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**A subject-based aspect report on provision in Scotland's colleges by HM Inspectors on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council**



**Performing arts  
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**Scottish Funding Council**  
Promoting further and higher education

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# **1. Introduction and methodology**

## **Introduction**

The HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) publication, *External quality arrangements for Scotland's colleges, September 2008*, specifies that HM Inspectors (HMIs) will produce a number of subject aspect reports over the four years 2008-12. These reports complement in a subject-specific context the generic evaluations of learning and teaching in HMIs external review reports of colleges. Colleges should act on the recommendations contained in these reports. College inspectors will monitor action towards implementation of these recommendations as part of their normal dialogue with colleges and will wish to discuss issues arising from subject aspect reports during annual engagement visits.

In preparing this report, inspectors visited a sample of eight colleges, drew on the findings of published HMIE external reviews of colleges and examined other relevant publications and reports. They consulted with key stakeholders, including college staff, learners, employers and professional bodies.

This report evaluates college programmes which lead to vocational qualifications in performing arts, offered at levels 4 to 8 of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

## **Methodology**

Each of the colleges in the sample of eight was visited during the fieldwork. A list of the colleges visited for the report may be found in Appendix 2. During these visits inspectors observed learning and teaching and discussed issues with staff and learners. The views of a wide range of stakeholders were obtained through face-to-face and telephone interviews. In a number of colleges, areas for development identified by inspectors during the first visit had been addressed by college managers and teaching staff by the time of the second visit. For example, in more than a few colleges, initial visits indicated that that teaching staff were not sufficiently aware of the need to promote equality and diversity within class activities. Most of the colleges had addressed this by the second visit by inspectors.

This report evaluates current practice and identifies important areas for discussion and further development amongst practitioners. HM Inspectors also identified examples of effective practice and set out recommendations for improvement. Examples of effective practice are incorporated throughout the report. The examples include practice which is innovative or illustrative of similar types of effective practice applied by a number of colleges.

## **2. Summary of key findings**

Performing arts programmes in Scotland's colleges are characterised by many strengths. These strengths are grouped under four headings:

- Planning of provision;
- Learning and teaching;
- Outcomes and impact; and
- Enhancement through self-evaluation and internal review.

### **Planning of provision**

#### *Strengths*

- In all colleges, staff work productively to plan provision which meets the needs of learners, the performing arts industry and communities.
- Across the colleges, the range of programmes provides good opportunities for learners to access programmes at a level appropriate to their individual skills and experience and to progress to further learning at a college or Higher Education Institution (HEI).
- In a few colleges, high quality, industry standard facilities and resources have raised the expectations of learners, staff and key stakeholders across Scotland.
- In almost all colleges, teaching departments work productively with a wide range of external organisations and use these links well to plan further their performing arts provision.

#### *However,*

- Some college departments do not work closely enough with community learning and development partners to promote and encourage routes from community-based informal learning to college-based programmes.
- Most programme teams do not have sufficient links with relevant subject teachers in secondary schools to be able to inform and update them about the types of performing arts programmes they offer.
- Almost all programme teams do not engage sufficiently with secondary schools in planning for the implementation of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Staff teams are unaware of the types of resources developed and used by other colleges and there are too few opportunities for colleges to work together to share resources and approaches to further enhance planning of provision.

## Learning and teaching

### *Strengths:*

- In all colleges, performing arts staff are very enthusiastic about their subject area and are highly committed to meeting the current needs and future aspirations of learners.
- Almost all staff have current professional involvement in the performing arts industry and use this effectively to inform programme planning and enthuse learners.
- Programme teams are adept at integrating units and sequencing learning activities to provide a holistic learning experience.
- In almost all colleges, staff incorporate themes for production which reflect and promote Scottish culture and heritage and widen learner and community awareness of Scottish history and current social issues.
- Programme teams responsible for different types of performing arts programmes work well together to plan inter-disciplinary experiences which enable learners to learn about wider aspects of theatre and performance.
- In almost all colleges, programme teams utilise the skills of staff and learners from other programme areas to support and enrich the learning experience.
- Almost all programme teams plan additional learning activities outwith class times to support and enhance learning. These activities include additional one-to-one tuition and support, rehearsals and live performances.
- Many programme teams take good account of the essential skills learners require for achieving and maintaining employment within the performing arts industry. Staff include entrepreneurship, business skills and marketing and promotional skills within programmes.
- In all colleges, teaching staff are highly motivated and committed to meeting the needs of all learners. The commitment and time teaching staff give to working with learners outwith college hours is commendable.
- Teaching staff use a wide range of effective learning and teaching approaches. They are skilled at adapting approaches to meet different types of learner needs.
- In almost all colleges, teaching staff set very high standards for learners which reflect the demands of working as a professional in the performing arts industry.
- Staff continuously provide learners with constructive and helpful feedback on their progress and performance skills.

- In all programmes, teaching staff naturally and consistently involve learners in shaping their own learning.
- In all colleges, staff have established productive and supportive relationships with learners.
- All performing arts departments promote their programmes well and host a wide range of useful and often innovative events throughout the year to inform potential learners about the types and levels of programmes they offer.
- Audition processes are used effectively by staff to identify individual learner skill levels and aspirations and to place learners on appropriate types and levels of programmes.
- Staff provide learners with good levels of support throughout their programme and provide high quality advice and information about further learning and employment options.
- In all colleges, learners work hard at achieving professional standards and their commitment to achieving their individual career aspirations is commendable.
- Most Further Education (FE) learners and all Higher Education (HE) learners participate in additional activities outwith class times to consolidate, extend and widen their skills.
- Most learners use social networking sites effectively and proficiently to showcase and promote their skills.
- Learners participate actively in learning about, and working to, industry standards and support each other well in achieving the demands required by industry.
- Almost all learners contribute enthusiastically, productively and positively to the wider life and work of the college.
- Learners contribute well to improving and enhancing programmes and wider college services.

*However:*

- Most programme teams have not yet mapped provision to the experiences and outcomes identified in Curriculum for Excellence.
- Most programme teams do not take sufficient account of the need to plan activities which promote equality and diversity and health and wellbeing.
- Some programme teams do not take sufficient account of the essential skills learners require for working in the performing arts industry and do not include entrepreneurship, business skills and marketing and promotional skills sufficiently within programmes.

- More than a few programme teams do not take sufficient responsibility for the contextualisation and delivery styles employed by staff delivering core skills.
- In a few FE level programmes, the range of learners within class groups is too broad to accommodate fully the needs and aspirations of all learners.
- In most colleges, teaching staff do not use information and communications technology (ICT) sufficiently within learning and teaching activities and do not make sufficient use of the college virtual learning environment (VLE) to support and enhance the learning process.
- In a few colleges, erratic or insufficient access to technical support interrupts or limits the overall quality of the learning experience.

