Board of Management

Students, Staff & Equalities Committee

Date of Meeting	**Wednesday 27 October 2021**
Paper No.	**SSEC1-G**
Agenda Item	**5.2**
Subject of Paper	**Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2021/22**
FOISA Status	**Disclosable**
Primary Contact	**Gillian Plunkett I Student Experience Director**
Date of production	**18 October 2021**
Action	**For Discussion**

1. Recommendations

The Students, Staff and Equalities Committee (SSEC) is asked to discuss the contents of the Admissions Review (Annexe A) for the main full-time intake in Academic Year (AY) 2021/22.

2. Purpose of Report

To provide members the SSEC with: -

- a high-level summary of student recruitment activity for full time courses where entry is based on selection;
- an applicant satisfaction survey and;
- equality, diversity and inclusion, and inclusivity statistics for both full time applications and full-time enrolments for entry to the main college intache in August 2021.

3. Key Insights

3.1 Achievement of student recruitment and enrolment targets supports the College's *Strategic Priority 1 - To be an inspirational place of learning* where the College is the first-choice destination for individuals. Monitoring demand for course provision also provides valuable information on the popularity and reputation of the College and given the current economic situation and demographic changes, the need for agility and responsiveness to the changing needs of our students and the economy is essential.

3.2 Evaluation of our performance in student recruitment in relation to equality, diversity and inclusiveness is also an indication of how well we meet our Student Academic Experience Strategy objectives to ensure that *'Individual needs are anticipated at every step of the student journey and are met in a proactive and meaningful way.* In addition, improving the diversity of our applicant population, conversion rates and retention of priority groups provides evidence of our commitment to our Regional Outcome Agreement objectives in relation to inclusivity.

3.3 Robust monitoring of student recruitment targets is maintained throughout the admissions period (January to September) with regular reports on applications

received, offers made and acceptances available via My Connect in addition to regular updates at SMT.

3.4 At a College level application activity for 2021/22 has decreased by 1.7% compared to last year. However, this decrease has slowed compare to the previous year and the volume of applications received by the College (18,906) still represented a ratio of approximately 3:1 application to places available.

3.5 A number of external factors continue to influenced the downturn in full time applications including a change in demographics, the impact of widening access policies currently being implemented by universities, more school pupils staying on to S5 and S6 and the various Government youth employment strategies spearheaded by Developing the Young Workforce.

3.6 To ascertain customer satisfaction levels with the College's admissions service, a survey of all applicants at July 2021 is included in the review, and while results show a slight dip in satisfaction levels, possibly attributed to the continuing impact of COVID -19 restrictions, overall satisfaction levels have been maintained.

3.7 Conversion from applications to enrolment was down compared to the previous year with Faculties reviewing January 2022 provision to make up any shortfall in enrolments. At October 2021 our focus now turns firmly to student retention while continuing to refine and develop a college wide blended learning model.

4. Impact and Implications

4.1 Monitoring recruitment and enrolment targets is essential to the continued financial stability of the College. While ensuring fair access supports our Public Sector Equality Duty and Regional Outcome Agreement. The College's core values include the recognition and achievement of equality, diversity and inclusiveness, and publication of statistics on applications and enrolments offers transparency in our approach to inclusivity.

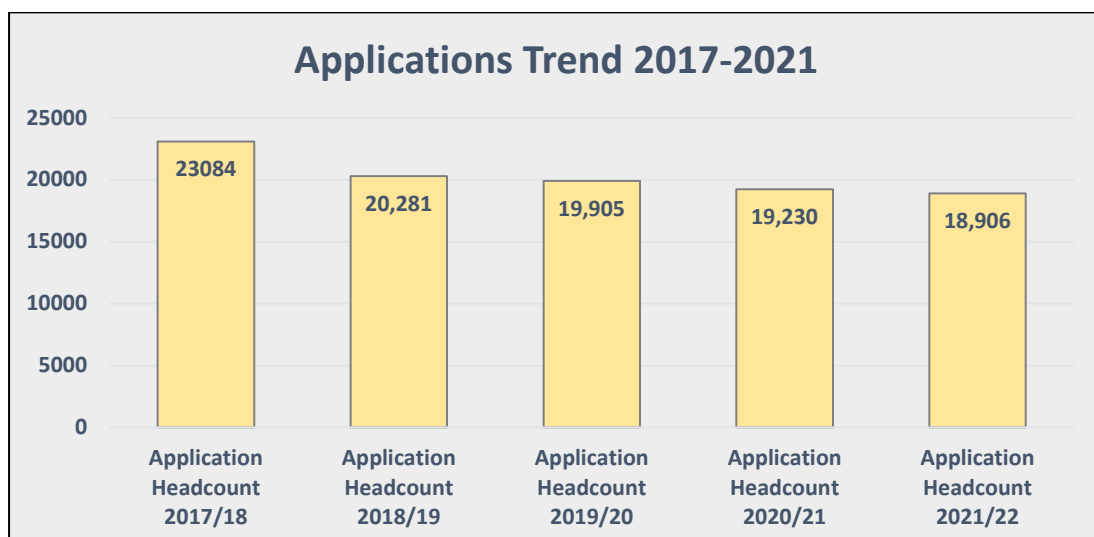# Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2021/22

1. Application Data

1.1. Table 1 provides a five-year trend for full time courses for the main College intake in August (where entry is based on selection criteria) and shows a decrease in 1st choice (headcount) applications each year, with a 1.7% decrease for this year AY2021/22 which is less than the 3.4% decrease between AY2019/20 and AY2020/21.

