

Board of Management Audit & Assurance Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 12 September 2023
Paper No.	AAC1-I
Agenda Item	5.4.3
Subject of Paper	Internal Audit Report – Staff/Organisational Development
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Henderson Loggie
Date of production	23 August 2023
Action	For Discussion and Decision

1. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and discuss the report and the management responses to the internal audit recommendations.

2. Purpose of report

The purpose of this review is to provide management and the Audit and Assurance Committee with assurance on key controls relating to the curriculum and financial plans in place for City of Glasgow College and their alignment with the regional plan for Glasgow and the college student number targets.

3. Key Insights

This internal audit of Staff/Organisational Development provides an outline of the objectives, scope, findings and graded recommendations as appropriate, together with management responses. This constitutes an action plan for improvement.

The Report includes a number of audit findings which are assessed and graded to denote the overall level of assurance that can be taken from the Report. The gradings are defined as follows:

Good	System meets control objectives.
Satisfactory	System meets control objectives with some weaknesses present.
Requires improvement	System has weaknesses that could prevent it achieving control objectives.
Unacceptable	System cannot meet control objectives.

4. Impact and implications

Refer to internal audit report.

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

Good

City of Glasgow College

Staff / Organisational Development

Internal Audit report No: 2023/08

Draft issued: 3 August 2023

Final issued: 23 August 2023



Contents

		Page
Section 1	Management Summary	
	• Overall Level of Assurance	1
	• Risk Assessment	1
	• Background	1
	• Scope, Objectives and Overall Findings	1 - 2
	• Audit Approach	3
	• Summary of Main Findings	3
	• Acknowledgements	3
Section 2	Main Findings and Action Plan	4 - 12

Level of Assurance

In addition to the grading of individual recommendations in the action plan, audit findings are assessed and graded on an overall basis to denote the level of assurance that can be taken from the report. Risk and materiality levels are considered in the assessment and grading process as well as the general quality of the procedures in place.

Gradings are defined as follows:

Good	System meets control objectives.
Satisfactory	System meets control objectives with some weaknesses present.
Requires improvement	System has weaknesses that could prevent it achieving control objectives.
Unacceptable	System cannot meet control objectives.

Action Grades

Priority 1	Issue subjecting the organisation to material risk and which requires to be brought to the attention of management and the Audit and Assurance Committee.
Priority 2	Issue subjecting the organisation to significant risk and which should be addressed by management.
Priority 3	Matters subjecting the organisation to minor risk or which, if addressed, will enhance efficiency and effectiveness.



Management Summary

Overall Level of Assurance

Good	System meets control objectives.
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Risk Assessment

This review focused on the controls in place to mitigate the following risks on the City of Glasgow College ('the College') Strategic Risk Register as at April 2023:

- SR9 – Failure to manage performance and achieve improved performance (net risk score: 10 - medium); and
- SR10 – Failure to attract, engage and retain suitable staff (net risk score: 16 – high).

Background

As part of the Internal Audit programme at the College for 2022/23 we carried out a review of the College's staff and organisational development arrangements. The Audit Needs Assessment identified this as an area where risk can arise and where Internal Audit can assist in providing assurances to the Board of Management and the Principal that the required control environment is operating effectively, ensuring risk is maintained at an acceptable level.

Within the College sector, recruitment and retention of key staff is of vital importance to the delivery of agreed outcomes. The College must ensure that it has the organisational capacity to implement its strategic plans and make full use of the abilities of its staff. It should therefore explicitly relate its staffing requirements to its strategic and operational objectives in terms of numbers, skills, knowledge, deployment, structure, etc. The College should ensure that all staff are managed effectively and efficiently. Managers should communicate business priorities and objectives to staff and ensure that those objectives are translated into tasks that teams and individuals undertake. Staff should know what is expected of them, their performance should be regularly assessed, and they should be assisted in improving their performance and contribution to the College's objectives through learning and development opportunities.

The College is currently undergoing significant Organisational Change activity leading to a specific set of challenges and meaning that staff and organisational development arrangements are increasingly important.

Scope, Objectives and Overall Findings

This audit considered whether the College was making best use of its staff and included a review of workforce planning; training; the personal development plan system; and succession planning. The work was informed by the People and Culture Strategy 2021-2030, which underpins the overarching College Strategic Plan 2021-2030.