## **Outcomes and impact**

### *Strengths:*

- Most colleges in Scotland delivering performing arts programmes have high or very high retention and attainment rates across all programmes.
- In most colleges, success levels for full-time and part-time FE learners are high.
- Success levels for learners on full-time HE programmes are high or very high and very high for learners on part-time HE programmes.
- Almost all learners develop confidence, independence and skills for learning, life and work through participation in their programme and involvement in local and national performing arts projects and events.
- Learners develop high level skills for learning independently and for learning with others as part of a group.
- In most FE and all HE level programmes learners gain high levels of skills for working in the performing arts industries and other types of employment.
- In the majority of programmes, learners develop useful business, marketing and promotional skills.
- Almost all learners make very good progress from prior learning and experience.
- Almost all HE learners progress successfully to further learning, including degree programmes or employment within or related to the performing arts industry.
- All colleges have good levels of knowledge about the destinations of their learners and regularly involve former learners who have achieved professional



success, in working with learners to raise their awareness of the industry and increase aspirations.

*However:*

- In a few colleges, completion rates on a few full-time and part-time FE programmes are low. In a few colleges, success rates on FE level programmes are low and in a few programmes very low.

### **Enhancement through self-evaluation and internal review**

*Strengths:*

- Almost all programme teams review their provision conscientiously and are proactive in identifying and addressing areas of programmes which require adjustment and improvement.
- Most programme teams monitor and analyse the attendance, retention and attainment rates of individual learners and class groups thoroughly.
- Almost all programme teams are proactive and successful in engaging learners in programme review and evaluation activities.
- Almost all performing arts staff regularly share effective practice within their department and use these activities to broaden and enhance their learning and teaching skills.

*However:*

- Where individual units are being delivered by staff in other curriculum areas, most programme teams do not take sufficient responsibility for ensuring that the content and delivery approaches are appropriate to learner needs
- A few staff teams do not clarify sufficiently the purpose and aims of their FE programmes and do not set or use appropriate measurable targets to gauge learner performance against programme aims.
- Overall, programme teams do not involve employers, industry representatives and staff in schools systematically enough in their evaluation processes.
- In almost all colleges, performing arts staff do not share their effective practice with other college departments. This results in missed opportunities for these colleges to adopt and extend the many practical approaches applied by performing arts staff which exemplify many aspects of the aims of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Overall, there is a lack of opportunity for teachers of performing arts in Scottish colleges to work more closely with other colleges, HEIs and national bodies to share and extend effective practice and resources.

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### 3. Background and context

Scotland's colleges play an important role in helping realise Scottish Government's ambition of *'...a culturally cosmopolitan Scotland capable of attracting and retaining gifted people, where our creative community is supported and their contribution to the economy maximised.'*

Following a national cultural review in 2005, Scottish Government published *Scotland's Culture*<sup>1</sup> (2006) which highlighted major changes to Scotland's infrastructure for supporting and developing the arts in Scotland. A further publication, *Culture Delivers*<sup>2</sup> (2008) reinforced the Government's commitment to widening access to culture for all communities and individuals across Scotland and identified how participation in performing arts alongside other creative industries has the potential to contribute to each of Scotland's strategic objectives of a: wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and stronger, greener Scotland through Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs).

In 2009, following *Scotland's Creative Industries Partnership Report*<sup>3</sup>, Scottish Government published *The Creative Industries Framework Agreement*<sup>4</sup> which set out how the complementary roles of key organisations would fit together under the new banner of *Creative Scotland*<sup>5</sup>. On 1 July 2010, the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen joined to form a single new body, *Creative Scotland*, to advise, support and invest in the arts in Scotland.

*Creative Scotland's* ambition is to see Scotland as *one of the world's most creative nations by 2020* and in 2010, published its three-year corporate plan, *Investing in our Creative Future*<sup>6</sup> which sets out the organisation's vision:

*That Scotland is recognised as a leading creative nation – one that attracts, develops and retains talent, where the arts and the creative industries are supported and celebrated and their economic contribution fully captured, a nation where the arts and creativity play a central part in the lives, education and well-being of our population.*

To realise this vision *Creative Scotland* identified a need to strengthen and develop appropriate and effective partnerships between colleges, HEIs and the performing arts industries in Scotland. To assist this, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) established the *Scottish Drama Training Network*<sup>7</sup> to support colleges and HEIs which offer programmes in acting, musical theatre, contemporary performance practice, technical theatre skills, film and television. The network seeks to enhance and strengthen provision, increase routes and pathways to HE level study and encourage collaboration and sharing of skills and facilities between institutions, teachers and learners.

Curriculum for Excellence is providing a valuable platform for providers of performing arts programmes. The learning processes involved in performing arts link very

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<sup>1</sup> [Scotland's Culture](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Culture Delivers](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Creative Industries Partnership Report](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Creative Industries Framework Agreement](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Creative Scotland website](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Investing in our Creative Future.](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Scottish Drama Training Network](#)

naturally with the development of the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, both in specific disciplines and inter-disciplinary programmes and in the development of essential skills for learning, life and work. The advent of reality television shows, showcasing performing arts talent has increased interest in performing arts and in achieving professional standards of performance skills for working in the industries.

This report explores and reports on the quality of performing arts provision using the principles and approaches outlined in the HMIE document *External quality arrangements for Scotland's colleges, September 2008*. For the purpose of the report, the term performing arts refers to acting, musical theatre, dance and music.

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## 4. Programmes in performing arts

Thirty-one of the 41 colleges in Scotland deliver performing arts programmes. Around 12 of these colleges deliver significant levels of provision<sup>8</sup> which provide opportunities for learners to gain the skills and knowledge to progress to employment or further study in the performing arts industry. Most of these colleges offer highly specialised performing arts programmes aimed at developing high levels of professional competence. Some deliver degree level programmes in performing arts.

The titles of performing arts programmes vary across colleges. However, as a guide they generally fall into the following categories:

- Acting: developing skills for working in areas such as professional theatre and television, community drama, theatre in education and teaching;
- Musical theatre: developing skills in music, dance and drama for working in areas such as professional musical theatre, cabaret, pantomime and teaching;
- Dance: developing skills for working in areas such as professional dance, musicals, cabaret, commercial dance and teaching; and
- Music: developing skills for working in areas such as performing, composing, arranging, sound production, music management and teaching.

Almost all college programmes consist of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) units. Colleges which offer a significant range of performing arts programmes generally deliver programmes from SCQF levels 4 to 8. Most programmes are offered on a full-time basis and include introductory level FE programmes (SCQF levels 4 to 6) including new National Progression Awards and advanced level HE provision (SCQF levels 7 and 8). Learners successfully completing Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes have the opportunity to progress to a degree programme delivered within a college or (HEI) such as *The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama*. However, entry and progression to further study is subject to audition and is not based solely on the attainment of qualifications.

Almost all programmes involve learners performing and contributing their skills to national performing arts projects and local initiatives. These include working with organisations such as *the National Theatre of Scotland*, *Scottish Youth Theatre*, *Y Dance*, the *Scottish Dance Theatre* and local community-based organisations.

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<sup>8</sup> Colleges delivering more than 2,000 SUMS of performing arts provision.

## 5. Learning and teaching

### Planning of provision

In all colleges, staff work productively to plan provision which meets the needs of learners, the performing arts industry and communities. College managers and teaching staff take good account of national educational and arts strategies, and the current and anticipated needs of industry, to plan the future direction of provision. They review their provision annually and adapt and develop programmes incrementally to take account of learner demand and market forces. In some colleges this has resulted in performing arts departments developing highly specialised provision in dance, acting, musical theatre or music. Some colleges offer degree level programmes in one or more of these specialist areas and a few colleges are working with Scottish universities to provide articulation from Higher National to degree level study. Across colleges, the range of programmes provide good opportunities for learners to access programmes at a level appropriate to their individual skills and experience and to progress to further learning at a college or HEI.

