

## Performance & Nominations Committee

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>24 June 2020</b>
<b>Paper No.</b>	<b>PNC5-D</b>
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Subject of Paper</b>	<b>Scenario planning for Academic Year 2020-21: Operations</b>
<b>FOISA Status</b>	<b>Disclosable</b>
<b>Primary Contact</b>	<b>Dr Sheila Lodge</b>
<b>Date of production</b>	<b>15 June 2020</b>
<b>Action</b>	<b>For Approval</b>

### **1. Recommendations**

1.1 PNC is invited to discuss the appraisal of various scenarios for College Operations in academic year (AY) 2020-21, and to approve scenario 3 (blended learning).

### **2. Purpose of Paper**

2.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee and the Board with an account of the options appraisal for College operations for the next academic year, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

### 3. Context and Content

3.1 When the coronavirus pandemic spread across Scotland in the early months of this year, it quickly became apparent that the lack of a vaccine or effective treatments to combat the disease would mean that the continuation of college operations 'as usual' would not be possible for the foreseeable future. Once the closure of college buildings on 17 March had been completed, and as Emergency Response Teaching was provided to enable our students to complete their qualifications and studies for 2019-20, ELT considered a range of options for college operations in AY 2020-21.

3.2 These options broadly fell into three possible scenarios:

- **Scenario 1:** 'Business as usual', with staff and students attending college buildings for five days a week
- **Scenario 2:** 'All online', with no use of the buildings, and all learning and teaching and support functions being delivered online
- **Scenario 3:** 'Blended learning', with the majority of learning and teaching and support functions being delivered online, but with use of the college buildings where absolutely necessary, eg for the delivery of skills using specialised workshops, studios and equipment, with brief visits by all students for aspects of induction, guidance and to build the sense of being part of the College community. Priority would be given to first year students and those with a personal learning support plan (PLSP).

Further details of each scenario and its strengths and weaknesses are given in Appendix 1.

3.3 In deciding to plan for scenario 3, it's important to remember that taking this direction cannot in itself resolve all the issues posed by coronavirus.

3.3.1 For instance, we must bear in mind our duty to support those who will not be able to return to the college at all, such as staff and students who are particularly vulnerable because of underlying health conditions. We are currently looking at how we will help shielding students who are on courses with a strong practical skills element, such as those in the hairdressing, culinary or fine art areas.

Most staff with underlying conditions will be able to continue to work online, but we do need to be mindful of the personal circumstances of staff who may have children at home rather than at school for a significant part of each week, or who are particularly isolated and vulnerable (to ensure that we continue to help them feel part of the college community).

3.3.2 Moreover, it is clear that the college does not have control of the external factors which may impinge upon our learning and teaching in AY20-21. Most significantly, it is impossible to foretell how the virus will progress in Scotland. Should there be a second

peak, or recurring peaks, of infections, the Scottish Government may decide to tighten lockdown rules so that all buildings need to close again, and this could happen unpredictably, with little notice and on several occasions. We need to be thinking now of how we will deliver skills to students if, again, we cannot access specialist accommodation and equipment, perhaps for an extended period or periods.

Furthermore, a higher rate of infection in the locality of one of our buildings may require City or Riverside campus to be closed while the other continues to operate. It is not impossible that a local incident, such as a suspected case of coronavirus in the college may require that a particular part of the buildings be closed for a week or so till test results are known.

3.3.3 In addition, the external environment may also shift in other ways as a result of coronavirus. Most obviously, the Scottish Government's request that the SFC review how it can best achieve coherent provision and sustainability in the tertiary sector may well result in major structural change in Glasgow and across Scotland that impacts on our operational models.

3.4 It should also be emphasised that blended learning should not be seen entirely as something forced on City by the coronavirus pandemic.

3.4.1 The Digital Transformation of City's activities was agreed as our strategic direction some years ago. Coronavirus has massively accelerated progress on this in ways that no-one would have sought; but in our case blended learning and digitised working are not temporary measures that will end with the pandemic, and we will not be returning to the *status quo ante* once a vaccine is universally available.

