

**Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee  
to be held on Thursday 28 November 2024 at 4.00pm  
via Microsoft Teams**

## AGENDA

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest
  2. Apologies
  3. Minutes from meeting held on 12 September 2024
    - Action and Decision tracker

Paper 1 (C/P)  
Paper 1a
- Part A – For discussion, decision and approval**
4. Student Association Report Q2 Paper 2 (P) (DH/CS)
  5. Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy Paper 3 (P) (AC)
  6. 2025-26 Draft Curriculum Delivery Plan Paper 4 (R) (AC/APs)
  7. 2023-24 Interim Ayrshire College Performance Indicator Report Paper 5 (P) (AC/APs)
- Break**
- Part B – Regular reporting and monitoring**
8. 2024-25 Performance Dashboard Verbal (AC/APs)
  9. Student Support Funds Update Paper 6 (P) (LP)
    - (a) Final 2023-24 Position and Audit Outcome
    - (b) 2024-25 Financial Position and Risks.
  10. Employer Engagement and Innovation Report Paper 7 (R) (ARo)
- Part C – Risk management**
11. Strategic Risk Register Paper 8 (R) (ARi)
- Part D – For information**
12. 2023-24 Final Outcome Agreement Self Evaluation Report Paper 9 (R)
  13. 2024-25 Self Evaluation and Action Plan Paper 10 (R)
  14. 2022-23 SFC Report on Widening Access [Link](#) (AC)
  15. **AOB**  
**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 06 March 2025 at 4.00pm

*(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published; (P) Papers will be published on the College website; (R) Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial sensitivity or for reasons of personal data confidentiality*

**Minute of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee Meeting  
Held by Hybrid Attendance at Kilwinning campus and via Microsoft Teams  
Thursday 12 September 2024**

**Present:**

Alison Sutherland	Chair LTQC & Senior Independent Board Member
Sharon Morrow	Vice Chair LTQC
Michael Ross	Non-Executive Board Member
Iain Shearer	Non-Executive Board Member (From Item 6)
Jane Grant	Non-Executive Board Member
Chris Boyce	Elected Member, EIS/FELA (From Item 4)
Lisa Keggans	Elected Member, Support Staff
Janette Steel	Elected Member, Curriculum Staff
Darcie Hamilton	Elected Member, Student President
Connor Skipsey	Elected Member, Student Vice President
Angela Cox	Principal, Ex-officio

**In attendance:**

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

**1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest**

Alison Sutherland, Chair of the LTQC, welcomed everyone to the meeting, including new Non -Executive Board members Jane Grant and Michael Ross, plus Student President Darcie Hamilton and Student Vice President, Connor Skipsey.

There were no Declarations of Interest presented.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Gillian Longmuir & Jason Currie, Non -Executive Board members, and Gavin Murray, Assistant Principal, Learning and Skills, and Anne Campbell, Vice Principal, Skills and Enterprise.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 May 2024 (Paper 1) (C/P)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2024 were approved as a correct record.

**Proposed:** Alison Sutherland

**Seconded:** Angela Cox

**3.1 Action Tracker (Paper 1a)**

The Committee noted that there were no outstanding actions.

#### **4. Student Association Report Q4 (Paper 2) (P)**

D Hamilton & C Skipsey highlighted the main activities from the report, and verbally updated the committee on activities since the report submission.

\*Chris Boyce, Elected Member, EIS/FELA entered the meeting.

##### **The Committee noted:**

- The Student President and Vice President thanked previous Student President, Tim Chan for his efforts in AY 2023-24.
- It was highlighted that the Student Association have registered for Battle for Scotland and are currently recruiting students.
- The College Class Ambassadors have engaged with Sparks for training.
- The Student Association have been populating key dates to build the Equalities Calendar.
- Freshers' events are due to take place on 17, 18 and 19 of September and members are to attend if available.
- The Brighten our Campuses project was discussed and the plans to develop a Wellbeing Garden in Ayr and Kilwinning Campuses.

**The Committee welcomed the report, informative updates, noting the report as presented.**

#### **5. 2024-25 Committee Terms of Reference & Work Plan (Paper 3) (P)**

H Denholm provided committee members with amendments to the Committee Terms of Reference, and also the Workplan for AY24/25.