A few colleges have made significant investment in new theatre and studio facilities. In these colleges, high quality, industry standard facilities and resources have raised the standard of expectations of learners, staff and key stakeholders across Scotland. Many of these colleges have rebranded their performing arts provision to convey a more professional, industry-based approach to the development of skills. This has resulted in a widening gap between colleges which seek to provide a high standard of professional training and those colleges where provision is more focused on providing a general introduction to performing arts or to enable personal and social development.

In almost all colleges, teaching departments work productively with a wide range of external organisations including local or area-based community arts projects and national bodies such as *Creative Scotland*, *Scottish Dance Theatre*, *Scottish Youth Theatre* and the *National Theatre of Scotland*. College staff use these links well to plan further their performing arts provision. In almost all colleges, staff work proactively with external partners to plan opportunities for learners to participate and perform in local and national performing arts projects and events. Across colleges, staff give high priority to planning these opportunities and in supporting national organisations in promoting the performing arts in Scotland.

Almost all college departments have established good relationships with local authorities and schools in their area to promote and encourage involvement in the performing arts. In some areas, college staff work effectively with local authority development officers to plan opportunities for learners to contribute to local arts initiatives. Some college departments work closely with community learning and development partners to promote and encourage routes from community-based informal learning to college-based programmes. However, this practice is not consistent across all colleges.

### **Ayr College: Partnership working to promote performing arts**

Staff in Ayr College's music department work in partnership with South Ayrshire Council to promote and provide opportunities for school and community-based learners in the area to access activities to develop and enhance their skills. The college delivers three evening classes to local youth clubs and a class for school learners who require more choices and more chances to engage in learning. A local community learning bus provides mobile laptop facilities to enable learners who live in remote communities to access ICT resources to develop and extend their skills.

The college provides a weekly evening workshop for secondary school age young people who have formed bands. The workshops run from August to February and enable band members to further develop their individual and collective performance skills and learn more about the performing arts industry. The programme of workshops culminates in a highly promoted local concert of bands in February. Learners on full-time college programmes manage the public address (PA) system and recording of the event. The recording of the concert is made available for purchase.

These activities develop industry awareness and enterprise skills of young people and provide college learners with a range of vocational and essential skills which prepare them for progression to employment or further learning.

There are many examples of college staff working with colleagues in schools to plan opportunities for learners to deliver workshops to young people in primary and secondary schools. In a few colleges, college staff work purposefully with teachers from local schools to facilitate joint Continuous Professional Development activities and plan arrangements for the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence. These approaches are effective in informing staff in schools about the range and levels of performing arts programmes available locally and in explaining curriculum content and progression routes to further learning or employment. However, this practice is not widespread and most programme teams do not have sufficient links with relevant subject teachers in secondary schools to be able to inform and update them about the types of performing arts programmes they offer. This reduces opportunities for college and school staff within local areas to collaborate and plan effectively for progression from school to college programmes. Almost all programme teams do not engage sufficiently with secondary schools in planning for the implementation of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence.

Across the colleges, staff have developed a wide range of high quality resources to support and enhance their provision. However, staff teams are unaware of the types of resources developed and used by other colleges. *Scotland's Colleges'* community of practice provides opportunities for teaching staff in colleges to share effective practice. The recently established *Scottish Drama Training Network* is further increasing opportunities for colleges and HEIs to work together in planning and improving the interface between college and degree level programmes. However, overall there are insufficient opportunities for colleges to work together to share resources and approaches to further enhance planning of provision.

### **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig: Supporting the development and promotion of Scottish culture and heritage through performing arts**

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on the island of Skye is the only Scottish Gaelic medium college in the world and is the International Centre for the Gaelic Language Culture and the Arts. It holds a valuable repository of resources in Gaelic and English which provide a commentary on the history and development of performing arts in Scotland. The college is the managing partner in a collaborative project with Edinburgh University (EU), the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) to conserve, digitise and make available on-line sound resources in Scots and Gaelic. The project, *Tobar an Dualchais ( Kist o Riches )* provides on-line access to over 12,000 hours of sound archive materials. This facility provides opportunities for other learning providers to access these resources to support and enrich learning and also to contribute to the further development of the project.

[www.tobarandualchais.co.uk](http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk) or [www.kistoriches.co.uk](http://www.kistoriches.co.uk)

The college works closely with the broadcasting industry. In-house television and recording studios and theatre facilities provide learners with first-hand experiences of working and performing within different types of communication mediums. A Memorandum of Understanding between the college and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama has resulted in a range of activities including an innovative partnership event *Oran 2010* which explored the relationship between Gaelic and Scots music and song traditions. The college's multiple media company, Cànan, is also responsible for the management of FILMG, the annual national short films competition sponsored by MGA Alba. The college is a host and partner with Creative Scotland in the Creative Futures Residency Programme, and hosts artists in residence in Music, Literature, Visual Arts and Drama.

The college combines the use of these resources to provide learners with a culturally rich and holistic learning experience. Learners draw on these resources and opportunities to extend their interests and to inform and refine their performance skills. These arrangements preserve and support the continuous promotion of Scottish language, culture and heritage.



## Planning learning and teaching

In all colleges, performing arts staff are very enthusiastic about their subject area and are highly committed to meeting the current needs and future aspirations of learners. They are passionate about their individual areas of expertise and enjoy passing on their skills and experience to learners who share their interest. All teaching staff have a relevant teaching qualification. Almost all staff have current professional involvement in the performing arts industry as actors, dancers, musicians, producers or advisors and apply their up-to-date experience of industry practice effectively to inform programme planning and enthuse learners.

Teams plan programmes effectively and make good use of the collective knowledge of staff to provide learners with relevant, high quality learning experiences. They are adept at integrating units and sequencing learning activities to provide a holistic learning experience which usually culminates in a final performance event. In almost all colleges, staff incorporate themes for production which reflect and promote Scottish culture and heritage. In many cases these are linked appropriately to local areas. These activities widen learner and community awareness of Scottish history and current social issues.

All programme teams are familiar with, and take good account of the principles and themes of Curriculum for Excellence. The types of learning activities and learning and teaching approaches used within performing arts fit well with the aims of Curriculum for Excellence. In all colleges, performing arts teams engage well in utilising the Curriculum for Excellence framework to map and plan further actions. In all colleges staff teams have taken steps to realign their programme planning processes to incorporate the entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence. However, in most colleges these arrangements are not fully developed and most programme teams have not yet mapped provision to the experiences and outcomes identified in Curriculum for Excellence. Most programme teams do not plan activities which promote equality and diversity and health and wellbeing. However, in almost all programmes teaching staff incorporate these themes naturally within learning activities.

Programme teams work creatively and effectively to combine activities which increase learners' skills and understanding of the performing arts industry. In almost all colleges, programme teams responsible for different types of performing arts programmes work well together to integrate units and plan inter-disciplinary experiences which enable learners to learn about wider aspects of theatre and performance. These activities include involving learners from acting, musical theatre, technical theatre and music programmes in working together to plan, coordinate and stage productions. Programme teams incorporate activities for learners to develop and apply their skills for working with others in the community. These include facilitating workshops, assisting in theatre groups and working with schools. There are many examples of staff teams planning opportunities for learners to undertake and manage commercial commissions such as producing training films for companies and documentaries for community organisations.