Over several years a similar drop in applications has been experienced across the Further Education (FE) Sector in Scotland.

1.2. Factors likely to have influenced this downturn in full time applications include; -

- a change in demographics with the number of young people in Scotland (particularly Glasgow) continuing to decline;
- Students staying on to S5 and S6 at school;
- the impact of widening access policies currently being implemented by universities which target the traditional FE College market; and
- the impact of Government youth employment strategies which offer part time access to college for school pupils studying in the Senior Phase.

Table 1 – 5 Year Applications Trend 2017-21

Applications Trend 2017-2021

Application Headcount 2017/18	Application Headcount 2018/19	Application Headcount 2019/20	Application Headcount 2020/21	Application Headcount 2021/22
23084	20,281	19,905	19,230	18,906

2. Admissions Survey – Customer Satisfaction

2.1 Table 2 provides information on the annual admissions survey over a 5-year period 2017 – 2021. All applicants (19,521, Year 1 and Year 2 applicants) are surveyed in June/July via survey monkey including successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Table 2 – Admissions Survey 2021

2021 Admission Survey Questions	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Q1. How easy was it to find information on courses on the City of Glasgow College website?	90%	92%	93%	90%	86%
Q2. How easy was it to create an account online?	91%	92%	94%	89%	86%
Q3. How easy was it to complete the application form?	88%	89%	90%	90%	87%
Q4. How easy was it to book an interview date online?	80%	82%	85%	75%	69%
Q5. How would you rate the interview information you received when you booked your interview e.g. interview details, date, time, what to bring to interview etc.?	86%	88%	92%	88%	88%
Q6. How would you rate your overall interview experience?	84%	87%	91%	87%	88%
Q7. After the interview how quickly did we get back to you with the outcome of your interview? (Response is for less than 4 weeks)	79%	83%	84%	74%	86%
Q8. How would you rate your overall experience with our application process?	82%	85%	90%	89%	88%

2.2 Only 2,563 (13%) applicants responded which was a decrease from last year at 4,254 (20.6%). Most results are slightly down or similar to previous years with overall satisfaction remaining high at 88%. The Admission Team are please with this result given the challenging circumstances in which service delivery took place. Due to COVID -19 restrictions face to face interviews were suspended and

curriculum teams either carried out interviews over zoom or made direct offers based on application information we are aware that this may have impacted disproportionately on some groups

3. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics**

3.1.   The following information compares Year 1 student application and enrolment data at September 2021 by protected characteristic. The data refers to full time courses only, where entry is based on selection criteria, including an interview. The College collects information at application stage on 7 of the 9 protected characteristics excluding marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

3.2.   The purpose of reviewing this data is to provide evidence that the College is meeting its public sector Equality Duty[1] by ensuring that the admissions procedures offer fair access to protected groups, and also to evidence the College's commitment to the Glasgow Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) targets and priorities.

Age

Table 3 offers information on the protected characteristic of 'age' and shows that the 16-19-year-old and 20-24-year-old age groups, continue to be the main source of applications and enrolments, in line with national priorities.

Table 3 – Age

Age Band	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Under 16	1%	1%	1%	0%
16-19	58%	60%	58%	58%
20-24	22%	23%	23%	25%
25-39	16%	14%	15%	13%
over 40	4%	3%	4%	3%

[1] Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland

Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2021/22

Religion

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 5 – Religion

Religion	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
None	56%	57%	58%	59%
Christian: Protestant	9%	9%	8%	8%
Christian: Roman Catholic	18%	18%	17%	17%
Christian: Other	4%	4%	3%	3%
Muslim	7%	6%	7%	6%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	1%	1%	0%
Jewish	0%	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%	0%
Another religion or philosophical belief	1%	1%	1%	1%
Information refused/Prefer not to say	4%	4%	4%	4%

Disability

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic. These figures represent full time applications only, the number of students declaring a disability across all enrolments is likely to be higher.

Table 4 – Disability

Disability	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
No Disability	85%	82%	84%	81%
Disabled	15%	18%	16%	19%

Sex

Table 6 shows that the College continues to receive more applications from females although this is redressed slightly at the enrolment stage. Gender/sex imbalances within curriculum areas are the focus of the College Gender Action Plan.

