Board of Management

Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Committee

Date of Meeting	**Tuesday 12 November 2024**
Paper No.	**LTSEC2-F**
Agenda Item	**4.6**
Subject of Paper	**Student Success Framework**
FOISA Status	**Disclosable**
Primary Contact	**Dr Derek Robertson**
Date of production	**1 November 2024**
Action	**For Discussion and Decision**

1. Recommendations

To discuss the draft Student Success Framework.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the draft Student Success Framework to facilitate discussion.

3. Consultation

The Senior Management Team, Student Experience Group, the Director of Excellence and the Student Engagement Manager have been consulted in the preparation of the draft framework.

4. Key Insights

Appendix 1 contains the full draft of the Student Success Framework. The appendix also outlines the proposed consultation project to take place this academic year.

Key points for noting are:
- The framework is a strategic priority identified in aim 3.2 of the Student Academic Experience Strategy
- The framework is closely aligned to the requirements of new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF)
- The framework draws upon the sparqs Student Learning Experience Model, which is a key point of reference for the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review element of TQEF.

The proposed consultation process is taking place from October 2024 with a final framework due to be in place for April 2025.

5. Impact and Implications

Implications for the quality of academic provision and / or the student experience
The Student Success Framework is intended to be at the centre of our strategic approach to quality assurance and enhancement, with a particular emphasis on meeting the requirements of TQEF. It will combine with our existing quality processes (for example, internal and external verification; Stop, Check, Support; and Curriculum Enhancement Planning) to produce a robust and reflective evaluation of college practice and to identify areas for enhancement. As part of this, it will provide qualitative data that will support the development of the College's Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) and will be used as a tool for reflection for Institution-Led Quality Review (ILQR).

Appendix 1 – Draft Student Experience Framework

Student Success Framework – project proposal

The background

The College's Student Academic Experience Strategy commits us to the development of a 'Student Retention Framework'. This framework should include consideration of: student preparedness for college; the induction and welcome experience; how we foster belonging; the promotion of health and wellbeing; the early detection and intervention of students at risk of failure or withdrawal; the facilitation of students' transitions through their college journey and into employment, and; the use of robust data to inform improvement in retention and success. This project aims to enact this strategic aim, which, to emphasise its focus on positive student outcomes, has been rebranded as a 'Student Success Framework'.

What is student success?

The project will use an adaptation of the definition of student success put forward by AdvanceHE:

> "Student success can encompass students' academic achievement; their progression through [education] or into employment, self-employment or further study; their deepening engagement with their programme and/or discipline area; the acquisition and development of skills, and their wider co-curricular achievements. It is the combination of these that helps students realise the potential of [education] to transform their lives. […] student success is highly personalised and individual. What represents success for one student may not be for another. Individuals will have different motivations for, and

> expectations of, studying […] and thus will want (as well as take) different
> things from the experience" (AdvanceHE, 2019)

The project will not only consider the success of students as individuals, but how we support success across particular groups who may be marginalised or have challenges in accessing education (such as through disability, poverty, ethnicity, care experience, etc).

Student Success Framework and the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework

Among the College's strategic priorities for academic year 2024-25 are a focus on increasing attainment and on improving retention. This focus comes at a time of change in the tertiary education sector, the most obvious manifestation of which is the new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF).

TQEF 'is the new quality assurance and enhancement framework for Scotland's colleges and universities'[1] which will be used across colleges and universities 'to give assurance on academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience, and ensure accountability for public investment in learning and teaching'.

The review methodology for TQEF come into effect this academic year and the Student Success Framework is intended to contribute to the College's self-evaluation and action planning obligations under TQEF including:

- Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) - TQER is the new external peer-led and enhancement focused review method for Scotland's tertiary sector. Running on a 7-year cycle this includes self-evaluation informed by ongoing institution-led enhancement activity, the involvement of peer and student reviewers, and a focus on student voice.
- Institution-Led Quality Review (ILQR) - ILQR is the periodic review of subjects, programmes and professional services contributing to the student experience, conducted by an institution-led review team. Among other outcomes, this activity should:
  - o 'Be designed to promote and support critical reflection on policy and practice and ensure that any shortcomings are addressed'.
  - o 'Give a central role to quality enhancement by promoting dialogue on areas in which quality and the student experience could be improved and identify good practice for dissemination within the institution and beyond'.
  - o 'Produce robust, comprehensive, and credible evidence that support services are effective and responsive to students' needs.'

It is intended that the Student Success Framework will generate data and evidence that the College can use as part of its new annual quality report to the SFC, the Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP).