Scope, Objectives and Overall Findings (Continued)

The table below notes each separate objective for this review and records the results:

Objective	Findings				
		1	2	3	Actions already planned or in progress
The objective of our audit was to obtain reasonable assurance that:		No. of Agreed Actions			
1. The College has a systematic approach for ensuring that its staff resources match need in order to deliver planned commitments. Where gaps are identified, timely action is taken to close these	Good	0	0	0	✓
2. The College's approach to training, including induction training, is clearly informed by an assessment of where there are skills / knowledge / performance gaps	Good	0	0	0	✓
3. The College has a systematic approach to evaluating its training to ensure that it is achieving the desired impact	Good	0	0	0	✓
4. There is a systematic approach for translating business objectives into actions / tasks for members of staff	Good	0	0	0	✓
5. A systematic approach is used for communicating objectives and performance expectations to staff	Good	0	0	0	✓
6. A systematic process is used for providing feedback to staff on performance and agreeing action to improve performance	Good	0	0	0	✓
7. There is a systematic approach for ensuring that the College makes full use of the skills and knowledge of its staff	Good	0	0	0	✓
8. Appropriate succession planning strategies, action plans and monitoring arrangements are in place within the College	Good	0	0	1	
Overall Level of Assurance	Good	0	0	1	
System meets control objectives.					



Audit Approach

The Vice Principal – People and Corporate Support, the Associate Director, People & Culture (HR, OD, Payroll & EDI), and the Organisational Development Manager, were all interviewed, and the College's policies, procedures and structure were reviewed, to assess the extent to which the above objectives were being delivered.

Summary of Main Findings

Strengths

- The College's People and Culture Strategy (2021-2030) aligns closely with the strategic vision of the College and provides a robust range of aims and objectives committed to attracting and retaining talent;
- The College has invested in a new Learning Experience Platform, 'MyDevelopment', for all staff learning and development activity, which will provide enhanced user experience as well as data and functionality that will increase opportunities and efficiencies for workforce planning, training, succession planning and personal development reviews;
- A new personal development review process has been developed and will be rolled out over academic year 2023/24. This will allow development needs and objectives to be formally identified for all staff;
- Clear linkages between individual staff objectives, operational plan objectives and the College's strategic objectives is embedded within the new personal development review process and in time this will also allow opportunities for senior management to effectively communicate strategic objectives and priorities to staff;
- A robust 'integration' process is in place for all new staff joining the College, which is tailored to their specific role;
- The College provides a wide range of learning and development opportunities for both academic and non-academic staff;
- Staff have access to a suite of online training material, which provides them with flexible opportunities for learning and development;
- The skills matrix, which is being developed within MyDevelopment, will enhance existing workforce planning arrangements, and will allow training and skills gaps to be identified across the College; and
- There is a focus on upskilling staff, with various opportunities available such as the 'Enhanced Qualifications' and 'Core Skills for Managers' initiatives.

Opportunity for Improvement

- The College could further enhance existing succession planning activity by considering the introduction of a future leader program aimed specifically at potential successors for key leadership roles. This would help to train, develop, and support current members of staff to prepare them for applying for a leadership role in the future.

Acknowledgments

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff at the College who helped us during the course of our audit.



Main Findings and Action Plan

Objective 1: The College has a systematic approach for ensuring that its staff resources match need in order to deliver planned commitments. Where gaps are identified, timely action is taken to close these

The College has developed a new Learning Experience Platform (LXP), 'MyDevelopment', which went live during the time of our audit fieldwork, in mid-July 2023. The platform has been introduced to replace the three integrated systems – MyCity, iTrent and Connected – for staff learning and development activity. The system has a plethora of new functionalities, which will enhance user experience as well as providing capability for maintaining rich, searchable data on the skill mix of all staff across the College.

