



# SWC

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE

# COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

# 2023 - 2024



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**Cookstown**  
**Dungannon**  
**Enniskillen**  
**Omagh**



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The South West College 2023-2024 College Development Plan outlines the College priorities for the year ahead, and details their alignment with the three pillars of the 10X Economy: An Economic Vision – Innovation, Inclusion and Sustainability. The challenge for the College in the year ahead is to further align its provision with the objectives of Skills for a 10x Economy – Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland, ie to address the skills imbalance, create a culture of lifelong learning, and promote the development of digital skills.

South West College is one of six FE colleges in Northern Ireland (the FE sector), which are all Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) and are a key delivery arm of the Department for the Economy (DfE). Under Article 20 of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, FE Colleges are required to produce and submit College Development Plans in line with DfE requirements. These College Development Plans reflect the sector’s mandate to play a central role in supporting a strong and vibrant local economy through the development of professional and technical skills, increasingly at higher levels, by helping businesses to innovate; and supporting those with low or no qualifications, or who have other barriers to learning, through social inclusion programmes aimed at providing them with the skills and qualifications needed to find employment and to become economically active.

The College Development Plan outlines the planned provision, ranging from entry level – level 6, which will strengthen and enhance the skills profile within our region, supporting learners to reach their full potential as active citizens and leaders in local industry. This plan outlines the operational targets that the College has set for 2023-2024.

South West College continues to progress an organisational change programme and in August 2023 reached a significant milestone completing a whole college realignment. The new three Directorate structure places curriculum delivery at the core of the College with wrap around support provided by the Directorates of Development and Support and Corporate Services. As part of the organisational change process, the College has recently launched an updated vision, mission, and values to reflect its commitment to inspire, promote and empower lifelong learning for the people of the region, working in partnership with our local employers and industry.

**Figure 1 – South West College Vision, Mission and Values**



The College is committed to strengthening the partnership with the communities we serve to provide citizens from across the region with lifelong high quality, full and part time learning opportunities; whilst also maintaining alignment between our curriculum provision and services and the needs of industry. In addition, enhancing the energy efficiency of the college estate and developing and delivering green sustainability skills is increasingly important.

South West College's comprehensive industry aligned offering will attract 10,709 learners in 2023/24. The College footprint covers the council districts of Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh, a rural region with a combined population of 268,000<sup>1</sup>. Economic inactivity remains a persistent issue for the region as well as low qualification attainment. In Fermanagh and Omagh and Mid Ulster the rate of the working-age population holding no formal qualifications remains high at 14.6%, and 16.1% respectively, above the NI average of 13.6%<sup>2</sup>. It is against this backdrop that the College prioritises targeted social inclusion and employability initiatives as the initial steps on a pathway where all learners can enter at their level and progress through a range of professional and technical education options leading to Foundation and Honours Degrees.

Whilst the region is challenged by pockets of low qualification attainment and economic inactivity, it is also home to a significant industrial base including the Mid Ulster Manufacturing cluster which employs 22,500<sup>3</sup> people, almost twice as many people as is the case in any other council region. Health and social care, construction and retail, remain economically important sectors of the regional economy. The strength of the industrial base and desire for local companies to secure talent alongside the College's commitment to co-designing and delivering industry aligned provision is recognised in the strength of our ApprenticeshipsNI and Higher Level Apprenticeship (HLA) recruitment which will increase to 1,929 individuals in the 2023/24 year. College and industry engagement is well-developed. Our Get Engineering Careers and the Apprentice Connect initiatives were attended by almost 100 local companies in 2022- 2023. The focus in 2023-2024 is to further enhance alignment between the College provision and the evolving needs of industry, building on the progress made to date and the solid foundations that exist.

Low productivity and under investment in research & innovation remain challenges for industry within the region. The College has aligned its resources to addressing the twin challenges of low levels of Productivity and reduced spend on Research and Innovation, targeting an expansion of 19% in the number of businesses supported to undertake innovation activities and increasing the up and reskilling opportunities provided through Skills Focus.