##### **The Committee noted:**

- The change in terminology from 'Corporate Risk Register' to 'Strategic Risk Register.'
- Updates to the Numbering System throughout the document.
- Changes of language and terminology.

**Decision: LTQ45-D01:** The Committee recommended the updated Terms of Reference, and Workplan to the Board for approval.

#### **6. 2022-23 College Sector KPI Benchmarking Report (Paper 4) (P)**

J Anderson provided an overview of the 2022-23 College Sector KPI Benchmarking Report.

##### **The Committee noted:**

- The overall College position has improved from AY 2021-22.
- Members noted data from Page 3 of Paper 4 which highlighted positive changes in both FE full time and HE full time courses.
- Members also noted improvement across all demographics.

- It was highlighted in reference to Page 7 of Paper 4 that each Curriculum Area has performed above the sector average however some areas for improvement can also be identified such as Care and Social Subjects.
- J Anderson discussed challenges faced with changes to University Entry Requirements and advised close working with universities remains a priority.
- A Cox reminded members that the report's data is relevant to AY 2022-23 and shows the best statistics historically for Ayrshire College.
- S Morrow highlighted a typo error on Page 2 regarding Student Certification which states October 2024. H Denholm will amend the paper to reflect October 2023 prior to publishing.
- A Cox confirmed further investigation will take place to review areas which are underperforming.

**The Committee noted the report.**

#### **11. 2024-25 Performance Dashboard – verbal update**

A Cox highlighted the dashboard will remain on the agenda to provide members the opportunity to review live data throughout the academic year. As the Academic Year has just begun, the system is not yet fully updated with information.

#### **14. AOB**

No AOB noted.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 28 November 2024 at 4.00pm @ Kilmarnock

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

**RESERVED ITEMS ON THE NEXT PAGE**

**Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee - Action and Decision Log**  
**Meeting No 46 – 28 November 2024**

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Reference	Details	Action Owner	Due Date	Action Decision	Open Complete Approved Declined
12.09.24	2024-25 Committee Terms of Reference & Work Plan	LTQ45: D01	The Committee recommended the updated Terms of Reference, and Workplan to the Board for approval.	NA	03.10.24	Decision	Approved
12.09.24	2023-24 Outcome Agreement Self-Evaluation Report	LTQ45: D02	The Committee recommended the 2023-24 Outcome Agreement Self-Evaluation Report to the Board for approval.	NA	03.10.24	Decision	Approved
12.09.24	2024-25 Self Evaluation Report and Action Plan	LTQ45: D03	The Committee recommended the 2024-25 Self Evaluation Report and Action Plan to the Board for approval pending data updates.	NA	03.10.24	Decision	Approved
12.09.24	Strategic Risk Register	LTQ45: D04	The Committee reviewed and approved the Strategic Risk Register for consideration and approval to the Board.	NA	03.10.24	Decision	Approved

**Title of Meeting:** Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

**Date:** 28 November 2024

**Title:** Student Association Report Q2

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

**Recommendation:** To note

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**1. Executive Summary**

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

**2. Associated Risks**

None

**3. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment**

None

**4. Publication**

This paper will be published on the College website.

## 1. **Background**

### Freshers

In Q1, we noted that we were undertaking preparations for Freshers in September. Freshers has now been completed, and we would note an increase in the uptake of the event on last year from circa 750 students across all three campuses, to circa 900 students. Feedback from the events was very positive with students reporting that they enjoyed it.

We were pleased to welcome TCS-Eco, our period pants provider, to the events this year. TCS-Eco, as a result, have been able to provide data on the uptake of the free period pants and we will use this to tailor our orders of future supplies with greater accuracy.

### Clubs, Groups and Societies

We used Freshers as a vehicle to chat to students about the student community side of Ayrshire College and to make them aware of the different activities available for uptake. We're pleased to report a high number of students have signed up to various clubs, groups and societies.

### Executive Committee Recruitment

We began recruitment for our Executive Committee in September and are delighted to welcome on board 13 new Student Officers. The Student Officers were taken through an induction presentation, have attended their first Executive Committee Meeting and are now undertaking a variety of activities pertaining to their role including participation during Challenge Poverty Week when three of them met with Sheila Laing, the Scottish Government Director of Lifelong Learning and Skills.