In almost all colleges, programme teams utilise the skills of staff and learners from other programme areas to support and enrich the learning experience. These include involving music learners in composing music for learners to use in mime, movement and dance classes. Learners on engineering and construction

programmes are involved in building props and stage sets. Colleges which have art and design programmes regularly involve learners in the design and production of publicity materials.

Programme teams are conscientious about providing learners with sufficient time to practise and demonstrate their skills. Almost all programme teams plan additional learning activities outwith class times to support and enhance learning. These activities include additional one-to-one tuition and support, rehearsals and live performances. Staff are proactive in scheduling public performance within programmes. Almost all teaching staff work in the evenings and at weekends to provide opportunities for learners to perform in public and to support them in preparing for, and delivering their performances. In some colleges, programme teams incorporate touring of productions to enable learners to gain experience of setting up and performing in different types of venues, ranging from small, informal settings to full-scale theatres.

All programmes incorporate the development of core skills. Acting and dance programmes include very high levels of development of a wide range of communication skills, through mime, public presentation and movement. Music programmes inherently include communication and a strong numerical element. Team working and working with others is an intrinsic component of all performing arts programmes. Many programme teams take good account of the essential skills learners require for achieving and maintaining employment within the performing arts industry. In these programmes, staff include entrepreneurship, business skills and marketing and promotional skills within learning activities. There are many examples of individual learners and class groups establishing and running their own business as actors, dancers or musicians as part of their college programme. In one college, learners undertake costing and box office administration to develop and apply their skills for business. However, this is not consistent across all programmes.

Staff in most programme teams work well with staff from servicing departments to ensure the communication, ICT and numeracy components of programmes are contextualised and linked sufficiently to practical activities and the world of work in performing arts. However, more than a few programme teams do not take sufficient responsibility for the contextualisation and delivery styles employed by staff delivering these core skill components. In these programmes, no or little collaboration between staff in performing arts and servicing departments reduces the quality of the overall learning experience.

Almost all FE level programmes provide an appropriate and valuable starting point for a diverse range of learners. These include learners who are seeking to progress to a professional career in performing arts and those who are undertaking programmes to reengage in learning, in preparation for entry to employment or other vocational programmes. Learners who are undertaking these programmes for personal and social development, particularly those requiring more choices and more chances, benefit greatly from these programmes.

Many colleges identify that many learners applying for full-time FE level programmes in a specific discipline such as acting, dance or music do not have a sufficient knowledge of the industry to be able to make fully informed choices about their career paths. Most colleges have addressed this by creating pre-National Qualification (NQ) level programmes which enable learners to engage in a broad range of performing arts in preparation for progression to more specialised NQ level programmes. These programmes are effective in widening learner awareness, and importantly, enable learners to reflect on and assess, their individual skill levels and commitment to pursuing a professional career as a dancer, actor or musician. Learners on these programmes value the opportunity to explore these options and report making more positive decisions about their future learning as a result. However, in a few FE programmes the range of learner experiences, interests and abilities within class groups is too broad to accommodate fully the needs and aspirations of all learners.

### **Delivering learning and teaching**

In all colleges, teaching staff are highly motivated and committed to meeting the needs of all learners. They take the career aspirations of learners seriously and work hard to provide individual learners with the right level and type of support to accommodate their needs and learning styles. Teaching staff establish very positive and productive relationships with learners. They are approachable and helpful and work hard to provide learners with a rich, relevant and engaging learning experience. Almost all teaching staff regularly work outwith college hours to coordinate arrangements and support learners in rehearsing or delivering performances. In all colleges, the commitment and time teaching staff give to working with learners outwith college hours is commendable.

Teaching staff use a wide range of effective learning and teaching approaches to involve and motivate learners. They adapt their approaches instinctively to meet the needs of individual learners and are confident and skilled in exploring and applying new approaches to engage and encourage learners who are experiencing challenges in their learning. Almost all teachers of performing arts have experience of teaching across a very wide range of programme levels. This includes access level provision for learners who require additional support to engage in learning, through to degree level programmes. As a result, teaching staff are skilled at adapting their learning and teaching approaches to meet different types of learner needs. Almost all use their experience of teaching on HE level programmes to introduce FE learners to the level of skills required for study at an advanced level. In many programmes, teaching staff regularly visit classes being delivered by other colleagues to assess how successfully individual learners apply the skills they have learned in their classes. They draw on their observations and work well with colleagues to identify and plan approaches to further enhance the performance of individual learners.

In almost all colleges, teaching staff set very high standards for learners which reflect the demands of working as a professional in the performing arts industry. In most FE and all HE level programmes staff reinforce and apply these standards effectively and consistently. Almost all learners respond well to these expectations and in return also set high standards for each other in terms of teamworking, responsibility and time management. As a result, learner punctuality and attendance is very good.

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### **Carnegie College: Using ICT to enhance and enrich the learning experience**

In Carnegie College performing arts staff use the college VLE extensively to engage learners in communicating with staff and peers, accessing resources and showcasing their work. Potential learners are directed to a user-friendly website which explains the content of programmes and style of classes. An enquiries page enables potential applicants to make direct contact with teaching staff to gain further information, plan for auditions and prepare for starting programmes.

When planning lessons and projects, teaching staff research internet materials and film clips and mount them on the VLE. During classes, they incorporate these resources to highlight and exemplify levels of technical skills and the different types of approaches applied by individual professionals and performing arts companies. Staff use these activities to involve learners in comparing and discussing different performance styles and in measuring their individual and group skills. These activities raise learner awareness of the standards and types of practices applied within the industry in the UK and internationally.

Teaching staff use the VLE to engage learners interactively in reflecting on the skills they have learned in lessons. At the end of classes, teaching staff place their evaluation of lessons on the VLE and invite learners to comment on the success of learning and teaching approaches. Almost all learners contribute their views quickly and regularly and staff use learner feedback to reflect on and make adjustments to learning plans and inform future planning of programmes. Class representatives post their own blog on the VLE and undertake responsibility for monitoring and assuring the appropriateness of content posted on the department's WebPages.

Staff use the VLE to maintain regular contact with learners. During severe weather conditions, which resulted in many learners being unable to travel to college, teaching staff used the VLE to continue to deliver classes and carry out tutorials. Learners recorded and posted their performances on the VLE which staff used to carry out assessments. Daily morning 'Drama in Pyjamas' sessions enabled learners in different locations to participate in class activities to discuss the theoretical components of individual and class projects. Staff use the VLE to support learners who are unable to attend college due to health issues. In these cases, staff keep in regular contact with learners and when appropriate enable them to continue their learning remotely prior to resuming their programme.

Staff use of ICT in learning and teaching ranges from very poor to very good. In a few performing arts departments, teaching staff use ICT proficiently and confidently within class activities to support and enhance learning. In these departments, staff integrate use of the college VLE and social networking sites to engage learners in continuing their learning outwith class times and to communicate and share their performance activities with others. Some staff use the VLE very creatively as a forum for providing learners with feedback and hosting class tutorials. However, in most colleges teaching staff do not use ICT sufficiently within learning and teaching activities and do not make sufficient use of the college VLE to support and enhance the learning process. In most music programmes, staff make effective use of digital resources and recording facilities which are in line with current industry standards.

