

A Framework for

Higher Education

in Scotland

Higher Education Review: Phase 2

Summary



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

INTRODUCTION BY MINISTER

Scotland's higher education sector already has a world-class reputation for excellence in teaching and learning, in scholarship and research, and in delivering real results for the people of Scotland. It is a reputation of which we can be rightly proud.

Our higher education sector is a powerful dynamo with the potential to create and shape the Scotland that we all want to see – a Scotland where enterprise can flourish, where opportunity does exist for all and where our people and our country have the confidence to face the challenges of a global society.

If Scotland is to reap the benefits of a vibrant, successful higher education sector in the years ahead, we have to be ready to change, ready to compete successfully for the most talented people in an increasingly competitive world, and ready to nurture and retain the talent we already have here in Scotland.



Our Framework for Higher Education sets out how we want to see higher education develop in Scotland over the next 10 years. Students, and all those who work in the sector, are invited to share in this development. The national priorities contained within this document were jointly worked up between the three key partnership groups: institutions, the Funding Council, and the Executive. Each must now take responsibility for playing its part in turning this shared vision into reality.

It is my firm belief that the Framework for Higher Education in Scotland contains the key strategies that will be required to ensure that we can meet with confidence the challenges of the future. Through continued collaboration and partnership working, I am confident that we can embed these as priorities in our approach to change, that we can strengthen the sector, and together ensure that higher education realises its full potential within the wider economic, cultural and social life of Scotland.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Wallace". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jim Wallace, MSP

Deputy First Minister and Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning

Did you know?

The Executive's funding to SHEFC will rise by 7% in real terms over the next 3

THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The broad relevance of higher education to the social and economic well-being of Scotland is reflected in the commitments set out by the Executive in the Partnership Agreement, as is the absolute importance placed on it by Ministers:

- We will increase the higher and further education budget by 16% by 2006.
- We will increase the proportion of graduates in the workforce. We will ensure robust funding for Higher Education research, and promote its commercialisation in Scotland.

- We will drive up Scotland's skills base:

Through Future Skills Scotland, we will identify the needs of business and we will focus on the education, training, and career guidance services required to meet them. We will charge the Funding Councils to have regard to the future skills needs of Scotland.

- We will support the start-up and growth of high value and high skills Scottish businesses:

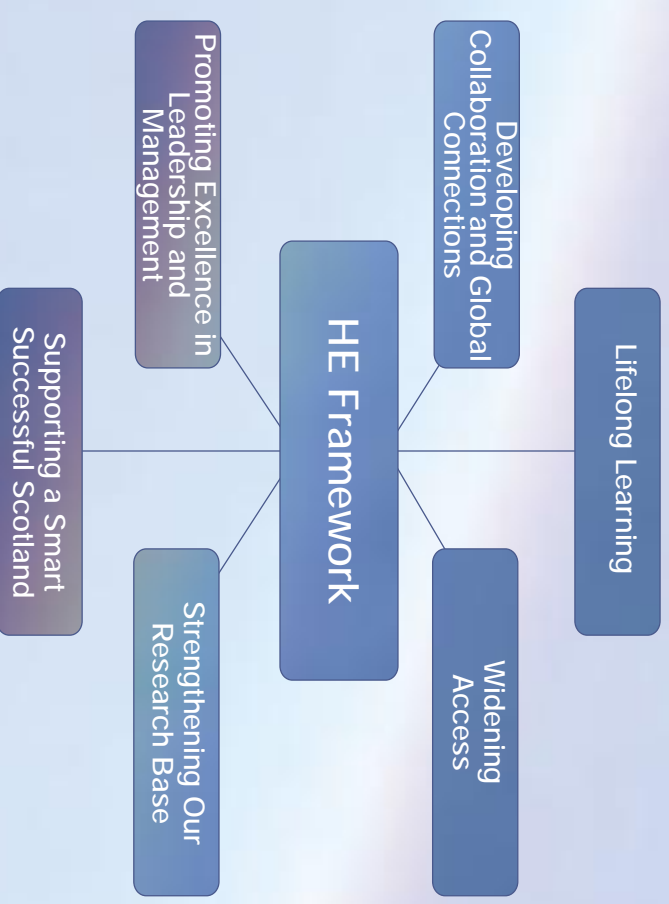
We will support the productive link between research and product development. We will encourage universities to offer business and entrepreneurial experience, and we will maximise the potential of the Intermediary Technology Institutes in Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow.

