterprise business advisors in conjunction with local activists, a further 80 registrations were collected and the trigger level reached less than a week later.

Future expectations

The MOLI project has proven the value of taking training and workshops out to rural communities to demonstrate the latest technologies and their business applications.

As Scotland does not yet have nationwide broadband access, MOLI will continue to play its part in increasing the coverage of broadband across Scotland, whilst ensuring SMEs make the most of ICT and their new broadband connections.

ICT Skills Development for e-business

With the support of ESF Objective 3 and private match funding from Cisco Systems and Microsoft, Fife and Glenrothes Colleges have been able to deliver “Skills for Networking Professionals” to employees from small medium sized companies in the East of Scotland Operational Plan area.

The partnership approach of Further Education (FE) Colleges working with large enterprises who have provided the hardware and vendor professional training packages at a reduced cost have allowed 185 employees from local companies to access high technology training opportunities not usually afforded to them. The use of online learning materials in the delivery of training (including vendor awards) has also enabled beneficiaries to access learning at times that suit their personal needs and gain the necessary skills required to succeed in effectively using ICT for e-business. The programs, linked to high technology, have been successful in raising academic standards and improving our links and reputation with industry. As educational institutions it has also allowed us to respond to the new learning needs of the workplace, creating a pool of highly skilled, well prepared flexible workforce.

The Cisco Networking Academy Program is a comprehensive e-learning program that provides students with the Internet technology skills essential in today’s economy. The Networking

Fife College

Academy delivers web-based content, online assessment, student performance tracking, hands-on labs and support in preparation for industry standard certifications.

Beneficiaries are able to construct a programme around a combination of instructor led, online/CD ROM & text based Open Learning materials. It is supported by a web site, with links/performance support systems and aids. Specialist support is also available via phone/email, with regular mentor reviews and an option of peer group learning sessions. This model allows learners to access both Fife learning and specialist options available online. In today’s challenging market place, understanding workplace demands and ensuring employee readiness are key components for success. This project is developing opportunities for Academy students and graduates to get the real hands on skills and experience they need today for their companies to compete.

As members of the E-Commerce Partnership Group (who promote e-business development for local SMEs) the Colleges continue to work closely with Scottish Enterprise Fife to ensure this project complements and adds value to other local provision.

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Annexes

Scotland Europa is a partnership promoting Scotland's interests to the major institutions of the European Union, the regions of Europe and beyond.

We represent more than 60 Scottish organisations drawn from many areas, including business, education, local government, trades unions and voluntary sectors. The diversity of interest across our membership gives us a powerful voice in European affairs.

We are part of the economic development body, Scottish Enterprise, and we provide intelligence, policy analysis and strategic funding advice about the European Union and its relevance to Scotland.

Scotland Europa operates Scotland House, in Brussels, providing a focal point for Scottish interests in the heart of the EU. Scotland House is home to a number of key partner organisations including the Scottish Executive EU Office, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Highlands and Islands European Partnership.

The **Scotland Europa Environment & Energy Group** is an example of the partnership approach taken by Scotland Europa's public and private sector members, in the area of European environmental and energy policy.

The Group comprises a broad range of public agencies, industry associations, universities, colleges and private companies, each with specific interests in either environmental or energy matters. Members of the Group include the Scottish Environment Protection



Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scotch Whisky Association, VisitScotland, the Universities, a number of colleges, the Federation of Small Businesses Scotland and UK Offshore Operators Association.

EU Environmental policy is of particular importance to Scotland given that 80% of current national environmental legislation originates at an EU level and has an impact across all of our major sectors and industries.

Scotland Europa provides the Group with intelligence concerning the latest European environment and energy policy developments, new legislative requirements, funding opportunities and calls for tenders.

In addition to the intelligence service, Scotland Europa offers support and advice not only regarding environmental and energy developments but on the European decision-making process in general and how to influence the process.

In 1996, the Group was able to visit the European Environment Agency in Copenhagen, and in 1997 it published a well-received report on environmental standards and sustainable development in Scotland, which coincided well with the inclusion of sustainable development into the Treaty of Amsterdam. In June 1999, the Group visited Helsinki to see a range of projects and organisations, prior to the Finnish Council Presidency of July-December 1999.

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The Group has recently updated the above mentioned paper to reflect the political and institutional changes that have taken place in Scotland since 1997 and also to address the environmental challenges of Sustainable Development.

The Research, Education & Training (RET) Group was established to promote the interests of Scottish education in Europe and to offer strategic and practical help to the education sector in building European partnerships and in accessing EU programmes.