In some colleges, particularly those that have invested in new studio and theatre facilities, technical staff work very well with teaching teams to support and enhance class and production activities. However, in a few colleges erratic or insufficient access to technical support interrupts or limits the overall quality of the learning experience.

#### **Dundee College: Integrating technical support to enhance performance activities**

Dundee College's performing arts department includes an in-house technical production team to enable learners to carry out learning activities and perform in a realistic, professional working environment. The technical production team includes a stage manager, production manager, lighting technician and wardrobe manager.

The college performs productions regularly throughout the academic year to enable learners on all levels of programmes to showcase their skills. The range of productions is diverse and includes contemporary dance, classical ballet, musical showcases and classical plays. The technical production team works closely with teaching staff and learners in the planning of productions. Prior to rehearsals, they work with staff and learners to clarify the structure and requirements of productions. They use this process to draw up a formal memorandum of understanding from which they create an action plan which details the types and timings of actions required to deliver productions. During the rehearsal process, they engage regularly in production meetings to adjust and further refine approaches to support performances.

These activities provide learners with an insight into the roles of other professionals who contribute to the success of theatrical productions. This is highly beneficial in preparing learners for progressing to work as a professional performer.

Staff continuously provide learners with constructive and helpful feedback on their progress and performance skills. This is further supplemented by regular formal tutorials which teaching staff use effectively to provide learners with more in-depth advice on the development of specific skills. Across all programmes, staff use class and peer critique processes regularly and effectively to help individual learners and class groups reflect on their performance and plan for improvement. Teaching staff manage these processes well and establish constructive and respectful approaches for learners to assess and comment on each others work. They use these processes very effectively to carry out formative assessment, facilitate learner reflection and stimulate action for improvement.

In all programmes, teaching staff naturally and consistently involve learners in shaping their own learning. They involve learners in negotiating and agreeing themes for individual and class projects. Within class activities they almost always engage learners in deciding how the class will take forward an idea or reach a given outcome. The balance between the high standards conveyed by staff in terms of team work, responsibility for self and others, time-management and the direct involvement of learners in deciding how they will achieve individual and class goals provides learners with high levels of skills for learning, life and work. Within class activities staff take good account of the principles and themes of Curriculum for Excellence. They monitor learner performance in relation to achievement of the four capacities and reflect well the holistic approach to developing the skills of each individual learner. Almost all teaching staff incorporate equality and diversity and health and wellbeing within class projects and learning activities. They involve learners in exploring and incorporating equality issues when planning dramatic productions. Staff regularly engage learners in activities to improve their physical fitness, flexibility and stamina levels to prepare for and enhance performance.

Staff teams are highly skilled in planning and monitoring assessment across programmes. Almost all staff take care to convey the purpose and standards of assessments. They make good use of formative assessment practice to explain to learners the links between acquisition of different types of skills and their application to different types of learning and performance contexts. In almost all programmes, units and assessment schedules are carefully planned and integrated to prepare learners for working towards and undertaking external examinations and final assessments at end of year performance events. As a result, learner programme attainment is usually dependent on learners undertaking and successfully achieving a number of assessments within a final performance activity. Staff teams take good account of, and plan well for circumstances which prevent individual learners from being able to participate in final productions. Many staff film and record learner performance throughout the year to provide a commentary of learner progress and to capture evidence of learner performance. In circumstances where learners are unable to participate in end-of-year events, staff make good use of these recordings to carry out final assessments. Learners who have additional barriers to learning are provided with appropriate alternative assessment arrangements.

## Guidance and support

In all colleges, staff have established productive and supportive relationships with learners. These relationships are founded on mutual respect, shared interest in the subject area and a genuine desire on the part of staff to help learners to achieve their individual aspirations.

All performing arts departments promote their programmes well and host a wide range of useful and often innovative events throughout the year to inform potential learners about the types and levels of programmes they offer. Staff provide good opportunities for individuals to discuss and explore their individual interests and aspirations and take time to explain the content of programmes and the types and levels of skills levels required for entry. There are many examples of departments hosting workshop activities to enable interested parties to sample the types and styles of learning activities used within specific programmes. Almost all departments involve current learners in these activities, including delivering workshops or acting as ambassadors to enable potential applicants to learn first-hand about specific programmes. These approaches are highly successful in encouraging and engaging potential learners in exploring their programme options. Many learners who are uncertain of their skill levels prior to application find these activities and their discussions with learners and staff, reassuring and helpful in making informed choices.

In almost all programmes, demand for places significantly outweighs the number of places available. At all programme levels, entry is subject to performance at audition, and is not determined by level and types of academic qualifications or on automatic progression from FE to HE. The audition process is used very effectively to ensure that potential learners understand the content and standards expected within programmes. Audition processes are generally rigorous and are used effectively by staff to identify individual learner skill levels and aspirations and to place learners on appropriate types and levels of programmes. As a result, some adults and school leavers who have higher level qualifications and have been advised by others to apply for HE level programmes are disappointed when, at audition, they are advised by college staff to enter at FE level. However, almost all learners who have experienced this situation acknowledge that their FE programme has been appropriate to their individual skill level and highly beneficial in preparing them for entry to HE.

In all colleges, staff provide learners with good levels of support throughout their programme. Induction programmes are well planned and provide learners with useful information about the content of their programme, the schedule of activities they will be involved in and types and styles of assessments they will undertake. At the start of programmes, learners create individual learning plans in which they identify their learning and career goals, plan and record their activities and chart their progress and achievements. Subject teachers provide accessible, ongoing support to learners and timetable regular slots for learners to review and assess their progress and set further goals. The arrangements for learners to discuss their progress with staff are well matched to the needs of individual learners and class groups. In programmes which demand high levels of individual performance skills, staff arrange regular one-to-one tutorials which enable learners to review and discuss their progress in depth and plan for improvement.



### **Stevenson College Edinburgh: Using ICT to simulate industry practice and prepare for employment.**

In Stevenson College Edinburgh music department, staff use ICT management software used within the music industry to engage learners in day to day activities and planning their own learning and group projects. Learners use the software to relay information to each other, schedule meetings, devise timelines and milestones and carry out project and production planning activities. Staff involve learners in practising and using business skills within class activities to communicate with each other, showcase their work and create industry standard presentations and reports. Learners peer review each others work and use this process to evaluate individual and group skills. Using these tools enables learners to become familiar and confident with the types of software being used by professionals in the music industry. This prepares learners well progressing to employment and also to managing their own business.

In almost all programmes, staff provide learners with high quality advice and information about further learning and employment options. Staff teams organise a wide range of events and activities which help learners make informed decisions about their progression to future learning or employment. These include visits to performing arts companies, other colleges and HEIs. Teaching staff regularly arrange presentations by visiting speakers including employers, representatives of national bodies and former learners working in the industry. Most colleges arrange for professional artistes to work with learners to reinforce the types of opportunities available to them. These events and activities are given high priority by staff and are very effective in motivating and assisting learners in planning and preparing for progression. Many learners use these activities positively, to revise and refine their original career plans.