Part of the guidance for the SEAP includes a provision that:

> 'Institutions should…plan to engage students as partners in the preparation of
> this annual SEAP and in the monitoring of the implementation of the actions.
> Student partnership is a key aspect of the TQEF, which is expected to develop
> and mature over time. Institutions will be encouraged to consult the sparqs
> Student Partnership ambition statement and features and accompanying
> resources as they are developed, when considering how to address this.'
> [emphasis added].

For this reason, the draft framework outlined below draws heavily on the sparqs Student Learning Experience Model published in October 2023 and available at https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/sector.php?page=1116. The sparqs model will be a key reference point for TQER method so it is useful for the College to incorporate it at this point.

The project

This project will create a Student Success Framework for City of Glasgow College. The Framework is intended to guide how we measure, support and develop student success allowing students to achieve their academic and personal objectives.

In line with the TQEF, the Framework will contribute to our strategic approach to quality enhancement and drive an enhancement culture that is embedded across the College community.

It is intended that the framework be used at multiple levels, for example, by curriculum areas, faculties, support services or college wide.

The project will be evidence based, taking a themed approach to gather what we currently do successfully and to identify areas for development and it will be produced collaboratively with students as partners.

Project outputs

1. A draft framework outline.
   The project team will produce a draft framework, based on the sparqs Student Learning Experience Model. The framework will be our strategic model for enhancing student success and will be used as a reflective tool to consider how we support success across the student experience.
2. Initial reflective report.
   The project team will, following consultation, work with specific curriculum teams and service areas to produce a report considering performance across the Framework's thematic areas. The aim of this is to work with Facilities, support services and students to 'road test' the draft framework and to identify areas of good practice and areas for development.
3. A final framework model.
   The project team (comprising Faculty ADs for Learning and Teaching, Student Association staff, student representatives, and staff from the Student Support and Performance teams) will provide a final framework model to be used by faculties and support services to support reflection on how their areas of responsibility support student success.
   The final model will identify where the wider quality work of the College (for example, internal and external verification; Stop, Check, Support; and Curriculum Enhancement Planning) fit into the Student Success Framework. This is to ensure that the Framework is at the centre of our strategic approach to quality assurance and enhancement.

Project timeline

Task	Date
Draft framework Proposed project outline and outcomes	September 2024
Consultation Use guidelines to identify areas of good practice and areas for development	October 2024- February 2025

Consultation with faculties, services areas and students	
Reflective report	March 2025
Revised framework model	April 2025

Framework themes

An initial draft framework has been created as a starting point for the project team's discussion and development. As discussed above, in line with the emphasis on TQEF and on working with students as partners, the draft framework uses four themes developed from the four top-level principles that underpin the TQEF and the nine building blocks of the sparqs Student Learning Experience Model.

Given the emphasis on reflective questions within the sparqs model, it is expected that much of the data produced from the framework process will be qualitative in nature. It is intended that this data be used to facilitate some of the reflective thinking that is emphasised in the self-evaluation aspects of the TQEF.
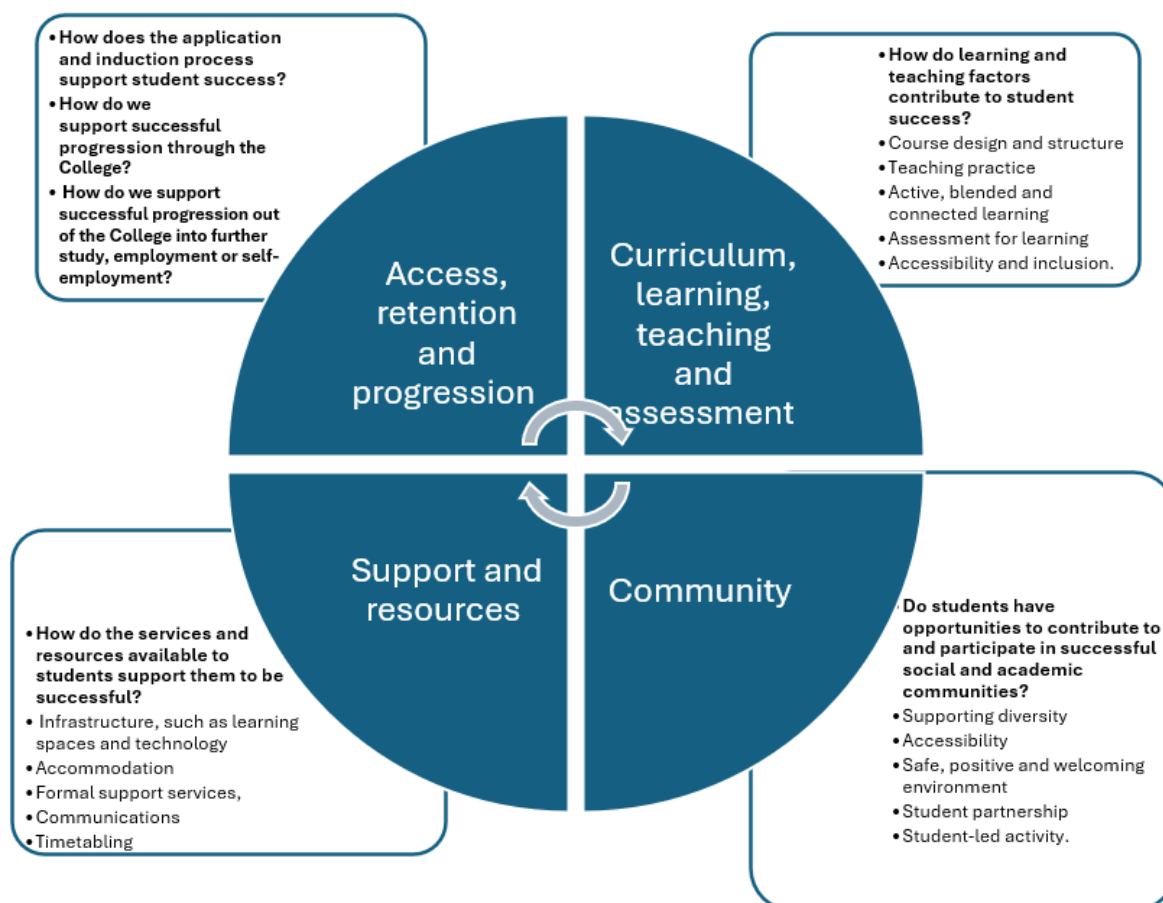
The themes