The Group comprises six of Scotland's universities, the UHI Millennium Institute, Queen Margaret University College, Universities Scotland, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Association of Scottish Colleges, the West of Scotland Colleges' Partnership and the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Scotland Europa actively carries out a variety of support measures, including disseminating information about education, training and research developments across the EU, maintaining and developing links with other European regions and organisations working in the field of education, and advising on policy, legislation and funding opportunities at European level.

Scotland Europa provides an important link between education establishments in Scotland and the European institutions. This is important in raising the profile of Scottish education, research and training, influencing the EU's decision-making process and optimising the potential benefits of EU policies and programmes in this field.

More recently, the RET Group has focused on developing capacity to access the funding available in the 2002-6 EU Sixth Research Framework Programme (FP6). Scotland Europa produced a step-by-step CD-ROM guide to accessing FP6 funding and works closely with higher further educational institutes across the EU in developing strategic partnerships.

The RET Group has also held a series of useful meetings on key issues including the new generation Community education and training programmes in the context of developing lifelong learning in Scotland. It has also produced several Scotland Europa papers in addition to the joint response to the EU consultation on the future role of universities (May 2003).

For further information contact:

Tel: 00 32 2 282 83 04

Email: information.desk@scotent.co.uk

Website: www.scotlandeuropa.com

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The Association of Scottish Colleges is the policy and representative voice for Scotland's colleges of further education (FE).

The FE sector is the largest provider of lifelong learning in Scotland, delivering half a million student enrolments and reaching 13% of the working age population in Scotland each year. Scotland's 46 colleges provide easy local access to learning opportunities and are strongly rooted in their communities.

By working with a wide range of local partners to deliver high quality and flexible learning which meets the needs of individuals, communities and employers, colleges are transforming lives and transforming Scotland.

The Association focuses on 4 main areas of activity:

- Informing and advising government, the Scottish Parliament, and other key decision-makers about the work of colleges and issues affecting the sector;



The Voice of Scotland's Colleges

- Influencing policy-makers to the benefit of colleges and their students;
- Developing sector policy and strategy; and
- Providing information and advice to colleges on a range of issues.

If you would like to find out more about further education in Scotland, please contact:

The Association of Scottish Colleges
Argyll Court
Castle Business Park
STIRLING
FK9 4TY

Tel: 00 44 1786 892100
Fax: 00 44 1786 892109
Email: enquiries@ascol.org.uk
Website: www.ascol.org.uk

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The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in Scotland is Scotland's largest direct member business organisation, with over 18 000 members.

Campaigning for a social, political and economic environment that will allow small businesses - and the Scottish economy - to grow and prosper, the FSB is now widely recognised as the authoritative voice of the small and medium-sized sector.

Our branch, regional and national structure ensures that all members are able to input to the organisation's policy process, and our credible, evidence-based policies have successfully



influenced the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive on a wide range of issues since 1999.

For further information please contact:

Tel: 00 44 141 221 0775
Fax: 00 44 141 221 5954
Website: www.fsb.org.uk/scotland

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Borders College is the only further education college in the Borders, a rural area in the South of Scotland. It has its Head Office in Galashiels, with campuses located in Hawick, Duns and Newtown St Boswells.

The college serves an area, which is large geographically, yet mostly rural, with small burghs and very sparsely populated areas. Over 90% of the college's students are drawn from the Scottish Borders. The college operates within a local environment where the unemployment rate is lower than the national figure.

BC Business Consultants Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary company of Borders College.

The organisation was set up in 1993 to address the training and development needs of non curricular learners. A strong and specific focus on customer needs and service was and remains a key objective, which has resulted in the development of a wide range of provision and delivery to suit the client.

Over the last eight years, the organisation has grown rapidly, delivering certified and non-certified learning to a large number of clients in many locations by Teams with the appropriate skills and industry knowledge.



BC Consultants has a proven track record for delivering successful Childcare Scottish Vocational Qualification programmes, and was one of the first College projects to provide vocational training.

The company has established a reputation as a provider of quality training within the Childcare Sector and have established positive, close and successful relationships with the Childcare Partnerships, Scottish Independent Nursery Association, Scottish Childminding Association, local authorities and private sector nurseries.

For further information contact:

Deirdre McKendry

Email: dmckendry@borderscollege.ac.uk

Website: www.borderscollege.ac.uk
www.bcconsultants.co.uk

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James Watt College of Further and Higher Education is the largest further education establishment in Scotland and has a reputation to match. The college has four campuses located in the west coast of Scotland; an area of unrivalled natural beauty and a mere hour's plane ride from London. Each of our main campus locations is less than 40 minutes from Glasgow International Airport, allowing easy access for both domestic and international flights.