The timescale for developing our blended learning approach is obviously not what we would have chosen, but the tremendous efforts being made by colleagues across the college should be seen as not only preparing us for AY20-21, but also as laying the foundations for our continuing model of operations thereafter.

3.4.2 This development is likely to be popular with the majority of staff. A recent invitation to colleagues to comment on their experience of lockdown focused on three questions:

- *What have you valued most from this period of remote working that we should ensure is retained?*
- *What new ways of working have emerged that we want to hold onto and implement in any future design?*
- *What old ways of working and activities do we not want to go back to, because they do not seem to add value?*

This portal closes shortly, but analysis of the early returns suggests that home working on at least some days of the week is something which many staff would wish to continue. They would welcome the time released from the daily commute, and, even more importantly, the flexibility to organise their work as suits them best. The sense of being trusted and empowered that comes from this is also something we would want to continue to foster.

3.4.3 Further work is being undertaken to gather the students' thoughts on their experience of lockdown learning, and we expect that issues such as digital poverty and quality of the learning materials we were able to provide as part of our emergency response will need to be tackled. But we also anticipate that, if students are well prepared and supported in AY20-21, they will also welcome the benefits of flexibility offered by attending college for one or two days a week, and being able to organise their own learning around their synchronous online sessions for the rest of each week.

It is therefore expected that blended learning will become the long-term model of the **City Way** of delivering **Inspiration, Excellence and Innovation**.

3.5 A narrative version of how scenario 3 might be operationalised within the college is provided in Appendix 2.

3.5.1 Plans are in hand to produce a series of protocols and other supporting documents, such as a college standard for learning & teaching on line and an updated home working policy and guidance for staff. A risk assessment has already been produced by the Health & Safety teams and considered at the meeting of the Health & Safety Committee on 11 June 2020. This will be revised as plans are taken forward, and risk assessments will be produced in each area of the college by the relevant Curriculum Heads, Associate Deans and Associate Directors, supported by the Health & Safety team. Equality Impact Assessments will also be carried out to ensure our plans have no discriminatory consequences.

3.5.2 The Health & Safety Committee will be meeting at least monthly till at least the end of this calendar year. Joint Union meetings and meetings with the EIS on the model for learning & teaching are being held regularly. Communications with the wider college community are being undertaken, and will be stepped up as the start of the new academic year comes closer.

3.6 A copy of the Operations Plan for AY20-21 is provided as Appendix 3.

3.6.1 Building on Key Principles and outline plans delivered to SMT on 14 May, and following initial consultation with a range of groups across the College, the Action Plan has been devised to give shape and pace to our preparations for AY20-21.

3.6.2 This is a live working document which is updated regularly, so the 'next steps' and deadlines refer only to the immediate next steps. It also operates at a relatively high level, and many of these entries will be underpinned by more granular action plans held in the areas concerned.

3.6.3 Although the Plan cites only members of SMT as being 'accountable', clearly we rely on the hard work and commitment of all our colleagues throughout the College to deliver the Plan successfully.

#### **4. Impact and Implications**

4.1 The impact of developing and delivering this blended scenario on our students, our staff and all our stakeholders, and on the daily life of the college, cannot be overstated. It will be monitored rigorously and tailored in the light of our experience of this unprecedented situation.

4.2 The financial impact of many of the elements of this scenario will be significant, and will also be monitored on an ongoing basis. However, it should be noted that little of the spend is discretionary if we are to continue to deliver our courses while maintaining our first principle, that **the health of our students and staff is our first priority, and we seek to take all measures that will reduce risk.**

#### **Appendices**

##### ***Appendix 1:***

***Options appraisal of possible scenarios for college operations in AY20-21***

##### ***Appendix 2:***

***Operational narrative for blended learning (scenario 3)***

##### ***Appendix 3:***

***Operations Action Plan: Academic Year 2020-21***

**Appendix 1:**

**Options appraisal of possible scenarios for college operations in AY20-21**

**Scenario 1:**

'Business as usual', with staff and students attending college buildings for five days a week