Table 6 – Sex

Sex	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Female	55%	51%	54%	51%
Male	44%	48%	44%	47%
Did not say	1%	1%	2%	2%

Sexuality

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 7 – Sexuality

Sexuality	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Heterosexual / Straight	85%	83%	82%	81%
Gay Man/Homosexual	2%	3%	2%	2%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	2%	2%	2%	2%
Bisexual	6%	7%	7%	8%
Other	1%	1%	1%	2%
Prefer not to say	5%	5%	6%	5%

Ethnicity

There is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 8 – Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Scottish	76%	77%	76%	77%
English	2%	2%	2%	2%
Welsh	0%	0%	0%	0%
Irish	0%	0%	0%	1%
Any other white Background	3%	3%	2%	3%
Any mixed background	1%	1%	1%	1%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	1%	1%	1%	1%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	4%	4%	4%	4%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0%	0%	0%	0%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0%	1%	0%	1%
Any other Asian background	1%	1%	1%	1%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0%	0%	0%	0%
African, African Scottish or African British	2%	2%	2%	2%
Other Black background	1%	0%	1%	0%
Any other background	1%	1%	1%	0%
Northern Irish	0%	0%	0%	0%
British	4%	4%	3%	4%
Gypsy/Traveller	0%	0%	0%	0%
Polish	2%	3%	2%	2%
Arab	1%	0%	1%	1%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	1%	0%	1%	0%

Gender Identity

Table 9 offers information on gender identity and the data shows that there is no significant variation between those applying and those enrolling for this characteristic.

Table 9 – Gender Identity

Gender Identity	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Same as birth	98%	98%	97%	97%
Different from birth	1%	1%	1%	2%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	2%	1%

Inclusivity Statistics

The following information compares Year 1 student application and enrolment data at September 2021 for care experienced students, employment status and SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) area to ensure that the College admissions procedures provides fair access to disadvantaged groups. These groups continue to be a priority for the Scottish Government and for the Glasgow Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA).

Care Experienced

Applications from care experienced individuals for AY2021/22 totalled 1,574 a 12% increase on the previous year with enrolments down by 1% on last year (though this figure is likely to increase throughout the year as more students enrol).

Table 10 – Care Experienced

Care Experienced	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Yes	8%	6%	9%	5%

Employment Status

The information provided in Table 11 relates to the employment/unemployment status of an applicant immediately before coming to College. The highest category

of 'in education/training' suggests that most students applying and enrolling were school leavers or students progressing from a lower level to a higher-level course at the College. The second highest category were 'employed' before coming to College which is likely to be continuing students with part time employment.

Table 11 – Employment Status

Employment Status	2020 Applications	2020 Enrolments	2021 Applications	2021 Enrolments
Unemployed up to 6 months.	9%	8%	5%	3%
Unemployed 6 to 12 months.	3%	3%	4%	3%
Unemployed 13 to 24 months.	1%	1%	0%	0%
Unemployed 25 to 36 months.	1%	1%	0%	0%
Unemployed over 3 years.	3%	2%	2%	0%
Economically inactive up to 6 months.	2%	2%	0%	0%
Economically inactive 6 to 12 months.	1%	1%	0%	0%
Economically inactive 13 - 24 months.	0%	0%	0%	0%
Economically inactive 25 - 36 months.	0%	0%	0%	0%
Economically inactive over 3 years.	1%	1%	0%	0%
Workforce Returners.	0%	0%	0%	0%
Employed.	36%	33%	36%	37%
Self-employed.	3%	2%	3%	2%
In education/training.	41%	46%	50%	38%
Not in employment, education or training				17%

SIMD

Table 12 provides information related to areas of deprivation through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). This measure uses 38 quality of life indicators to identify small area concentrations of multiple deprivations across Scotland. The data zones are divided into quintiles with quintile 1 representing the 20% most deprived postcode areas in Scotland.

The table compares full time applications and full-time enrolments by quintile and location i.e. Glasgow region and other (out with Glasgow) and shows a lower conversion from application to enrolment across all quintiles for this year reflecting the higher enrolment figures from AY2020/21 compared to AY2021/22.

The category 'Postcode not found' represents applications from outside Scotland (non-international i.e. other UK area or EU).

Table 11 – All Applications and Enrolments by Quintile

2020	Glasgow or Other Region	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5	Postcode Not Found
Applications	Glasgow City	4789	1244	782	474	267	
	Other	2323	2476	2100	1862	1965	948
Enrolments	Glasgow City	1713	479	329	193	128	
	Other	913	986	868	815	870	332
Enrolments as a % of Applications		37%	39%	42%	43%	45%	

2021 SIMD	Glasgow or Other Region	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5	Postcode Not Found
Applications	Glasgow City	4712	1148	816	463	279	
	Other	2339	2387	2111	1859	1762	1030
Enrolments	Glasgow City	1594	438	324	180	109	
	Other	844	890	778	715	741	470
Enrolments as a % of Applications		35%	38%	38%	39%	42%	