- We will promote Scotland as a good place to live and work, to attract fresh talent from around the world.

We will work with academic institutions to promote research links, education and student exchanges and to build global networks.

A framework for higher education in Scotland sets out some of the specific means by which these commitments will be driven forwards.

Key Themes of the Framework



years. By 2005-06, the HE sector will receive over £800m via SHEFC.

PARTNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Model for relationship is one which

- Puts learners and the delivery of relevant quality outputs at its core.
- Is built on a constructive relationship between the Scottish Executive, SHEFC and the HE sector, with regular formal and informal dialogue.
- Explicitly recognises the importance of leaving space for HEIs and SHEFC to innovate, and for SHEFC to respond to progressive proposals from sector.
- Values and supports closer dialogue and collaboration among key partners and beyond.

Roles and expectations for each of the three players

INSTITUTIONS

To operate more as a coherent group, working together to respond to Scotland's social and economic needs. To work with the Executive and SHEFC in taking the sector's priorities forward.

We will expect all institutions to play an active part in the Strategic Dialogue initiated by SHEFC, and to use the priorities set out in this report to inform planning and processes, and to assist in determining their institutional direction.

SHEFC

To ensure that funding levers are used effectively in the distribution of funds to HE institutions.

As a key means of taking forward the priorities for the sector for the next 10 years, we will expect SHEFC to put in place the incentives and disincentives required to deliver the outcomes that are needed from higher education.

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

The Scottish Executive is committed to taking forward the commitments in this report in partnership with the Funding Councils, with institutions, and with staff, students, employers and other relevant stakeholder groups.

A key role of the Executive will be to develop measures and targets to monitor progress, in order to make the most effective use of existing resources.

KEY THEMES OF THE FRAMEWORK

LIFELONG LEARNING

HE has a vital role in delivering lifelong learning in Scotland. HEIs should serve learners: helping people develop throughout their lives so that they play the fullest part they can in society and the economy.

ACTIONS:

HEIs Be more outward-looking across the range of HE activities. Have mechanisms in place to ensure that the needs of learners are being met, both in terms of course content and institutional policy, and be responsive to demand from students, and to the wider needs of Scottish economy and society.

SHEFC Steer the sector towards continuous quality enhancement, more flexible provision, and closer contact with employer and professional bodies.

SE Provide funds and high-level guidance, continue to monitor carefully funding levels for higher education, ensure that the Executive's priorities for Lifelong Learning are being delivered.

WIDENING ACCESS

HE has a key role to play in closing the opportunity gap and achieving a socially just Scotland. We need to see real improvement in the proportions of students from the most economically disadvantaged groups benefiting from provision in our HEIs, and to improve retention rates across students from all backgrounds.

ACTIONS:

HEIs Demonstrate creativity and flexibility in helping people from non-traditional backgrounds to access higher education, to include easing progression to degree-level study from further education, and, crucially, building stronger links with schools and further education colleges.

SHEFC Monitor the use of funding dedicated to widening access, and ensure that any future initiatives focus squarely on delivery.

SE

Progress initiatives to help school leavers achieve better results and increase support for economically disadvantaged 16-19 year olds to stay on at school and/or FE college. Collaborate with all representative bodies in the sector to improve information available to potential students, to establish targets, and to foster and extend good practice.

STRENGTHENING OUR RESEARCH BASE

University research is already an area of world-class strength for Scotland. Our policies seek to ensure that this base remains fully competitive, and to build on our strengths into the future.

ACTIONS:

HEIs Determine the best strategic use of resources for research, and encourage beneficial research collaborations within and across disciplines.

SHEFC Identify strengths and weaknesses in the research base, provide detailed advice regarding potential future inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional research, and use available research funding to attract sustainable resources from other funders.

SE

Work with SHEFC to ensure optimal strategic use of research funding. Support Scottish Enterprise to fund a 10-year programme of investment, worth £450 million, in intermediary technology institutes, and provide support and funding to HEIs to assist their involvement with ITIs.

SUPPORTING A SMART SUCCESSFUL SCOTLAND

Knowledge transfer through teaching and from research gives HE a crucial role in developing the skills and knowledge for a smart, successful Scotland.