Theme 1 - Access, retention and progression
This theme would look at factors around how students:
- Successfully access the college, including how they come to know about the college, how they are supported through and experience the application process and their experience of pre-induction support.
- Successfully transition into and are retained at the college, including the initial induction process, how they are supported in the early weeks and how they that are supported as they develop though the course
- How students progress through and out of the College, including transition to new College courses and pathways to university and employment, including formal links with universities and employers

- Framework alignment:

TQEF	sparqs SLE Building block
Supporting Student Success	Progression and Achievement

Theme 2 - Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment
This theme would seek to understand the 'academic' factors that contribute to student success, considering how we design and structure courses, how they are taught, the activities that students participate in and how assessment and feedback support learning.

- Framework alignment:

TQEF	sparqs SLE Building block
Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Curriculum; Learning and Teaching Delivery; Assessment and Feedback

Theme 3 – Community
This theme will consider how students have opportunities to contribute to and participate in successful social and academic communities. It will consider how the College can support a diverse community that is accessible, safe, positive and welcoming. It will also consider how we support effective student partnership and dialogue through formal representation and how we support student-led activity.

- Framework alignment:

TQEF	sparqs SLE Building block
Student Engagement and Partnership	Community and Belonging; Student Partnership

Theme 4 - Support and resources

This theme will consider how the services and resources available to students support them to be successful. This will include infrastructure, such as learning spaces and technology, accommodation, formal support services, pastoral support, communications and timetabling.

- Framework alignment:

TQEF	sparqs SLE Building block
Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment; Supporting Student Success	Resources, Environment and Technology; Support and Guidance; Organisation and Management

Consultation

As outlined in the timeline above, the project includes a consultation phase where the framework is tested and refined and, where possible, areas of strength and challenge across the thematic areas are identified.

The intended outcome of the consultation is to evaluate the tool and to work with stakeholders to identify how it and the activity around it fit in with our existing quality, engagement and enhancement activities.

The consultation would comprise:

- Stage 1 - Initial consultation on the draft framework with the project team, with revision where necessary.
- Stage 2 – Engagement with:
  - Curriculum teams – identify a small number of curriculum areas to use the thematic reflective questions (see example below) to identify strengths and challenges and to perform a small-scale self-evaluation exercise. Is the framework a suitable tool for this? How can the insights gained be actioned and opportunities for enhancement be identified? How do other quality arrangements and obligations fit in with the framework?
  - Service areas – rather than focus on one service area it is proposed that we identify one thematic area and use the framework to evaluate that across service and academic areas. For example, were we to select retention, we might use the reflective questions across faculty management, lecturing staff, student support, learning support, etc, to identify issues or challenges in preventing drop out and promoting retention where appropriate.
  - Students – it is proposed that students be involved in all aspects of the previous activities, but that the model is also used as a tool to facilitate discussion with and between student representative groups. Initial ideas include a broad consultation on a selection of themes with class representatives from across the college, and working with one of the priority student groups to evaluate how the reflective approach can be used to identify specific areas of challenge to them.