A Strategic Alliance was formed in early 2023 between North West Regional College, South West College, and Northern Regional College. This is based on the strong alignment of the respective colleges in terms of ethos, scale, geography, industry, and community connectivity. The Alliance was approved by the respective Governing Bodies. The overall aim of the Strategic Alliance is to develop a strategic approach to curriculum development and delivery; to deliver standardised patterns of delivery including remote delivery options; to address duplication and further create and strengthen existing pathways for progression in line with the 10X Strategy.

<sup>1</sup> NISRA (2022) MID-2022 Population Estimates LGD

<sup>2</sup> NISRA (2022) Labour Market Structure by district council area

<sup>3</sup> UUEPC (2020) Sub-Regional Skills Barometer 2019

The programme of activities are being taken forward through a set of workstreams. Geographically the three Colleges cover a substantive part of Northern Ireland from Enniskillen to Newtownabbey and representing nearly 42% of all enrolments in the FE sector in 2021/22, working with over 28,252 individual students, and 760 businesses in our areas (Figure 2).

**Figure 2 – Strategic Alliance Colleges Statistics**



South West College has recovered well following the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in terms of enrolment figures with enrolments totalling 19,004 (CDR October 2023) for 2022/23. With increasing budgetary pressures across the sector and with no NI Executive currently in place to enable financial planning beyond the 2023/34 academic year, the College has had to make adjustments to address financial pressures, and this is reflected in the reduced curriculum offer and anticipated corresponding contraction in enrolments and student numbers in 2023/24. There are however, increases noted in key areas including Higher Level Apprenticeships, Essential Skills, and Further Education (FE) full-time, indicative of the different pathways available to support learners already in, or ultimately into, employment.

This College Development Plan sets out the aims and key priorities for the College for 2023/24 aligned with the strategic priorities of DfE and endorsed by our Governing Body. The College will strive to deliver these priorities, working together with our staff and students, DfE, the wider FE sector, and our industry stakeholders.

## 2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### EXECUTIVE’S DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT (PFG) OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Of the nine strategic outcomes included in the PFG’s draft Outcomes Framework, the College supports the following draft outcomes:

- We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.
- Our children and young people have the best start in life.
- Everyone can reach their potential.
- Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral.

### STRATEGIES / PRIORITIES / POLICIES

The College is a key delivery partner in taking forward:

DfE’s - [10X Economy](#), [Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland - Skills for a 10X Economy](#), [10x Delivery Plan 2023/24](#) [Trade and Investment for a 10X Economy](#), and [Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland – The Path to Net Zero Energy](#)

### REVIEW OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION DELIVERY MODEL

**The Department for the Economy agreed the following priorities for the FE sector:**

1. Improve the value for money provided by the sector through increasing enrolments and reducing costs;
2. Ensure the FE sector is more clearly focused on delivering against the Department’s objectives; and
3. Ensure the FE sector has the necessary capacity and agility to respond to the changes in the economic context.

### 3. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE / POSITION

**Table 1 - 2023/24 Forecast Position**

The table below sets out the College's resource and capital requirements of £1 million and resource requirements of **££32,217k** (totalling **£33,217k**).

	PROGRAMME / ACTIVITY					
	Further Education	Higher Education	Apprenticeships / Traineeships	Business Development	Social Inclusion	Other
	All Levels up to Level 3 not under any of the succeeding categories	Level 4-6	Programmes up to Level 3 including AppsNI; Traineeships; Skills for Life and Work; TfS	InnovateUs; Skills Focus; Assured Skills Academies; Flexible Skills; International Programmes; Innovation Voucher Scheme	Access NI; Essential Skills; ESOL; College Connect; Skill Up; NI Prisons Service; VEP; Princes Trust; UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Catering, hair, and beauty etc.
Direct Teaching Costs - Pay	5,696	2,922	5,023	41	1,616	0
Direct Teaching Costs - Non-Pay	325	167	287	40	92	0
Non-Direct Costs*	8,817	4,726	8,243	1,403	3,974	158
<b>Total Delivery Cost</b>	<b>14,838</b>	<b>7,815</b>	<b>13,553</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>5,682</b>	<b>158</b>
Non-Grant in Aid Income	1,000	3,498	4,622	613	1,188	392
<b>Net Requirement</b>	<b>13,838</b>	<b>4,317</b>	<b>8,931</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>4,494</b>	<b>-234</b>

\* Includes total support service/non-front-line activity overheads apportioned based on delivery hours.