### October Events and Campaigns

In October, the Student Association completed the following events and campaigns:

- World Mental Health Day on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October which included all student emails with information and resources, social media content, supporting students with campus-based activities including mood boards, positivity trees, fitness activities etc as well as supporting the sports department with a Walk n Talk session
- Breast Cancer Awareness. Our Women's Officer kindly pulled together some resources for sharing with the students around looking out for the signs and symptoms of breast cancer and where to go for additional support.
- Hate Crime Awareness Week. The focus this year was on anti-racism and anti-xenophobia and activities included student notice boards, all student emails, social media and supporting the work of the Police Scotland Liaison Officer
- Black History Month. Our ESOL Students Officer worked closely with the team to create and develop a suite of BHM information and resources which were shared with students though email, our notice boards and on social media.

### Radio for All – Ayrshire College Foundation

We regret to report that our joint application to the Ayrshire College Foundation alongside Essential Radio was unsuccessful. However, we

continue to maintain our working relationship with Essential Radio and offer our continued support. Our thanks go to everyone involved.

## **2. Current Situation**

### **Class Ambassadors**

Our thanks go to our CQMs and teaching teams for their activity in relation to this year's Class Ambassador recruitment. The Student Association has now on-boarded 296 Ambassadors. We had circa 320 Ambassadors for AY 2023-2024. Whilst this is a drop in numbers, due to the lower matriculation rates this year we have moved from 1 Ambassador for every 33 students to 1 Ambassador for every 29 students and is therefore an increase in student representation across the college.

Ambassadors are undergoing a two-phase training programme with support from Sparqs. The first Class Ambassador/Student Association meetings are scheduled for the week commencing 04 November.

With the reported success of the monthly Summary Note document that was implemented by the previous Student President, the current Sabbatical Officers will use this mechanism again for the current academic year as means of collating Class Ambassador and student feedback.

### **Battle For Scotland**

In our Battle for Scotland tournament, unfortunately, we have not won any of our matches so far, however this is not stopping the students from enjoying the experience and staying engaged with the tournament. The current round of playoffs will conclude at the end of November with the next round taking place in March. The students have also developed a team logo and team name and are now known as Ayrshire College E-sports or ACES for short.

## **3. Proposal**

### **Extra-Curricular Fund**

We are delighted to report that Ayrshire College has gifted the Student Association £2,000 which will go toward The Student Association Extra Curricular Fund. This means, that the combined fund will be able to offer students a share of £8000 over Semester 1 and Semester 2 for which they can apply.

The fund has been reviewed and agreement has been reached to keep the same criteria for the fund as last year in that funds must go towards student led activities, projects or resources that would bring added value to their learning experience but that they would not ordinarily get through their course.

However, considering the Education Scotland Report comments on the need for more meta skills activities, The Student Association will include this as another valid criteria for funding. Therefore, the funds must go towards student led activities, projects or resources that would bring added value to their learning experience and/or support the development of meta skills.

### Virtual Reality Student Association

Whilst we await confirmation of the availability of training on Frame VR, the platform that would host the Virtual Reality Student Association, we are undertaking some light touch planning, including think about the content we'd like to see on the platform and what "zones" we may need. This would be things such as long term student resources and short term campaign areas.

### 16 Days of Action

The Student Association and Ayrshire College will again be taking part in this year's 16 Days of Action at the end of November. This campaign aims to raise awareness of violence against women and girls. We will have a mini market place which will include The Student Association, Police Scotland and The Star Centre. We will speak to students about the hidden impact of violence against women and girls, how we can change our language and behaviours to help stamp it out and be on hand to support students.

### WinterFest

This years WinterFest, which is our December time fun event, will have themes of student safety and wellbeing which will include keeping well in the winter, avoiding scams, looking out for signs of drink spiking and much more. We are pleased to have students involved who are hoping to offer fun things such as hair tinsel, Christmas nails as well other students who will be selling Christmas decorations and festive treats.

#### **4. Resource Implications**

There are no significant resource implications. All activities are within the nominal range for staff time, budgets and skills.

#### **5. Consultation**

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

#### **6. Conclusion**

The Student Association feel that the first half of Semester 1 has been very successful, and we look forward to a successful second half.