CV Profiles will be maintained within MyDevelopment, allowing data on skills and qualifications of all staff to be captured within the system. All current staff have a CV Profile within MyDevelopment and an automated process is in place for profile creation when new employees join the College. All qualification information (which was previously held within iTrent) has been migrated into MyDevelopment and all qualification and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) records held separately within staff surveys or by Organisational Development have been collated in MyDevelopment. At the time of our fieldwork around 600 of these CV profiles were fully populated (out of around 1,300 profiles) and the College is currently working towards completing all of the remaining 700 profiles. The College has access to bespoke reporting functionality within MyDevelopment, which allows skills information to be extracted by role / area / team / manager / support or academic area. Once skills profiles are complete and fully functional, this will allow even tighter monitoring of staff resources to ensure that they match need, alongside existing monitoring arrangements (such as maintaining an approved establishment list, recruiting in line with approved posts and budgets, and managers continually monitoring staff numbers).

There is currently not a formal workforce plan in place. However, workforce planning is a central pillar of the People and Culture Strategy (2021-2030). Aim 1 of the People and Culture Strategy (2021-2030) is to deliver a comprehensive workforce plan. Despite the challenging environment which the College is operating within, each objective under Aim 1 is being worked towards. Business cases for each faculty and directorate of the College have been developed as part of ongoing compulsory redundancy exercises and these are acting as interim workforce plans. Any gaps that are identified will be filled either through redeployment of staff from other areas of the College, by supporting staff through further training or, where necessary, through external recruitment in line with the approved staff budget model. Since March 2022, there has been an amended "authority to recruit process" in place whereby all requests to fill vacancies are considered by the Executive Leadership Team prior to approval. Only posts that are business critical are being filled and any new posts created must be evidenced as business critical.



Objective 2: The College's approach to training, including induction training, is clearly informed by an assessment of where there are skills / knowledge / performance gaps

Integration

All new staff who join the College complete 'staff integration' which consists of a mix of online training, face to face introductory sessions, and departmental integration. They receive an interactive PDF on their first morning at College which has links to videos, policies and procedures and a checklist for the stages of induction that they will complete on day one, week one and by the end of their first month. A College Welcome session is delivered to all new staff, which is led by the Organisational Development team and provides essential information while offering an opportunity to meet other new colleagues and other staff from all levels and departments. Mandatory training modules are automatically assigned to new staff in MyDevelopment and include core modules as well as any additional modules depending on the role. The Learning and Teaching Academy offers an additional lecturing integration pathway in addition to the generic pathway. A checklist is in place for managers to ensure that each stage of integration has been completed. Analytics are in place for the interactive integration PDF which allow Organisational Development staff and managers to identify which stage new staff are at with integration at any given time.

Teacher Training

All teaching staff are required to obtain the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Teaching Practice and the Teaching Qualification in Further Education (TQFE) within three years of appointment. Teacher training has been managed by the Learning and Teaching Academy since 2019. The College is also working towards a position whereby all staff are General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) registered, in line with new membership requirements introduced across the sector in 2021. A comprehensive teacher training policy and procedure is in place outlining the College's approach to fair and transparent access to College supported teacher training.

Enhanced Qualifications

Staff have the opportunity to apply for support with funding and time off from their usual role to obtain an academic or professional qualification. Requests should be discussed with line managers and supported by a business case submitted via MyDevelopment to the Organisational Development Manager. Authorisation is required by the relevant Associate Dean / Faculty Dean or Head of Department / Director.

Core Skills for Managers

A 'Core Skills for Managers' program is in place at the College, which is designed to '*Develop knowledge, competence and confidence in management and leadership skills.*' The program comprises of four distinct phases which are planned to be implemented between September 2022 and February 2024 and will involve the identification of learning needs, setting of priorities, and designing and delivering training in line with these priorities. The final phase will include evaluation, review, and enhancement of the training offering, including the program of refresher training.



Objective 2: The College's approach to training, including induction training, is clearly informed by an assessment of where there are skills / knowledge / performance gaps (Continued)

PDR Process

A new Personal Development Review (PDR) process due to be launched within the College in Autumn 2023. This will be embedded within MyDevelopment and will play a key part in identifying training needs where there are identified skills, knowledge, or performance gaps.