<b>TOTAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENT (£000's)</b>	<b>£32,217k</b>
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Capital Expenditure	1,000
Capital Receipts	-
<b>Net Capital Requirement (£000's)</b>	<b>1,000</b>

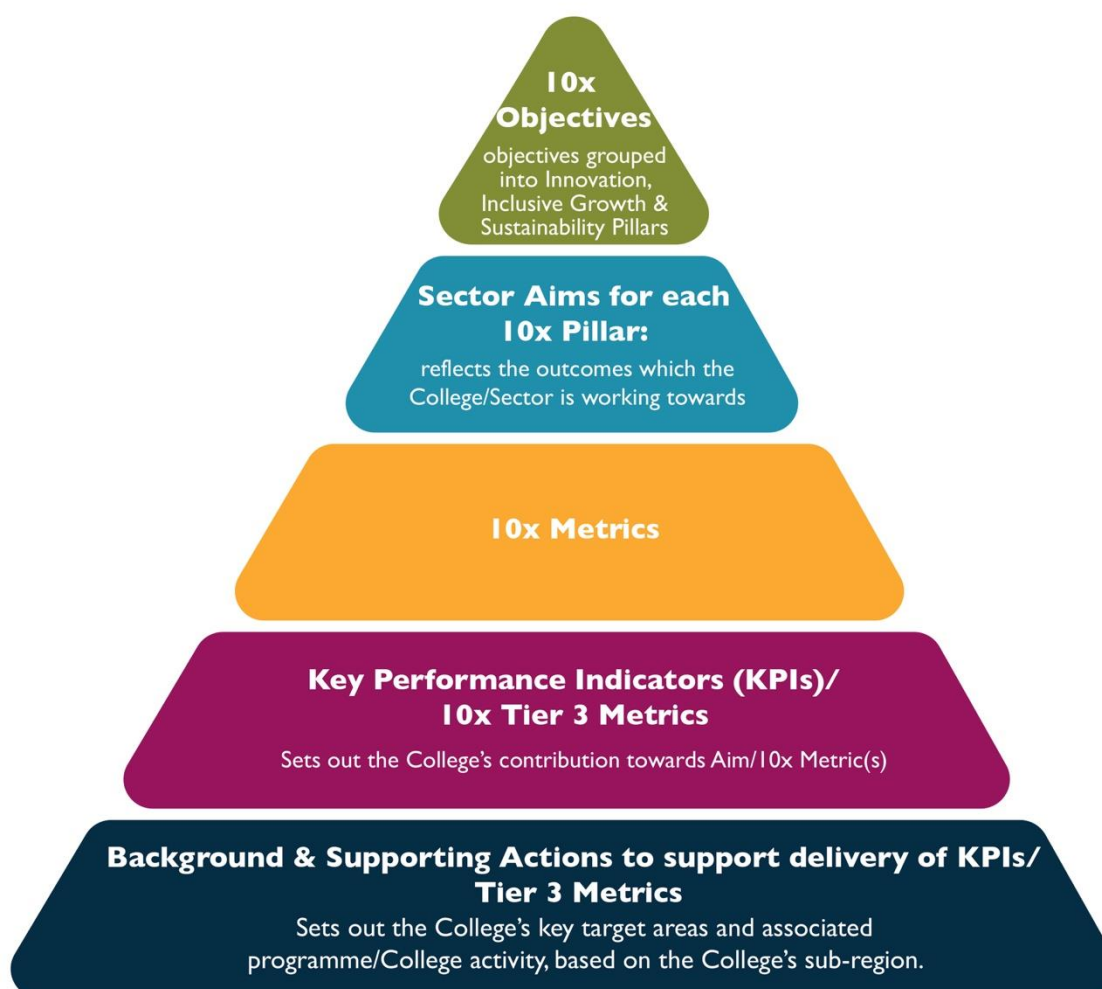


## 4. 2023/24 COLLEGE PLANNED DELIVERY

### a. SETTING THE SCENE

In support of the Strategic Context, the College takes into account the College profile and Sub-regional Operating Context to prioritise resource utilisation to areas of greatest need.