**Darcie Hamilton**  
**Student President**  
**November 2024**

**Connor Skipsey**  
**Student Vice President**  
**November 2024**

**Learning,  
Teaching and  
Student  
Experience  
Strategy  
2024-27**

## 1) Introduction

The Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy (2024-2027) is one of four underpinning enabling strategies which will facilitate the delivery of the College's new Strategic Ambition, [Empowering People for a Changing World \(2024-27\)](#)

## 2) Ayrshire College Strategic Ambition and Objectives

### Strategic Ambition

Enabling learning which provides our people with the skills to be successful and our economy to thrive

### Strategic Objectives

#### Outstanding Experiences

Grounded in high quality learning and teaching, where our students are challenged to reach the highest standards, to thrive and succeed.

We deliver outstanding experiences through:

- Personalised and inclusive approaches
- Building ambition
- Inspiring success

#### Partner of Choice

Our sense of place extends to our communities, our business partners, our region and beyond. We are regionally focused and globally engaged as a key partner through:

- Innovation and collaboration
- Impactful contributions
- Immersive relationships

#### Enabling the Future

We will shape the future positively, to drive transformation and continuous improvement, respond to challenges and bring new ideas to life through:

- Leading and influencing within our ecosystem
- Data informed and intelligence driven approaches
- Agile and responsive behaviours

## 3) Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategic Ambition and Objectives

### Our Ambition

To create outstanding, transformative and positive learning experiences which enable our ambitious learners to achieve their full potential.

### Objectives

#### 1. Outstanding Experiences

We will be recognised as an outstanding college by delivering innovative, high-quality learning and teaching, where our students are enabled to reach the highest standards to thrive and succeed.

We will do this by:

- Delivering personalised and inclusive learning experiences.
- Providing digitally enabled, problem-based learning.
- Offering enriching student-centered learning experiences delivered by outstanding staff.

## 2. Students as Partners

Students, as our partners, will be empowered, supported and inspired to positively shape and influence their learning experiences.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring all students are active participants in shaping their own learning. as well as influencing the strategic direction of the College.
- Regularly seeking and responding to student feedback.
- Supporting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our students.

## 3. Prepared for the Future

We will prepare our students with the right skills to embrace challenges that will impact their lives and will enable them to make a positive contribution.

We will do this by:

- Delivering a transformative curriculum which is co-created by employers and industry.
- Offering inspiring skills pathways which lead directly to job opportunities and/or further study.
- Developing the skills that our students require to successfully innovate and collaborate both now and, in the future.

### Performance Measures

#### 1. Recruitment

	24-25	25-26	26-27
SFC Credit Target	111,480	111,480	111,480

## 2. Retention

	24-25 %	25-26 %	26-27 %
FE FT	74	75	76
FE PT	93	94	95
HE FT	78	77	78
HE PT	93	94	95

## 3. Attainment

	24-25 %	25-26 %	26-27 %
FE FT	68	69	70
FE PT	86	87	87
HE FT	67	68	70
HE PT	86	87	87

## 4. Progression

	24-25 %	25-26 %	26-27 %
Positive Destination	80%	82	84

## 5. Student Satisfaction

	24-25 %	25-26 %	26-27 %
SFC Student Satisfaction Survey	97	98	98

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Strategic Objectives will be achieved through the successful delivery of a range of performance measures. The objectives, and associated performance measures will be embedded, on an annual basis, within the College's Operating and Enhancement Plan.

The Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee will annually review the progress made against each strategic objective.

**Title of Meeting:** Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

**Date:** 28 November 2024

**Title:** AY 2023-24 Interim Performance Indicators

**Purpose:** To provide committee members with background information and technical guidance on learning and teaching performance indicators. Also, to provide members with information on the College's interim AY 2023-24 PIs.

**Recommendation:** Committee members are invited to discuss and note the contents of this paper.

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### 1. Executive Summary

Indicative Ayrshire College AY 2023-24 KPIs show a decline in attainment across all four models of delivery.

Annual Year 2023-24 saw unprecedented levels of disruption in relation to learning and teaching because of nation industrial action taken by EIS-FELA.

As of November 2024, college sector KPIs for AY 2023-24 have not been formally signed off and published by the SFC, therefore, the figures presented are interim.

### 2. Associated Risks

N/A.

### 3. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

EqlA not required.

### 4. Publication

This paper will be published on the College website.

## 1. Background

Performance Indicators (PIs) support quality enhancement and improvement, in the College, by allowing curriculum teams to analyse and benchmark performance against subject specific and national trends. PI guidance is published annually by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

The College records an outcome for every enrolment and this must be one of the options outlined in the table below.