All colleges have well-established systems to support learners with additional barriers to learning. A high proportion of learners on performing arts programmes have additional support needs arising from dyslexia or other barrier to learning. Teaching staff are experienced and skilled at making adjustments and arranging support to meet individual needs. There are many examples of staff providing effective support to learners whose individual circumstances such as caring responsibilities or health issues prevent them attending college regularly.

### **Learner engagement**

In all colleges, learners are motivated and engage fully in learning activities. Most learners at FE level and almost all learners on HE programmes are very highly committed to working within the performing arts industry. This is reflected in the high number of learners who have overcome barriers to undertake programmes and progress in their studies. These barriers include overcoming the prejudices of others to pursue a career as an actor, dancer or musician and travelling long distances or relocating to access college programmes.

Learners have positive and productive relationships with staff and their peers. They contribute confidently to discussing and determining the format of class activities and in identifying and taking forward themes for individual and class

projects and performances. When planning performances or productions, they take good account of each others' skills and attributes to allocate specific roles and responsibilities. Almost all learners use these processes well to invigorate and shape their own learning and to extend and demonstrate their individual skills to others.

Most FE learners and all HE learners are very committed to achieving success in their specialism, and as a result participate in additional activities outwith class times to consolidate, extend and widen their skills. These include working with theatre, music and dance companies, working with community groups and participating in student- led and college-wide clubs and events. In a few colleges, learners organise and participate in self-directed learning outwith class times to practise and extend their skills. In colleges where learners have access to rehearsal space, studio and theatre facilities outwith class times, the vast majority of learners use these facilities regularly to practise, film and record their performances. Most learners use social networking sites effectively and proficiently to showcase and promote their skills. Learners in college departments which use a VLE, make good of this facility to discuss their projects and course work, video their performances and interact with staff and peers. There are good examples of learners contributing regularly to chat rooms to discuss and share their ideas and experiences.

All learners have increased their confidence in learning independently and in learning alongside others within an ensemble, cast and class group. They participate actively in learning about, and working to, industry standards and support each other well in achieving the demands required by industry. As a result, they set high standards in their expectations of each other. There are many examples of learners providing each other with careful and well-judged feedback on their individual and group performances. Within these activities learners develop and demonstrate trust, sensitivity and skill in giving, receiving and making use of constructive criticism. Almost all learners make good use of feedback from staff to reflect on their learning, progress and performance and to set and redefine their future goals.

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### **Edinburgh's Telford College: Engaging learners in peer teaching and critique activities**

In Edinburgh's Telford College, staff engage all HE learners on dance choreography programmes in peer teaching and peer critique activities to improve their dance and choreography skills and skills for working with others. Each learner on these programmes works with learners undertaking a lower level of programme. This, for example includes learners on degree programmes working with HND learners and HND learners working with learners on HNC programmes.

Learners are allocated class groups and support them in conceptualising dance arrangements and in working towards delivery of a stage-based dance performance. Within this process staff train and mentor learners in observing and evaluating technical skills and in using dialogue responsibly and productively to provide constructive feedback and plan further instruction. This approach requires learners to reflect objectively on their own technical skills and explore, identify and convey the strategies which have enabled them to overcome technical challenges. Staff observe the skills of learners in carrying out these activities and reduce levels of mentoring and intervention in accordance with learner confidence and skills. Through this process, learners on advanced level programmes develop communication and instruction skills to meet the needs of individual learners and learner groups.

These activities provide learners with valuable experience of evaluating, assessing and improving the skills of themselves and others. This prepares learners well for progression to working professionally with others in performance and teaching activities. Learners who receive peer teaching, critique and review from learners on advanced programmes value and are motivated by the experience. They use these activities well to learn about, and work towards, the standards expected in further programmes.

Almost all learners contribute enthusiastically, productively and positively to the wider life and work of the college. They participate in college-wide productions and events and there are good examples of learners designing and performing productions to inform and reinforce ideas to other learner groups. Learners contribute well to improving and enhancing programmes and wider college services. Almost all programmes have one or two class representatives. Almost all class representatives convey the views of their peers very well. Due to the positive relationships between learners and staff, learners are comfortable about, and proactive in, raising issues with staff as they emerge.

Almost all learners engage regularly in programme activities to widen and extend their skills. These activities include peer teaching, teaching elements of lower level college programmes, facilitating workshops for schools and community groups and undertaking work placements. Some learners participate in tutoring activities through which they work with staff in secondary schools to help pupils learn about performing arts programmes. In most colleges, there are examples of learners from different countries sharing their previous experiences of learning and using this effectively to widen their knowledge of other industry practices and cultures.

### **Carnegie College: Engaging learners in working with young people**

Carnegie College hosts Carnegie College Stage School which engages around 150 young people in Fife in youth theatre activities. Learners on HN Acting programmes regularly deliver workshops to local primary schools in Fife. However, staff in the performing arts department identified an opportunity to involve learners in working with schools to further promote the performing arts. College staff identified a Shakespearean play being delivered in schools and combined the HNC units in Shakespeare and Leading a Theatre workshop to engage learners in facilitating and performing the play. Within this process, learners filmed their rehearsals and created a webpage called Streetspeare through which they translated Elizabethan text into modern language. School learners were able to view and follow the progress of rehearsals and access Streetspeare through the college VLE. At the end of the process, learners toured local schools to perform the play.

In 2010 learners devised a play 'Dare 2 Hope' to raise awareness of the high suicide rates of young people. The play was produced by Cutting Edge Theatre Company and partly funded by the NHS. Several HND learners were successful in gaining acting roles in the production. The play has been toured around Scottish schools to raise awareness of, and try to reduce, the incidences of suicide in young people. This year learners participated in a play 99/100 produced by National Theatre Scotland which explored and celebrated life in Fife.

These arrangements are successful in engaging learners in working with young people. They provide valuable experiences for learners in facilitating workshops and performing productions to meet specific needs. Learners develop useful skills in adapting approaches to relate to young people which prepares them well for employment.

## **6. Outcomes and impact**

### **Retention and attainment**

Most colleges in Scotland delivering performing arts programmes have high or very high retention and attainment rates across all FE and HE programmes. In almost all colleges, early retention is high on FE programmes and very high on HE programmes. However, retention rates are lower on full-time FE programmes. Across most colleges, completion rates on FE level programmes are high. In a few colleges completion rates on a few full-time and part-time FE programmes are low. In almost all colleges completion rates on full-time HE level programmes are high and in some colleges very high. Completion rates on part-time HE programmes are very high. In most colleges, success levels for learners on full-time and part-time FE are high. However, in a few colleges success rates on FE level programmes are low and in a few programmes very low. Success levels for learners on full-time HE programmes are high or very high and very high for learners on part-time HE programmes. Further information on retention, attainment and completion rates over three years is included in a summary of data in Appendix 1 of this report.

### **Wider achievement**

Almost all learners develop confidence, independence and skills for learning, life and work through participation in their programme and involvement in local and national performing arts projects and events. These include work placements or work experiences with local and national performing arts organisations and working with community groups and schools. Almost all learners gain considerable experience of performing to different types of audiences and many achieve success in their individual discipline. They work hard to improve their skills and gain confidence and determination to achieve their individual aspirations.

Learners develop high-level skills for learning independently and for learning with others as part of a group. Almost all learners develop responsibility and self-reliance for achieving individual and class goals. They develop strategies to enable them to retain instruction and memorise scripts, scores and movements. Learners gain and apply time-management skills to plan their learning and prepare for meeting rehearsal and production schedules. Almost all learners gain resilience in working towards and achieving professional standards.