Situated on the banks of the River Clyde in Greenock, the Finnart Campus offers one of the widest ranges of Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) courses in the country. Those interested in studying Business and Management also benefit from the £8m (€11m) Waterfront Campus and Halls of Residence in Greenock. This campus offers first-rate teaching and residential accommodation with panoramic views over the Clyde Estuary to the hills of Argyll and Bute. Courses have been devised to further reflect the changing needs of industry, thus keeping up with new technologies and further widening the range of career options available to the student population.

To complement such industry-based courses, facilities at the college are all geared to industry standard, with the most up-to-date resources available. These currently include a state-of-the-art sound studio, an electronic debug centre, up to date hair and beauty salons and, for students of the Scottish School of Sport, Exercise and Outdoor Studies, the best facilities in the west of Scotland at the SportScotland National Centre, Largs. The excellent equipment and resources available means students are using the same equipment and technology they will find in the workplace.



The college's fourth campus, based in Kilwinning, North Ayrshire is a stunning new £10m (€7.5m) facility. Up to the minute industry-standard resources include design studios, computer suites, refectory and a first class nursery, as well as substantial grounds and large car-parking facilities.



Europe and Scotland
Making it **work together**

We are particularly proud of our extensive links with the university sector across the UK, enabling students to progress from an HNC or HND at the college on to a university degree. Our partner universities include Glasgow Caledonian University, Kingston University, Napier University, University of Central Lancashire, University of Northumbria and the University of Paisley.

International students benefit from the excellent facilities and resources available to our student population, in addition to extra support throughout the duration of their studies. This includes excellent English as a Foreign Language support, a successful past record of teaching students from throughout Europe, the Middle East, Hong Kong and the CIS and a dedicated International Student Unit, who provide an initial welcome programme to all

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international students, followed by ongoing support, assistance and social planning.

To find out more about resources for international students, contact the Student Information Centre:

Tel: 00 44 1475 554017
Email: intstudy@jameswatt.ac.uk

and ask for a copy of our International Student course guide and our current prospectus.

For further information regarding the Employment Unit contact:

Ruth Cooper
Tel: 00 44 1475 554080 / 2
Email: rcooper@jmaeswatt.ac.uk
Website: www.jameswatt.ac.uk

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Dundee, which has a population of 145 000, lies on the bank of the River Tay seventy kilometres north of Edinburgh. The city has experienced significant change in recent years following the demise of the traditional shipbuilding and jute industries. New emerging sectors include Biotechnology and the Creative Industries.

Dundee College is the fourth largest college in Scotland and each year enrolls approximately 25 000 students, of whom more than 4 000 follow full-time programmes. The college employs 750 staff and is one of the major employers in the city. Its mission is to provide education and training to the local community. The college is committed to lifelong learning and social inclusion, and aims to align the curriculum to the needs of the different communities it serves.

The seven academic sectors within the college cover a wide range of vocational and non-vocational courses and are able to respond quickly to changing local needs. The college is recognised as a centre of excellence in many subject areas including Contemporary Dance, Art & Design, Communication and Media, Care, Biotechnology and Automotive Engineering, and Business and Management.

Dundee College enjoys well established links with employers. These are strengthened by a range of European funded projects which are now an integral part of the college's portfolio. These have encouraged and supported local SMEs in a range of key industrial sectors such as creative and cultural industries, biotechnology, electronics and computing with other small companies benefiting from



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environmental awareness raising and training.

Dundee College is well resourced with IT Learning Centres (we are part of the Learndirect network) online library services, state of the art facilities for training in engineering, construction technologies and biotechnology plus

specialist training rooms, laboratories, workshops and studios including The Space – an innovative new venue for dance and theatre training.

For further information see:

Website: www.dundeecollege.ac.uk

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Stow College was founded in 1934 by David Stow. Its main aim was to support the people of Glasgow and the West of Scotland to meet the economic challenges they faced. Acknowledged as Glasgow's Centre of Excellence, Stow has continued to adapt to Glasgow's and Scotland's changing economy, by providing training in management, computing, electronics, science and music with professionally recognised skills and qualifications which can help people to more rewarding and interesting jobs.

Stow College works with individuals, communities and employers to ensure the students receive a quality learning experience and achieve their full potential. Widening access to new learning opportunities for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups is at the heart of our commitment to social justice and the promotion of inclusion.

Most of the college courses and programmes of study are linked to national qualifications. Many of these are awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). It also offers its own certificates for certain courses as well as those approved by various professional bodies. One of the distinguishing features of the Energy Efficiency courses is the fact that they are validated and accredited by SQA.