Outcome	Description
Completed successful	students who completed the course <b>and</b> achieve the qualification that they were enrolled on
Partial success	students who completed the course but <b>did not</b> gain the qualification that they were enrolled on
Early withdrawal	students who withdrew before the course census date
Further withdrawal	students who withdrew from their course after the course census date

The College delivers a range of courses split into two categories – FE (Further Education) and HE (Higher Education) and students study on either a full-time or part-time basis.

The four main PIs reported are: FE full time, FE part time, HE full time and HE part time. It should be noted that part time provision, particularly at FE level, is very diverse and includes school-college partnership courses, evening classes, commercial training and community-based employability courses.

### Interim Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Ayrshire College Interim Key Performance Indicators would normally be presented to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee each year at the September meeting, however, annual year 2023-24 was another year that was disrupted by industrial action.

EIS-FELA, Unison, Unite and GMB members participated in co-ordinated national strike action on 7 and 19 September 2023 and on 29 February 2024. This meant that although the College remained open, only a very small number of classes were able to take place and almost no support services, such as student funding and student services, were available to students.

EIS-FELA members continued to participate in strike action during April, May and June 2024 affecting a total of 25 days across the three months. Participation from members was high – on average 122 lecturers took part. In addition, EIS-FELA members participated in ASOS from 12 February 2024, which meant that some lecturers did not disclose or process results into college systems for a second year.

A data return to Colleges Scotland demonstrated that, as of 19 August 2024, 10,397 unit results were outstanding, affecting 2,566 students. 135 students required a result for university and of the 2,566 students that had outstanding results 1,078 were scheduled to return to college in Academic Year 2024-25.

All students choosing to study in AY 2024-25 with the College were given an unconditional offer. Partner universities such as UWS and GCU did the same with students progressing/articulating from HNC and HNDs.

The pay offer was formally ratified at a meeting of College Employers Scotland and EIS-FELA on 3 September 2024. As part of the agreement, lecturers committed to entering outstanding results into college systems and, thereafter, students were formally certificated.

College sector KPIs for AY 2023-24 have not been formally signed off and published by the SFC therefore, the figures presented are interim.

## 2. Current Situation

### FE Full Time

Early withdrawal, further withdrawal, partial success and success rates for FE FT are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Further Education – Full Time			
	2022-23	2023-24	Difference
<b>Early Withdrawal</b>	10.0%	5.2%	4.8%
<b>Further Withdrawal</b>	15.2%	20.3%	5.1%
<b>Partial Success</b>	6.4%	9.9%	3.5%
<b>Success</b>	68.5%	64.5%	4.0%

### FE Part Time

Early withdrawal, further withdrawal, partial success and success rates for FE PT are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Further Education – Part Time			
	2022-23	2023-24	Difference
<b>Early Withdrawal</b>	3.1%	4.7%	1.6%
<b>Further Withdrawal</b>	4.8%	6.4%	1.6%
<b>Partial Success</b>	5.6%	7.0%	1.4%
<b>Success</b>	86.6%	80.5%	6.1%

## HE Full Time

Early withdrawal, further withdrawal, partial success and success rates for HE FT are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Higher Education – Full Time			
	2022-23	2023-24	Difference
<b>Early Withdrawal</b>	8.3%	4.4%	3.9%
<b>Further Withdrawal</b>	15.8%	20.7%	4.9%
<b>Partial Success</b>	10.1%	13.2%	3.1%
<b>Success</b>	65.8%	59.9%	5.9%

## HE Part Time

Early withdrawal, further withdrawal, partial success and success rates for HE PT are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Higher Education – Part Time			
	2022-23	2023-24	Difference
<b>Early Withdrawal</b>	3.2%	3.3%	0.1%
<b>Further Withdrawal</b>	3.2%	5.0%	1.8%
<b>Partial Success</b>	3.4%	7.5%	4.1%
<b>Success</b>	86%	80.3%	5.7%

It is particularly disappointing to see the year-on-year improvements in KPIs negatively affected during academic session 2023-24. Despite improvements in early retention figures for both FE and HE FT, further withdrawal and partial success rates increased and, correspondingly, overall success rates decreased.

There is no doubt that the concentrated strike action by EIS-FELA members for 25 days across April, May and June 2024 affected the higher rates of further withdrawal and partial success.