Other Training Opportunities

- Staff can request external or additional training through the MyDevelopment platform for approval by managers and Human Resources (HR). If the cost is over £500, approval by the Dean or Director is also required. If managers approach advisors in Organisational Development regarding development in their team, a Learning Request Form is used as a mini training needs analysis including identifying learning outcomes and objectives;
- A CPD events calendar is available on MyDevelopment which states all upcoming Learning and Development workshops. The College offers six days (or 36 hours) of structured CPD activity each year to all staff;
- A learning catalogue is available on MyDevelopment with a range of e-learning workshops available;
- There is a quarterly Organisational Development newsletter which has been relaunched this year. This is circulated to all staff via email and available on the MyConnect intranet which highlights learning and development opportunities available; and
- The College also recognises the importance of wellbeing on performance and is offering various opportunities with a focus on mental health and wellbeing.

MyDevelopment allows completion of mandatory, essential and job specific training modules and any further training to be monitored by both Managers and HR / Organisational Development staff. It can also use analytics to make individual training recommendations based on the skills information that is held. The system is set up to send auto-generated reminder notifications to staff when training is due to be completed (7 days prior) and managers are alerted when training is overdue.

As discussed above under Objective 1, MyDevelopment has the functionality to profile skills of all staff across the College. There are plans in place to use this data to create a skills matrix which could be used to clearly identify any skills and knowledge gaps across the College and to inform future training. The system will allow PDR data to be analysed for trends and to identify any development needs on a wider basis.



Objective 3: The College has a systematic approach to evaluating its training to ensure that it is achieving the desired impact

The Launch of the LXP will enhance the College's ability to support the learning needs of the College's diverse staff population as well as evaluate the impact of training delivered on a micro and macro level. Feedback forms are automatically generated within MyDevelopment. These are sent out after the College Welcome session for feedback on the integration process as well as following any training completed thereafter. There are four different settings within MyDevelopment for post training evaluations with increasing levels of information gathered on the effectiveness of learning activities. There is a generic feedback form in place as well as forms tailored to the type of training delivered, for example a simple e-learning module may request a star rating whereas the 'Core Skills for Managers' training has a more in-depth feedback form.

Successful applicants of Enhanced Qualifications are required to sign a Learning Agreement. During the course of the qualification, the individual and their line manager should frequently evaluate progress of qualification and associated development goals as part of the PDR process. Within three months of completing the qualification the individual should complete and return to Organisational Development an evaluation of the course and an evaluation paper (of no less than 1000 words and no more than 5000 words) detailing learning outcomes achieved and benefits realised as a result of undertaking the qualification.

All feedback gathered will be retained within MyDevelopment, meaning the data can be evaluated to ensure that training is achieving the desired impact and inform future training delivery and learning and development activity.



Objective 4: There is a systematic approach for translating business objectives into actions / tasks for members of staff

The College's strategic objectives agreed by the Board of Management are cascaded down through the Executive and Senior Management Teams to each Faculty / support service team through the development of operating plans for each department that directly link into the Strategic Plan priorities and supporting strategies, e.g. the People and Culture Strategy. The new PDR process aims to ensure that individual development plans align with the operational plans and strategic aims and priorities of the College. The first stage of the PDR process involves 'reflection' on the operational needs of the staff member's role and their own developmental needs. Staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the strategic priorities set out in the College Strategic Plan and departmental operational plans as this is key to setting effective goals and objectives aligned to strategic priorities. The PDR record within MyDevelopment asks staff to record the strategic / operational objective that each of their personal objective's link to. Managers can also use the PDR process as an opportunity to communicate operational and strategic priorities to staff.



Objective 5: A systematic approach is used for communicating objectives and performance expectations to staff

Objective 6: A systematic process is used for providing feedback to staff on performance and agreeing action to improve performance

As mentioned above, under Objective 2, the College has developed a new PDR process, which will become the core mechanism for staff and managers to discuss objectives and provide feedback. The process has been developed in consultation with staff, managers, and trade unions and is due to be rolled out from the start of academic year 2023/24. GTCS membership mandates that staff should have access to a PDR process and the College's PDR process has been endorsed by GTCS and we were advised that it is recognised as an example of best practice.

The PDR process aims to be employee-led and provides individuals with greater autonomy for their own learning and development. Prior to meeting with line managers, staff members will complete paperwork within MyDevelopment encouraging them to reflect on their performance and aspirations. Lecturers should also look at the 'Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges' guidance when identifying their own personal goals. An agreement conversation with line managers will follow, which will provide the opportunity to discuss and agree both operational and development objectives. An 'Individual Development Plan' will be completed with input from both the staff member and line manager. Both should agree and sign-off on all agreed development identified. All PDR paperwork and data will be held within MyDevelopment and analytics will allow effective oversight of uptake across the College as the new process is rolled out and will eventually allow staff objectives to be tracked on an individual and College wide level by staff, managers, and the Organisational Development team.