Our traditional base has been the successful delivery of education and training to meet the needs of industry and commerce and increasingly the service sector and the voluntary sector.

Stow College enjoys strong links with many universities and has formal



progression links with the University of Strathclyde, the University of Paisley and Glasgow Caledonian University.

The college supports industry and commerce with tailored training and development opportunities. These courses are designed to cater for the requirements of a particular client or client group. The development of courses in energy efficiency was in response to a perceived need for businesses and organisations to reduce their emissions and contribute to the minimisation of the effects of Global Climate Change.

The college has been highly successful in establishing links with foreign partners accessing European Union funding programmes and integrating a European dimension into the curriculum. It was by accessing EU Structural Funds that the online development and delivery of the sustainability and energy efficiency courses became a possibility.

Stow College is actively contributing to sustainable development by providing practical solutions to the major environmental issues facing us all today. In doing so Stow hopes to contribute to a Smart Successful and Sustainable Scotland.

For further information contact:

June Thomas

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Website: www.stow.ac.uk



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Glenrothes is located in centre of Fife, Scotland. Fife lies on the East Coast of Scotland and is surrounded largely by water, with the Rivers Forth to the South and River Tay to the North, and the North Sea running round Fife's East Coast. It is only 30 minutes away from Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth and Stirling.

A brief introduction to Glenrothes College

The current student population is 8 700. The College has four dynamic Faculties, each of which offers expert tuition and excellent facilities.

- Faculty of Creative Arts and Technologies;
- Faculty of Business, Hospitality and Leisure;
- Faculty of Information Technology; and
- Faculty of Social Health and Child Care.

Glenrothes also boasts a Centre for Special Learning Programmes, which includes a craft centre and offers courses for people with special needs.

For the highest quality training in Engineering Programmes, one of the best facilities is the Institute of Applied Technology, which is a joint venture between Glenrothes College and Fife College.

GlenCo Development Solutions, is the commercial arm of Glenrothes College, it is widely regarded as one of Scotland's leading



specialists in the provision of customised training and consultancy throughout Scotland.

Our dedicated team of staff come from a variety of business and industry backgrounds and all have a clear focus on today's commercial needs.

Our uniqueness stems from the flexibility we offer clients. Individuals can choose from an extensive range of standard courses or discuss a tailored training package to suit their individual training requirements. With GlenCo training, people not only gain the knowledge they need - they acquire the know-how to put what they learn into practice, back in the workplace.

GlenCo incorporates an Information and Communication Technology Unit (ICT), a Management Development Unit and a Language Export Centre with professional translation services. The ICT Unit includes a CAD Centre, a Web Design Centre and an approved Microsoft Centre. The Unit has received numerous awards for its quality training and has authorised training status from many of the leading vendors, Autodesk, Microsoft, Sage, CompTia and Pearson Vue.

GlenCo has a solid history of producing



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standard courses or customised training packages to suit individual company requirements. They now offer a wider range of flexible courses to meet today's training needs that can be delivered at any of our suites in Glenrothes or on-site.

For further information please contact:
Shaun Marley or Stephen Loughlin:

Tel: 00 44 1592 568300

Email: shaunm@glenco.org

**TRANSFORMING THE LEARNING CULTURE:
PARTNERSHIP WORKING FOR A SUSTAINABLE SCOTLAND**

Fife College is located in the Fife region of Scotland on the East Coast, north of Edinburgh, Fife is surrounded largely by water, with The Rivers Forth and Tay around the North, South and the North Sea running round Fife's East Coast.

Fife College - one of the largest colleges in Scotland with some 15 000 students - is committed to developing courses and services for local, national and international communities and businesses. With heavy investment in our facilities in Kirkcaldy and other parts of Fife in the last decade, we have increased our student numbers in the last five years by 165%.

Fife College has been welcoming students from all over the world for decades. Our most successful link to date has been through our engineering courses with students from Eastern Europe and North Africa attending courses with Fife College and more recently with The Institute of Applied



Technology (our joint venture with Glenrothes College).

In August 2003 our student enrolments included people from Sweden, Denmark, Ghana, Poland and Eire.

Fife College has over 700 courses covering full-time, part-time, flexible and distance learning programmes. Courses range from introductory taster courses right the way through to Higher National Certificates/Diplomas, Degrees and professional qualifications. Subject areas taught include engineering, tourism and hospitality, construction, science and computing right the way through to design, management and also care.

For further information please log on to our website: www.fife.ac.uk

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Customer Comment Form

To: SCOTLAND EUROPA

Fax: +32.2.282.8318 (for the attention of VERONICA MCWATT)

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Please copy this page and use this space to fax to us any comments, suggestions, corrections or follow-up requests you have:

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