In this scenario, the college returns to the conventional way of operating, with all staff working from college premises 5 days a week, and with the overwhelming majority of learning & teaching taking place face to face.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Familiar model for staff and students  Minimal disruption  No additional costs incurred  Best model for maintaining college community and student affinity, with fullest student experience and co-curricular activities	Bringing staff and students into the campus puts them at greater risk of contracting the virus on each visit. This contradicts our first principle, which is that <b>the health of our students and staff is our first priority, and we seek to take all measures that will reduce risk.</b>  Does not allow for social distancing, which is likely to be in force and legally required for at least the majority of AY20-21. It is impossible to maintain even 1 or 1.5m distance, let alone the current 2m, if we continue to operate as before.

Given the likelihood of the legal requirement for social distancing still being in force in August and September, this scenario is simply too optimistic and cannot be considered further.

**Scenario 2:**

'All online', with no use of the buildings, and all learning and teaching and support functions being delivered online

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<p>Safest option, removing the chance of anyone contracting COVID19 in college or on their way to or from the college buildings</p>	<p>Least engaging model for students, and likely to impact adversely student engagement and retention</p> <p>Most demanding model for staff, who would have to transfer all L&amp;T online</p> <p>Likely to be unpopular (as the University of Durham discovered when it had to retract its intention to go entirely online within days of its announcement, in the face of major objections from staff and students)</p> <p>Most expensive option in terms of staff development required to produce a high quality student experience</p> <p>Students would need very significant support if all their learning &amp; teaching is to be delivered online. This would prove very challenging, especially where high level practical skills are an integral part of the course.</p> <p>Excludes some students if they have difficult home circumstances in which studying is impossible</p>

In the current circumstances, where the Scottish Government hopes to be in phase 4 of its plan for lifting lockdown by the start of the new academic year, this scenario seems overly pessimistic. It is too draconian and extreme, and too costly, especially in terms of the overall student experience.

Nonetheless, some preparation for the possibility of further *periods* of lockdown, when access to college buildings is not possible, must still be made.

### Scenario 3:

'Blended learning', with the majority of learning and teaching and support functions being delivered online, but with use of the college buildings where absolutely necessary, eg for the delivery of skills using specialised workshops, studios and equipment, with brief visits by all students for aspects of induction, guidance and to build the sense of being part of the College community. Priority would be given to first year students and those with a personal learning support plan (PLSP).

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Blend of online and on campus learning gives students best possible experience in the time of continued social distancing	Most expensive option in terms of the significant investment required in upskilling staff to produce materials and support online learning
Students and staff attend college for at most 2 days a week, minimising the risk of travelling and being in the buildings	Significant costs in mitigating as far as possible the risks of using college buildings: duplicating practical classes with smaller group numbers, providing PPE, additional cleaners and cleaning protocols, higher heating bills as windows opened for ventilation, etc
Students can build affinity to the college through induction, guidance and support sessions on campus	May need to extend the working day and open on Saturdays to fit in all practical class sessions
Online learning has been shown to work more effectively when students have had some face to face contact with their lecturers and peers	Places high demands on those attending the college to maintain compliance with arrangements to mitigate risk, eg following circulation routes on each level, entering and exiting at designated points,
Students with difficult home circumstances can be given safe working spaces in socially distanced study areas	Depends on careful and extensive communication to manage student expectations and ensure retention

That this is the only pragmatic and feasible scenario can be seen in the way in which nearly every tertiary institution, not only in the UK but around the world, have opted for a blended learning model. While the details vary, the basic principle of delivering as much learning & teaching and support as possible online while retaining minimal time on campus to give a semblance of the conventional student experience seems to be universal.