ACTIONS:

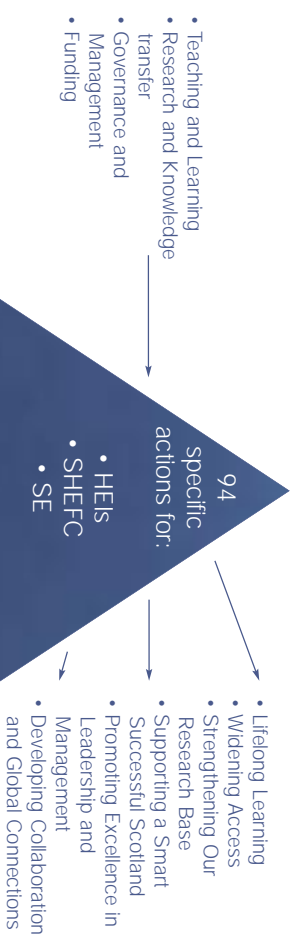
HEIs Draw on information from Futureskills Scotland and the Sector Skills Councils to inform course provision, and stimulate creativity and enterprise in our graduates. Share more effectively commercialisation expertise with the sector, and improve dialogue with business to maximise the opportunities for the increased commercialisation of research.

SHEFC

Through drawing on current research, and working with Scottish Enterprise and the Enterprise Networks, develop expertise in the field of commercialisation, labour market requirements, careers education, and employability, to play an active role sector-wide in maximising the contribution of higher education to economic growth in Scotland.

SE

Implement our Science Strategy, and work with SHEFC to provide funding incentives for more intensive interactions between HE and business, to identify and address future public sector workforce requirements, and to ensure the most productive and effective balance between business needs, learners, and higher education throughout Scotland.



PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The key to delivering the high quality teaching and research that Scotland needs is having in our institutions pervasive high quality management, strong and purposeful leadership, and well-managed, valued and motivated staff, underpinned by sound business practice.

ACTIONS:

HEIs Pursue models of excellence in leadership, management, and business practice across entire spectrum of activity. Optimise the use of existing capacity.

SHEFC

Develop and extend the Strategic Dialogue Process, examine the sustainability for long-term investment in the teaching estate, of providing teaching funding in a single block, work with institutions to make best use of existing programmes relating to quality, management development, and leadership and governance.

SE

Legislate to merge the further and higher education funding councils, set a Scotland-wide target for use of capacity in institutions. Use Phase III to examine long-term issues for Scottish higher education which may arise from developments elsewhere in the UK.

DEVELOPING COLLABORATION AND GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

HEIs should work together as a community of diverse institutions, through collaborating more across the range of activity, and in promoting Scotland internationally. HE as a whole has a key role to play in raising Scotland's international profile.

ACTIONS:

HEIs Work with EducationUK, Scotland and SHEFC to fully explore and actively capitalise on the potential for international promotion, and national inter-institutional collaboration, including research, where there are strategic, financial or other benefits to be gained.

SHEFC Work with institutions on expanding connectivity, and retain funds to support institution-led proposals for collaboration.

SE

Provide annual core funding for EducationUK Scotland for 2003-04, and 2004-05, and monitor progress towards the specific targets it sets, and levels of institutional collaboration, in deciding on any future funding for this activity. Encourage linkages between Globalascot, individual alumni networks, and other initiatives to attract overseas students to study and to stay in Scotland.

Our Lifelong Learning Strategy watchwords

responsiveness quality relevance coherence

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We will **measure achievement** by continuing to work to existing targets to:

- Increase the number of graduates as a proportion of the workforce;
- Support 150 joint academic and industry ventures by 2006;
- Increase support to 16-19 years olds from low-income families to stay on at school and/or FE college, thereby raising the participation and retention of this group by at least 5% by 2007-08;
- Increase the proportion of students from disadvantaged groups in higher education;

and by **developing new measures and targets** on:

- Improvement in access from the most economically disadvantaged groups;
- Improvement in retention of students from all backgrounds;
- The numbers of students successfully completing a qualification relative to the funded places allocated; and
- The recruitment of overseas students.

Further information

This is a summary version of 'A Framework for Higher Education in Scotland', the second phase of the Higher Education Review.

You can access the full document at: www.scotland.gov.uk/publications
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