### 3. Proposal

It is expected that the significant levels of disruption caused by the industrial action will have had an impact across the sector, particularly in colleges that experienced high levels of participation. College sector benchmarking information will be brought to the Committee following publication of the college sector KPIs by the SFC in May 2025 for further discussion and analysis.

Curriculum teams will continue to analysis KPI data as part of their team evaluation activities throughout the academic year, using the information to inform action planning and the development of their Team Operating and Enhancement Plans (TOEP).

#### **4. Resource Implications**

Not applicable

#### **5. Consultation**

Curriculum teams, alongside students are consulted as part of the College's team evaluation activities throughout the academic year.

#### **6. Conclusion**

Committee members are invited to discuss and note the contents of this paper

**Anne Campbell**  
**Vice Principal, Skills and Enterprise**  
**29 October 2024**

*(Doreen Wales, Assistant Principal)*

*(Gavin Murray, Assistant Principal)*

*(Alistair Rodgers, Director)*

*Jennifer Anderson (Assistant Principal)*

Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

28 November 2024

**Title:** 2024-25 Student Support Funds

**Purpose:** The paper provides an update on:

- a) The conclusion of the 2023-24 student support fund audits.
- b) How the College plans to expend the £11m of 2024-25 student support funding.

**Recommendation:** The Committee is requested to:  
a) Note the content of the paper.

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## 1. Executive Summary

### 2023-24

The following audits were completed as part of the 2023-24 audit process:

#### i) Student Support Funds – SFC and SAAS

- Unqualified audit report:  
*We have examined the records of Ayrshire College and have obtained such explanations and carried out such tests as we considered necessary. On the basis of our examination and of the explanations given to us, we report that the information set out in these forms is in agreement with the underlying records. We also report that, in our opinion, the College used these funds in accordance with the guidance issued by the Scottish Funding Council. We are satisfied that the systems and controls of the administration and disbursement of these funds are adequate. This resulted in a £320,999 underspend that will be returned to the Scottish Funding Council.*
- No audit recommendations

#### ii) Educational Maintenance Allowance

- Unqualified audit report  
*We have examined the books and records of Ayrshire College, including evidence of checks of 5% of applications and payments, with a sample size appropriate to the total number of applications, and have obtained such explanations and carried out such tests as we considered necessary.*  
*On the basis of our examination and of the explanations given to us, we report that the information set out in these forms is in agreement with the underlying records.*

*We also report that, in our opinion, the College used these funds in accordance with the SFC's conditions and the principles of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) programme.*

*We are satisfied that the systems and controls of the administration and disbursement of these funds are adequate.*

- No audit recommendations

## **2024-25**

The 2024-25 funding position remains that the College is operating within its allocated budget subject to the caveats and risks highlighted within the paper. There are no significant risks that require to be drawn to members attention.

## **2. Associated Risks**

Noted below are the most significant risks faced by the College regarding student funding:

<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Rating</b>
There is a risk that the SAAS HE Discretionary budget does not allow the College to support all HE learners start / complete their course.	The potential impacts are loss of students who either do not start or are forced to withdraw during the year.	
There is a risk that FE students are not able to support themselves during their course due to the maintenance rates not keeping pace with the cost of living.	The potential impacts are loss of students who either do not start or are forced to withdraw during the year.  In addition, there is a risk that the College is required to use its core funds to supplement student bursary payments.	
There is a risk that the reintroduction of capped study cost expenditure will impact on consumable budgets.	The risk is that the cost of items purchased for students will be more than sectoral averages and total amount permitted to spend and that the College will be required to use core funds to supplement these costs.	
There is a risk that the CAMS online application will be decommissioned without an alternative suitable solution being available.	Students will be unable to apply digitally for student support funding.  Paper based solution is not effective or efficient and negatively impacts on our carbon footprint.  Negative impact on staff resources and service delivery.	

### 3. Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to conduct an EDIA because of this paper.

### 4. Publication

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

### 5. SFC Student Support Funds

In 2024-25 the SFC have provided Student Support Funding of £10,362,673 and table 1 details the bursary support funds position including projected spend for January applications.