**Appendix 2:**  
**Operational narrative for blended learning (scenario 3)**

Following the Scottish Government's 4-phase route map out of lockdown (21 May), college campuses may reopen in Phase 4, but with full social distancing and hygiene measures in place. Of course, this is subject to continuous monitoring of the extent and progress of the virus, and may be halted (or speeded up) depending on the scientific evidence; and we will follow the Scottish Government's advice and guidance. Our operational plans are currently being developed on the basis that we will have reached phase 4 by the end of August, and with these key assumptions always to the fore:

- 1. The health of our students and staff is our first priority, and we seek to take all measures that will reduce risk.**
2. If a vaccine is produced and widely available by autumn 2021, then social distancing will be in force till the start of academic year 2022-3.
3. Some staff and students will not be able to come into college at all because they are themselves vulnerable or are shielding vulnerable relatives, and we will support them.
4. Above all, **anything that can be done online should be done online.** In most cases, students and staff will mostly work from home, although we may need to provide safe spaces for those whose home circumstances are difficult.

Curriculum teams are currently working to devise timetables that will show on campus classes and online synchronous sessions (when staff and students meet virtually on Zoom or Teams, for example, for teaching and learning activities), and will suggest times when students might be working online independently (asynchronous study), either individually or in groups. This represents a new style of working for everyone, and we are looking to develop ways of recognising the time staff will spend preparing online materials and supporting students online. Further guidance on working from home is currently being prepared by HR.

On campus classes will mostly be reserved for those that need specialist accommodation, for guidance sessions and for those needing particular support. We have now determined how many students we can safely accommodate in each room and specialist workshop, and this is many fewer than a full class would have been in the past, so we will need to repeat sessions several times. We will be extending the working day in order to fit in all the sessions we need, possibly including Saturday opening; and will timetable for staggered arrival and departure times at half-hourly intervals, to reduce the flow into and out of the buildings.

We want to minimise the number of times each student and member of staff comes into the college buildings, to reduce their risk of infection, so we are aiming to block

classes so that each person who comes in does so for only one or at most two days a week. A booking system is being developed to minimise the number of staff and students in each area at any one time. Support staff should also work from home wherever possible, and come into college only when really necessary.

When staff come into the buildings, they should do just what you need to, then return home. This will help avoid travelling at peak times. Desks are being moved to ensure that people don't sit side by side or opposite each other if working at their desks.

Coming into the college buildings will be very different from in the past. For example:

- We are reviewing our parking system to allow more people to park for just one or two days a week and to reduce the need to use public transport.
- We will open up more doors and designate each as an entrance or exit. We will observe 2m distancing, and you may need to queue outside to enter. We are looking at checking temperatures when you arrive.
- Inside, there will be a one-way system clearly marked out on the floor. Lifts will take only 1 person at a time, and we would ask those who can use the stairs to do so: but please remember that each stair will be marked as 'up only' or 'down only'.
- We will disable the security barriers and ask that passes be shown at the entrance instead. Lanyards will need to be worn by students and staff while in the building. There will be screens at reception areas, and we are looking at other locations that may need these.
- We will provide PPE (gloves, masks, visors, aprons, etc) at entrances and on each floor, and there will be hand sanitiser, wipes and bins in each area. Following a 'deep clean' over the summer, we will have more cleaners who will clean the buildings throughout the day, and especially between classes. Windows will be open to ensure good ventilation.
- We are looking at ways in which to ask students and staff to stay in small group 'bubbles' throughout their time in the buildings, so that any infection is kept to a minimum.
- We are currently negotiating with our catering partners, BaxterStorey, but there will be a reduced provision and we will be more reliant on vending machines. We will block off the fridges and dishwashers in the pantry areas as these pose a high risk of cross-contamination. We may also remove the water coolers, and are looking at other ways in which to make drinking water available.

- Access to toilets will be managed with a queuing system, and toilets will be cleaned frequently throughout the day.

Clearly, it's important that all meetings take place online, including team meetings and meetings of the Board, Academic and Faculty Boards. The Library will continue with online provision, but there may perhaps be some scope for self-issue of books. We are looking at rearranging Library furniture to create individual study spaces that can be booked by students who may have difficult home situations.