Target dates will be set for all objectives and quarterly meetings held with staff and line managers to review and discuss progress. An annual review meeting will also be held to reflect and evaluate the progress. The PDR process will be cyclical on an annual basis so each year operational and development needs will be reconsidered, as well as operational plans and the College Strategic Plan, and objectives will be updated where relevant.

Guidance has been developed for staff as they familiarise themselves with the new process and guidance for managers is also available.

A 'Values and Behaviours' handbook is in the final stages of development and was approved by the Senior Management Team in June 2023. The handbook summarises positive behaviours which each level of management can display to allow College values to be actively role-modelled. This handbook provides clear expectations of leadership colleagues and is intended to be used to guide feedback for the PDR process. Annual staff surveys form a key part of data gathering, which will complement the new PDR process to identify the aspirations of staff members and the data accessible in the LXP will assist in clarifying any gaps that need filled as well as potential future leaders.



Staff / Organisational Development

Objective 7: There is a systematic approach for ensuring that the College makes full use of the skills and knowledge of its staff

As mentioned above, the implementation of the new LXP, MyDevelopment, will allow the College to develop a skills matrix which can be utilised to ensure it is making full use of the skills and knowledge of staff. Staff interests as well as additional skills such as languages can be captured in MyDevelopment and held within the 'MyCV' or 'MyBio' functions.

We noted that key staff within the HR / Organisational Development department are leaving the College however from discussion confirmed that this should not affect the implementation of MyDevelopment or the roll out of the new PDR process directly.



Objective 8: Appropriate succession planning strategies, action plans and monitoring arrangements are in place within the College

Although the College does not have a formal succession plan in place, succession planning is embedded into the People and Culture Strategy. One of the strategic priorities is to 'support collaborative long-term resource planning and talent management to meet strategic needs, inclusive of a strong, visible, empowered and inspirational leadership team'. Succession planning actions also form a key part of the Organisational Development Operational Plan.

A new workforce plan and succession planning framework was discussed during our previous audit of this area in 2019/20 however events have superseded this as the climate has changed significantly with funding restrictions and compulsory redundancies. Ongoing national job evaluation poses an additional challenge to the College's recruitment activity. The business cases recently developed as part of the compulsory redundancy process have identified all key posts and required in depth analysis of single points of failure. The cost of formally documenting action plans to cover key senior roles in the event of unexpected absence or resignation would not be effective given the challenges mentioned.

Redeployment, upskilling, and reskilling are a key focus of the College going forward. There are a variety of initiatives which aim to upskill and develop potential future leaders, such as the Enhanced Qualifications program and Core Skills for Managers, as discussed under Objective 2 above.



Objective 8: Appropriate succession planning strategies, action plans and monitoring arrangements are in place within the College (Continued)

Observation	Risk	Recommendation	Management Response	
<p>The College could further enhance its succession planning initiatives offered by considering a program specifically for upskilling talented individuals earmarked for leadership positions. This may include mentorship, specialised training, exposure to various aspects of leadership, and networking opportunities to prepare them for future leadership roles. A future leader program may also improve employee morale and productivity as well as retention of talented staff.</p>	<p>Unexpected departure of key leaders can lead to disruption and a loss of valuable institutional knowledge.</p>	<p>R1 Consideration should be given to the development of a future leader programme to create a robust pipeline of talent with the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to ensure that they are ready to apply for key leadership positions when these arise.</p>	<p>This opportunity for improvement is to be welcomed, as the College begins to exit from substantial organisational change, to right size Leadership and management development (inclusive of succession planning) should be an integral component of building back. This has the potential to provide detailed and bespoke development opportunities that will engage and enthuse "team city", providing further alignment with the People and Culture Strategy.</p> <p>To be actioned by: Vice Principal – People and Corporate Support</p> <p>No later than: 31 July 2024</p>	
			<p>Grade</p>	<p>3</p>



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