In most FE and all HE programmes learners gain high levels of skills for working in the performing arts industries and other types of employment. These skills include presentation and communication skills, teamworking, working with others, project management and problem solving. These skills prepare learners well for progression to further learning and work and enhance the wider employment options of learners. Almost all learners increase their communication, literacy and numeracy skills. Within the majority of programmes learners develop useful business, marketing and promotional skills. Learners on these programmes make good use of these skills to obtain performance contracts and prepare for employment in the industry. Many learners successfully promote their skills and set up and run their own company during their college programme.

Learners gain skills for life through their exploration of a wide range of topics and themes. Within programmes and production planning activities learners engage

regularly in analysing the impact of actions on the lives of others. They use this process to identify ways of communicating social and emotional issues within performance activities. Through these experiences, learners develop awareness and understanding of the needs and circumstances of others and gain valuable citizenship skills.

## **Progression**

Almost all learners make very good progress from prior learning and experience. They progress well in their learning and participate in additional activities outwith classes to practise, extend and apply their skills. Most learners progress successfully from FE to further HE programmes in performing arts. Almost all learners who undertake FE programmes for personal and social development progress to other FE programmes or employment. Almost all HE learners progress successfully to further learning, including degree programmes or employment within or related to the performing arts industry.

Many learners, particularly school leavers who apply for a place on an HE level programme and at audition are advised by college staff to undertake an FE level programme, value and benefit from their FE programme. These learners make good use of their programmes to extend their knowledge of the performing arts industry and achieve the standard of skills required for entry to further learning. Almost all progress to HE programmes.

Learners who are undertaking programmes in colleges which have high quality industry standard theatre and studio facilities benefit from working in a professional environment and many gain a wider knowledge and understanding of the industry such as managing a box office, theatrical lighting and stage set, and managing front of house. These facilities and activities prepare learners well for progression to work or further learning.

All colleges have strong and current links with the performing arts industry and as a result have good levels of knowledge about the employment destinations of their learners. Almost all HE learners progress to professional roles within the performing arts industry and many achieve national recognition and success as actors, musicians, producers or dancers. Colleges regularly involve former learners who have achieved professional success in working with learners to raise their awareness of the industry and increase aspirations. These activities are very motivating and inspiring for learners. Across all colleges, staff celebrate the success of their learners and arrange high profile events for learners to showcase their skills to employers, other colleges and HEIs and the wider community. These events are invariably of a high standard and demonstrate well the skill, passion and commitment of staff and learners in contributing to the continuous development of the performing arts in Scotland.

### **Motherwell College: Engaging with employers to assist progression**

In Motherwell College, performing arts staff work closely with employers and industry representatives to provide opportunities for learners to showcase and demonstrate their skills to potential employers in Scotland and the UK. Throughout the year staff involve employers in contributing to audition processes, delivering masterclasses and workshops and participating in practical class activities. These arrangements enable learners to learn first-hand from professionals working in the industry about the standards and skills employers are seeking and encourage and support learners in working towards achieving these standards. Learners perform a number of productions throughout the year. Staff invite employers and partner agencies including local authorities to productions to see and hear the skills of learners. In addition, at the end of the academic year the college performs two major productions in professional theatres in Scotland and London. Staff promote these productions to national bodies and employers and both productions are highly publicised. These arrangements are effective in enabling employers to meet with and view the work of learners. They widen learners' awareness of the range and types of work opportunities and assist progression to employment in the performing arts industry.

## **7. Enhancement through self-evaluation and internal review**

Colleges have well-established systems for evaluating the effectiveness of their provision and the quality of the learning experience. Within almost all performing arts teams, staff work well together to review and evaluate programmes and strive to continuously enhance and improve the quality of their provision.

Almost all programme teams engage well in quality assurance and enhancement activities and most engage all relevant staff in internal review processes. They are proactive in identifying and addressing areas of programmes delivered in their department which require adjustment and improvement. They monitor and analyse the attendance, retention and attainment rates of individual learners and class groups thoroughly. When issues emerge, they take quick action individually or collectively to make improvements to programmes. However, most programme teams do not analyse sufficiently the attendance, retention and attainment rates of learners across all individual units within programmes. In colleges where individual units are being delivered by staff in other curriculum areas, most programme teams do not take sufficient responsibility for ensuring the content and delivery approaches are appropriate to learner needs and do not monitor learner attendance, retention and attainment sufficiently. In some programmes, this results in continuously poor performance in a few units being overlooked and therefore unresolved. This reduces the overall quality of provision and detracts from an otherwise very positive learning experience for learners on these programmes. A few staff teams do not clarify sufficiently the purpose and aims of their FE programmes and do not set or use appropriate, measurable targets to gauge learner performance against programme aims.

In all performing arts programmes, curriculum design and learning and teaching approaches reflect well the aims of Curriculum for Excellence. As a result, almost all performing arts staff and teams are enthusiastic about taking forward and implementing Curriculum for Excellence. In almost all colleges, staff teams have made good progress in incorporating Curriculum for Excellence within their quality assurance and enhancement and lesson planning processes. A few programme teams have started mapping their provision to the Curriculum for Excellence expressive arts experiences and outcomes. However, in most college departments this is not yet well developed.



### **Aberdeen College: Putting Curriculum for Excellence into practice**

In Aberdeen College, staff in the performing arts department have embedded Curriculum for Excellence into their programmes and practices. Programmes and assessment processes have been designed to monitor learners' progress in achieving the four capacities and acquisition of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Course overviews and programme delivery guidelines have been refined to demonstrate how these skills and attributes are implemented and charted across the learning experience. Staff use the language of Curriculum for Excellence consistently when engaging with learners and colleagues. This has aided clarity of understanding between learners and staff when discussing programme design and learner outcomes.

The performing arts team has mapped the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence to existing programmes. This has resulted in a significant movement towards embedding Curriculum for Excellence within programme planning and curricular practices. Staff teams ensure that personal choice is embedded into all programmes to enable learners to explore areas of personal interest and to become successful learners. Staff plan interdisciplinary experiences to enhance and widen the skills of learners. For example, learners on Drama and Music programmes worked with the Holocaust Education Trust – 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project to create a theatre performance which was filmed by learners undertaking film and media programmes.

The college carries out regular internal audits of Curriculum for Excellence implementation across all curriculum areas to assess the progress and effectiveness of programme teams. College-wide procedures for observing lessons have been adapted to reflect Curriculum for Excellence and to capture effective and innovative practice. The principles of Curriculum for Excellence are included in programme evaluation documentation and are standing agenda items in departmental and college meetings and learner focus groups. These approaches are successfully embedding the ethos and principles of Curriculum for Excellence within the life and work of the college.

Almost all programme teams are proactive and successful in engaging learners in programme review and evaluation activities. In many performing arts departments formal procedures for learners to contribute to quality enhancement processes are further supported by ongoing informal dialogue between learners and staff.

All programme teams successfully involve learners in contributing regularly to the enhancement and improvement of wider college services. Almost all programme teams take good account of, and respond swiftly to, feedback and suggestions from learners. Most staff and programme teams are proactive in conveying to learners the improvements they have made as a result of learner suggestions and feedback. However, more than a few staff teams do not tell learners quickly or effectively enough about the improvements they have made to programmes as a direct result of their feedback and contribution.