It's important that we carry out comprehensive risk assessments of every area of the College and update these regularly. Our Health & Safety team will support this, and are revising our fire safety, evacuation and first aid procedures for our new environment. Equality Impact Assessments will also be undertaken.

As we move to develop all our safety procedures for mid-August, we know that some colleagues may wish to visit before the holidays start, to collect materials needed to prepare for next session. At the moment, we can admit only a few staff at any one time. We plan to introduce a booking system for this, and will send out details as soon as possible,

We hope the measures outlined here will be reassuring and will help keep everyone safe and well. Suggestions and comments will be welcomed.

**Appendix 3:**

**City of Glasgow College**

**Operations Action Plan: Academic Year 2020-21**

**V.2, 12.6.20**

**Estates and Facilities**

	<b>Area</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Next step</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Target date</b>
1	Parking	Parking allocation to be revised to allow staff to use on single days	Devise new system	ST	17.7.20
2	Entrances	Marked to maintain 2m spacing with queuing system	Order tape and signage	ST	10.6.20
		Temperature checks on admission to buildings	Order thermometers	ST	10.6.20
		Automatic doors to be costed	Note for protocols	SL	12.6.20
		Security barriers to be turned off	Note for protocols	SL	5.6.20
		All to wear lanyards at all times	Note for protocols	SL	10.6.20
		App to control numbers?	Agreed not to progress	SL/ST	8.6.20
3	PPE	PPE provided at each entrance and at stations throughout the buildings (gloves, masks, visors, aprons, specialised, kit)	Order PPE	ST	10.6.20
4	Traffic routes	Signage to indicate traffic flow and maintain 2m distance	Order signage	ST	10.6.20
		Draft flow plans for each floor finalised	Plans signed off	ST/SL	10.6.20
5	Lifts	1 person only per lift	Signage prepared	ST	12.6.20
		Receptionists to oversee lifts?			
6	Staircases	'Up only' and 'Down only' stairs designated	Signage prepared	ST	12.6.20
7	Cleaning	Deep clean' carried out over the summer	Arrange cleaning Last week July, first in August	ST	10.7.20
		Number of cleaners required to clean rooms between classes and maintain public areas ascertained Likely to double to 12 @ City. 4 @ Riverside May redeploy Baxter Stories staff into these roles	Calculate number needed 5 vacancies now	ST	30.6.20

		Cleaners employed and trained	Prepare recruitment materials	ST/JG	10.7.20
		Investigate electrostatic cleaning	Passed to AN 10.6.20	SL/AN	22.6.20
8	Sanitiser and wipes	Wipes and bins in each room in use and in public areas	Order wipes and bins	ST	10.6.20
9	Toilets	Devise queuing system	System devised, signage ordered	ST	17.7.20
		Cleaning protocols to be developed Cleaning materials in cubicles and more frequent cleaner visits	Protocols agreed	ST	17.7.20
10	Ventilation	Windows to be opened whenever possible	Note for protocols	SL	5.6.20
		Cleaners to open each morning and on each visit to a room Automatic windows to be turned to manual Adjust air system to minimise air circulation	Signage prepared	ST	10.7.20
11	Screens	Screens to be installed at receptions and other necessary areas Pilot areas being selected	Screens agreed and ordered	ST	25.6.20
12	Catering	Ongoing negotiations with BaxterStorey for reduced provision and increased vending	Negotiations concluded	ST	25.6.20
13	Pantries and kitchens	Fridges & dishwashers to be closed	Tape and signage prepared	ST	30.6.20
14	Distancing at desks	Chairs and desks to be removed to prevent people sitting next to, opposite or back to back with others	Plan agreed	ST	30.6.20
15	Study space for disadvantaged students	Library to redesign space for single student use, removing and repositioning furniture	Plan agreed	ST/SL	30.6.20
16	Specialist studios etc	Protocols for cleaning between classes to be developed	Protocols agreed	ST/Deans	30.6.20
17	Deliveries	Quarantine all deliveries and incoming post for 72 hrs after arrival	Protocols agreed	ST/LP/ A Stalker	8.6.20
18	Bike store	Big enough? Safe enough?	Plans developed	ST	10.7.20
19	Face coverings	Mandated face coverings in College? Masks v visors.	Protocols agreed	SL	10.7.20
20	2 <sup>nd</sup> lockdown	Plan for 2nd lockdown, on national and/or local levels (or even parts of the College buildings)	Protocols agreed	SL	24.7.20