Student Success Framework – Example of a proposed Curriculum area workshop (ILQR)

This session would consider those aspects of the framework that can be influenced or actioned at curriculum team level.

The intention is to identify areas of successful practice and areas for development, wih the session using reflective questions from the sparqs SLE model to facilitate discussion.

The session would take a 'speed dating' format - each theme has a table and participants are invited to spend 10 minutes answering the reflective questions for that theme. Answers are recorded on post-its/flipchart/padlet. Not all questions need to be answered directly – they are intended to act a guide for areas to consider.

At the end of the session participants are invited to share responses for each theme.

Reflective questions
Theme 1 - Access, retention and progression

- To what extent are admissions processes informative, responsive, easily accessible, and fair? Can students follow the progress of their application?
- Are all students provided with a comprehensive and supportive induction to the institution and the course, including students joining the institution at a later stage in the course?
- How are students supported in the transition between different levels of study, such as from school to college/university, HNC to HND, further education to higher education, pre-honours to honours, and undergraduate to postgraduate study?
- Does the institution have in place processes and procedures to inform students of their individual progress and to identify and support students who require additional support?
- Does the institution monitor progression and attainment rates by course and demographic area and put in place strategies to support student success?

Theme 2 - Curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment

- Do students understand why they are learning content and does the curriculum clearly link to the assessment of the module?
- Is the course as a whole structured cohesively and logically, with clear links between modules and stages of learning?
- In which ways can students develop attributes as part of their course of study which are relevant to their wider life outside of the education sphere?
- Is course content reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date and accurate?
- To what extent is consideration given to the mode of study of the module (e.g. in-person, online, hybrid), including what level of flexibility can be given to the student to engage?
- In what ways are approaches to learning and teaching accessible and inclusive? Are teaching methods suited to the diverse learning strategies of students and adapted to a wide range of learning profiles and preferences?
- Are students supported to undertake self-directed learning and what opportunities are there to learn independently outside the classroom?
- Is the format and timescale of assessments clearly communicated at the beginning of the module?
- Are a range of assessment methods offered across the course which accommodate the diverse needs of the student body?

- Do assessments allow accommodations for those with additional needs for learning?
- To what extent do assessments map to the learning outcomes of the course and capture the knowledge and skills covered in the curriculum?

Theme 3 – Community
- In what ways do all students have the opportunity to participate in social and academic communities, and to feel included and that they belong?
- What opportunities do students and staff have to collaborate as part of a learning community within their course and subject area?
- What social opportunities are there for students to get to know other students outside of class, including students on other courses?
- To what extent are community spaces accessible to all students, with principles of universal design employed when planning events or projects?
- In what ways do students work in partnership with staff to make changes to the student experience?
- How do students and staff engage in genuine dialogue to explore challenges and develop solutions together and do students and staff value the expertise each brings to the discussion?
- How do staff work with students to design, deliver, and analyse a variety of methods for understanding the student learning experience?
- Are there multiple opportunities for students to share their views and ideas throughout the course?
- How can students identify actions that have been taken as a result of their feedback?
- How can they be confident that their views are taken seriously and result in change at a local and strategic level?

Theme 4 - Support and resources
- Are course and exam timetables set and communicated to students in a timely manner, with any changes clearly communicated to students with advance notice?
- When planning teaching and learning, how does the institution take into account logistical considerations such as transport options, time to travel between classes, and students' needs and circumstances?
- How are students made aware of the variety of support services available to them and how do they know how and when they can access them?
- Is academic, pastoral, and financial support signposted to students during induction and consistently throughout the course of study?
- Do all students, at all levels of study, have a key contact within the institution who they can go to for initial support and to ask for advice?
- Do staff have dedicated time set aside in their schedule to provide academic and/or pastoral support to students?
- Are all staff trained to accurately and sensitively signpost students to the right support?
- Are students who require additional support for learning and student life provided with a range of support based on individual needs?
- Is support for students with additional needs monitored regularly and re-evaluated to adapt to any changing needs of the student?

Completion
At the end of the session attendees are invited to:
- identify at least 4 areas of successful practice that can be shared more widely across the Faculty or the College
- identify at least 4 areas of challenge that they would like to address

- identify at least 4 actions resulting from the above.

Following the session the facilitator writes up a short report summarising the discussion for each theme and listing the agreed actions for the team.