Almost all individual staff and staff teams take good account of feedback from key stakeholders and external organisations when reviewing and planning programmes. Programme teams liaise regularly with external bodies and most draw on their ongoing dialogue with these bodies to gauge the effectiveness of programmes. Although these arrangements are almost always informal, they provide valuable feedback which staff use productively to adapt and adjust programmes and practice. There are a few examples of college staff working alongside secondary school colleagues to share and exchange curriculum content and delivery approaches. However, this is not widespread and across almost all colleges, there is insufficient partnership working with secondary schools to plan progression pathways and prepare for implementation of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence. Overall, programme teams do not involve employers, industry representatives and staff in schools systematically enough in their evaluation processes.

Almost all performing arts staff participate in team teaching arrangements on a regular basis and frequently share effective practice within their department. They use these activities productively to broaden and enhance their learning and teaching skills and to learn about and adopt different types of approaches to assist learners. A few staff teams share their effective practice with other college departments on generic activities such as working with community groups and induction. However, in almost all of the colleges there are very few examples of performing arts staff sharing their effective practice with other college departments. This results in missed opportunities for these colleges to adopt and extend the many practical approaches applied by performing arts staff which exemplify the philosophy and aims of Curriculum for Excellence.

Within Scotland's colleges there is a wealth of commitment, skills, experience and resources to achieve the vision of Creative Scotland that: *Scotland is recognised as a leading creative nation – one that attracts, develops and retains talent, where the arts and the creative industries are supported and celebrated and their economic contribution fully captured, a nation where the arts and creativity play a central part in the lives, education and well-being of our population.* However, overall there is a lack of opportunity for teachers of performing arts in Scottish colleges to learn more about, and work more closely with other colleges, HEIs and national bodies to share and extend effective practice and the resources available within Scotland.

## 8. Recommendations

*Scottish Funding Council (SFC)* should:

- continue to support work to enhance and strengthen performing arts provision, increase routes and pathways to HE level study and encourage collaboration and sharing of skills and facilities between institutions, teachers and learners, such as that of the *Scottish Drama Training Network*.

*Scotland's Colleges* should:

- improve opportunities for performing arts staff in colleges across Scotland to work collaboratively with each other and HEIs to share effective practice and resources.

*Colleges* should:

- establish closer working relationships between performing arts programme teams and community learning and development partners to promote and encourage routes from community-based informal learning to college-based programmes;
- ensure performing arts departments establish links with relevant subject teachers in secondary schools to inform and update them about the types of performing arts programmes they offer;
- implement arrangements for performing arts staff to engage with secondary schools in planning for the implementation of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence;
- develop further the awareness of teaching staff of the types of resources being used by other colleges to support and enhance planning of provision;
- implement arrangements for ensuring programme teams map their provision to the experiences and outcomes identified in Curriculum for Excellence and plan activities which promote equality and diversity and health and wellbeing;
- ensure programme teams incorporate essential skills learners require for achieving and maintaining employment within the performing arts industry;
- ensure programme teams take responsibility for the contextualisation and delivery styles employed by staff delivering core skills;
- continue to develop the skills of teaching staff in using ICT within learning and teaching to support and enhance the learning process;
- ensure programme teams take action to improve retention and attainment rates on programmes where they are low;

- ensure programme teams clarify and convey sufficiently the purpose and aims of their FE programmes and set and use appropriate measurable targets to gauge learner performance against programme aims;
- implement arrangements for performing arts departments to involve employers, industry representatives and staff in schools systematically in their evaluation processes; and
- further develop arrangements for performing arts staff to share their effective practice with other college departments.

*Education Scotland* should:

- continue to monitor the progress made by colleges in taking forward the above recommendations; and
- encourage performing arts teachers in colleges and schools to collaborate on programme design to ease transition and support implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.

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## 9. Effective practice

During the fieldwork inspectors identified the following examples of effective practice.

- Ayr College: Partnership working to promote performing arts
- Sabhal Mòr Ostaig: Supporting the development and promotion of Scottish culture and heritage through performing arts
- Carnegie College: Using ICT to enhance and enrich the learning experience
- Dundee College: Integrating technical support to enhance performance activities
- Stevenson College Edinburgh: Using ICT to simulate industry practice and prepare for employment
- Edinburgh's Telford College: Engaging learners in peer teaching and critique activities
- Carnegie College: Engaging learners in working with young people
- Motherwell College: Engaging with employers to assist progression
- Aberdeen College: Putting Curriculum for Excellence into practice

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## Appendix 1

### Performing arts sector-level summary 2007/08 to 2009/10

2007/08

Mode	Level	Enrolled	Funded	Completed	Succeeded	Early Retention	Student Retention	Success
FT	FE	1,759	1,572	1,229	994	89%	78%	81%
FT	HE	2,111	1,974	1,676	1,459	94%	85%	87%
PT	FE	2,632	2,396	2,266	2,094	91%	95%	92%
PT	HE	113	101	95	70	89%	94%	74%

2008/09

Mode	Level	Enrolled inc. non-assessed	Funded	Completed inc. non-assessed	Completed exc. non-assessed	Succeeded exc. non-assessed	Early Retention	Student Retention	Success
FT	FE	1,730	1,586	1,311	1,311	1,074	92%	83%	82%
FT	HE	2,214	2,101	1,841	1,841	1,563	95%	88%	85%
PT	FE	11,285	11,119	10,935	1,347	1,221	99%	98%	91%
PT	HE	155	122	112	112	94	79%	92%	84%

2009/10

Mode	Level	Initial enrolment	Completing 25% counting towards ESR	Completed 25% inc. non-assessed	Completed inc. non-assessed	Completed exc. non-assessed	Succeeded exc. non-assessed	Early Retention	Student Retention	Success
FT	FE	1,609	1,467	1,449	1,174	1,164	946	91%	81%	81%
FT	HE	2,431	2,293	2,297	2,024	2,021	1,669	94%	88%	83%
PT	FE	11,561	11,444	11,504	11,287	1,275	1,165	99%	98%	91%
PT	HE	117	111	111	100	99	80	95%	90%	81%

In 2008-09, SFC revised the definition of success, to take account of programmes which were designed where learners were not to be assessed.

The early retention figure for 2009-10 excludes courses where the funding qualifying date was reached in the previous academic year. This is a change in definition for the 2009-10 data so the percentage is not directly comparable with previous years.

Student retention figures in 2009-10 are not directly comparable to previous years. This category includes the following outcome in 2009-10 but not previous years: 'Completed programme/course, student not assess although programme/ course designed to be assessed. Studying on a flexible open learning programme'.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Colleges involved in the fieldwork for this report**

- Aberdeen College
- Ayr College
- Carnegie College
- Dundee College
- Edinburgh's Telford College
- Motherwell College
- Sabhal Mòr Ostaig
- Stevenson College Edinburgh

## Appendix 3

### Glossary of terms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
EU	Edinburgh University
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HMIE	HM Inspectorate of Education
HN	Higher National
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NHS	National Health Service
NTS	National Trust for Scotland
NQ	National Qualification
PA	Public Address
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
SOA	Single Outcome Agreement
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment



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