### Student Experience / Learning & Teaching

	Area	Action	Next step	Responsible	Target date
1	Timetabling	Staggered start times through extended day	Sessions agreed	CC/Deans	30.6.20
		Students timetabled for on campus, online and (suggested slots for) asynchronous learning (Aiming to have students on campus only 1 day per week)	Information to Timetabling	CC/Deans	30.6.20
2	Staff campus visits	Booking system to allow staff to collect materials before end June	System devised, online & communicated	ST	10.6.20
3	Shielding students	Plan for how to support students in this group (and if there is a second- local or national - lockdown)			
4	<i>Get Ready for College</i>	Online materials prepared	Access to pre-enrolment module agreed	CC/GP	30.6.20
5	Induction	Online induction materials prepared	Materials completed	CC/GP	30.6.20
		Rotas for new starts to visit campus in small, 'bubbled' groups	Rotas devised	CC/GP	10.7.20
6	Returning students	Rotas for returning students to visit campus in small, 'bubbled' groups	Rotas devised	CC/GP	10.7.20
7	L&T	L&T Academy sessions continue	Schedule published	SL	Ongoing
		Mandatory module being prepared	Module completed	SL	17.7.20
		Checking of appropriate online design and activity	Checking ongoing	CC/ADs	31.8.20
8	Communications	Students to be sent regular updates to manage expectations	Updates scheduled	CC/GP	12.6.20
9	Library	Arrangements to return books on loan	Arrangements approved	SL	12.6.20
		Reading lists to Library	Lists supplied	CC	20.6.20
		Plans for online provision and some self check-out	Plans agreed	SL	15.7.20

**HR**

	Area	Action	Next step	Responsible	Target date
1	AWAM	Tariff of expectations of staff	Draft tariff	SL/CC/ST/JG	12.6.20
2	Guidance	Working from home guidance	Draft guidance	JG	30.6.20

**IT**

	Area	Action	Next step	Responsible	Target date
1	Return of laptops	Arrangements to receive machines returned from loan	Approve arrangements	ST/BA	10.6.20
		Cleanse and prepare for next session	Schedule work	ST/BA	17.7.20
2	Provision of new devices	Devise specification and costings for loan / purchase system	Agree spec and costings	ST/BA	30.6.20
3	System resilience	Ensure systems are prepared for increased load next session	Checking and prep	ST/BA	30.7.20

**Health & Safety**

	Area	Action	Next step	Responsible	Target date
1	Risk assessments	Support risk assessments in Estates and each curriculum area	Draw up lists and offer support	SL	25.6.20
2	Fire wardens	Devise new system	Devise system	SL	10.7.20
3	First Aid	Develop protocols and recruit additional first aiders	Develop & recruit	SL	10.7.20

## Communications

	<b>Area</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Next step</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Target date</b>
1	Staff	Devise and implement plans for regular communications Track effectiveness and amend as needed	Plans agreed Implementation	RG/MW	19.6.20 Ongoing
2	Students	Devise and implement plans for regular communications Track effectiveness and amend as needed	Plans agreed Implementation	RG/MW	19.6.20 Ongoing
3	Stakeholders	Devise and implement plans for regular communications Track effectiveness and amend as needed	Plans agreed Implementation	RG/MW	19.6.20 Ongoing
4	Influencers	Devise and implement plans for regular communications Track effectiveness and amend as needed	Plans agreed Implementation	RG/MW	19.6.20 Ongoing
5	Public	Devise and implement plans for regular communications Track effectiveness and amend as needed	Plans agreed Implementation	RG/MW	19.6.20 Ongoing