**Table 1**

Student Support Fund	2024-25			2023-24	Movement on 2023/24 %
	Budget Spend £'000	Forecast Spend £'000	Variance £'000	Actual Spend £'000	
Bursary	8,290	8,702	(412)	7,920	10
FE Childcare	255	173	81	165	5
HE Childcare	148	109	39	98	11
FE Discretionary	1,670	1,250	420	1,873	(33)
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,363</b>	<b>10,234</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>10,056</b>	<b>2</b>

Any remaining unspent funds will be returned to SFC.

### Fund Position as at November 2024

(Excluding EMA and January start courses)

#### Bursary

The following tables provides further detail on the number and quantity of funding awarded to date.

**Table 2 - Number of student supported through Bursary funding**

Bursary	2024-25	2023-24	Movement on 2023-24
Number of students supported	2,635	2,724	(3)%
Awarded	£7,214,243	£7,919,732	(9)%

**Table 3 – Care experienced students**

(figures included in table 2)

Care Experienced Bursary	*2024-25	2023-24	Movement on 2023-24
Number of students supported	458	497	(8)%
Awarded	£3,155,909	£3,459,885	(9)%

The College is seeing a stabilisation in the number of care experienced students requiring support. The College is supporting 458 care experienced students with this number likely to increase once January intake courses are awarded.

## Childcare

**Table 4 - Number of student supported through Childcare funding**

Fund	2024-25	2023-24	Movement on 2023-24
FE Childcare	56	62	(10)%
HE Childcare	25	34	(26)%
Total Awarded	£311,082	£262,942	18%

Parents continue to be eligible for Scottish Government childcare funding where they have a child who is 3 or 4 years old (around 30 hours per week). The number of students applying for College childcare funding therefore continues to remain low compared to previous years.

## FE Discretionary

**Table 5 - Number of student supported through Discretionary funding**

FE Discretionary	*2024-25	2023-24	Movement on 2023-24
Number of students supported	134	1,872	(93)%
Awarded	£327,840	£1,873,497	(83)%

The main purpose of this fund is to support students with rent and general housing expenses although other forms of hardship are awarded. The figures for 2023/24 include one-off payments in support of cost of living.

The College has continued to support payments to provide additional financial aid for students who need help with rising food, fuel and heating costs.

## **6. Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)**

EMA funding is provided by the Scottish Government to support eligible 16 to 17 year-old students. The College does not receive an allocated amount but are reimbursed through a reclaim system each month.

**Table 7**

EMA	2024-25	2023-24	Movement on 2023-24
Number of students supported	536	645	(17)%
Awarded	£443,760	£436,830	2%

## **7. SAAS Funds provided for Higher Education Discretionary**

In 2024-25 SAAS have provided Student Support Funding of £129,203 and table 8 details the fund position.

**Table 8**

	2024-25			2023-24	Movement on 2023-24
	Budget Spend	Forecast Spend	Variance	Actual Spend	
HE Discretionary	£126,509	£126,509	£0	£125,228	1%
FE/HE International Discretionary	£2,694	£2,694	£0	£2,660	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£129,203</b>	<b>£129,203</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£127,888</b>	<b>1%</b>

SAAS have removed the £3,000 cap for this year allowing the College to align banding levels with FE Discretionary.

## 8. Further Information

- Changes to the SFC, Care-Experienced Bursary eligibility has been extended to include individuals who have experience of care outside of the UK. Scottish Government residency criteria apply. Low risk to the College due to the demographic make-up of our current student cohort.
- Inisoft have confirmed April 2026 for the decommissioning of their online funding and application systems:
  - Development work has already begun to ensure a replacement system is developed and fully functioning before this point.
  - Louise Park, Head of Student Funding, Richard Simson, Head of Business Intelligence & Information Systems, assisted by Danny Walls, Information Systems Analyst, will lead this project on behalf of the other colleges affected, whilst working with ESS.
  - Meetings have already taken place with ESS and affected colleges.
  - ESS have agreed that this joint project will not incur any expense.
  - Demo with West Lothian College has already taken place with further meetings arranged with City of Glasgow College and Forth Valley College.
- The new College Development Network (CDN) Community of Practice funding group is now established chaired by Louise Park, Head of Student Funding which meets quarterly. Recent guests have included:
  - Rory Stride & Scarlett Campbell, SFC – Policy topic discussion
  - Greg Hiddleston, SDS – Funding Care Experienced students
  - Janet Sneddon, SG – Review of Partnership Matters document

**Alan Ritchie**  
**Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure**  
**13 November 2024**

*(Louise Park, Head of Student Funding)*