To align with 10x Economy, the College Planned Delivery has been set out to show the College's contribution to 10x as follows:



In-year College Development Plan Progress Reports tracking **'how well'** the College is performing will be provided to the Department for the Economy. The Department for the Economy will publish reports on performance against 10x objectives demonstrating if **'anyone is better off'**, along with progress reports on the 10x delivery plan 2023/24.



**5**  
CAMPUSES

**SWC**  
SOUTH WEST COLLEGE  
2023-2024

**616**

EMPLOYEES  
excluding part-time lecturers



Delivering **98**  
Innovative based projects

## INNOVATION

Tailored Training to  
**145** businesses

**11,009** individuals  
participating in provision generating  
**17,871** enrolments

## INCLUSIVE GROWTH

**2,758**  
Individuals on training  
programmes

**70%** of staff  
undertaking training to better  
understand climate change

## SUSTAINABILITY

**£200,000**  
invested to improve /  
maintain energy efficiency

## Priorities 2023-2024



Strengthen Partnerships  
with community and further  
align curriculum provision and  
services with  
industry needs



Embedding Pathways;  
Developing a Culture of Lifelong  
Learning, Ensuring Local Access  
to  
Higher Order Skills,  
including Digital Skills



Developing staff  
on green sustainability skills  
and improve the energy  
efficiency of college estate

Leading the Engineering and  
Advanced Manufacturing Hub



Providing Development  
opportunities for a Population of

**268,000**

across Fermanagh, Omagh &  
Mid Ulster

Supporting local companies  
with skills & research &  
development to enhance  
productivity & increase wages



Supporting **7,560**  
individuals to move into or  
closer to employment via  
social inclusion measures

Providing opportunities for

**300**

students to boost their  
confidence, motivation and  
transversal skills through  
participation in Turing and skills  
competitions

Supporting **1,415**  
individuals with local  
access to industry aligned  
Higher Education



Promoting engagement in  
ApprenticeshipNI and  
Higher-Level Apprenticeships  
via GET Engineering &  
Apprentice Connect

**b. COLLEGE PROFILE FOR 2023/24**

South West College is a vibrant, progressive college which services the counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone and surrounding areas. The College operates across the four major towns in the region; Omagh, Dungannon, Cookstown and Enniskillen, delivering high quality professional and technical education supporting student growth and development; and meeting the needs of our community and local industry. The College footprint covers the council districts of Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh, a rural region, which is home to a progressive industrial base. The region has a combined population of 268,000<sup>4</sup>. The largest employment sector within the region is manufacturing employing 22,500 workers. This accounts for 19% of the region’s total employment and 24% of all manufacturing jobs in Northern Ireland, making Mid Ulster the manufacturing centre of Northern Ireland<sup>5</sup>. In addition, retail, health and social care and construction remain economically important sectors of the regional economy.

**Figure 3 – South West College Campus Locations**



**CAMPUS PROFILE**

The College estate is modern and continues to evolve to maintain alignment with the needs of industry and our students. The College’s commitment to sustainability is exemplified by the Erne Campus in Enniskillen, which having attained PassivHaus Premium energy certification and, alongside the Technology and Skills Centre Enniskillen (home to the Centre Renewable Energy Sustainable

<sup>4</sup> NISRA (2022) MID-2022 Population Estimates LGD  
<sup>5</sup> UUEPEC (2020) Sub Regional Skills Barometer 2019

Technologies CREST), acts as a key driver for the College’s sustainability curriculum including PassivHaus Designer and Tradesperson.

Our Omagh campus supports a significant apprenticeship provision with specialisms in automotive and agricultural machinery repair, whilst also providing strong Further Education provision in business and IT. With well-established pathways into full and part-time Higher Education, the College provides local industry with a pipeline of high achieving new entrants and a range of channels to upskill existing employees.

The College’s campuses in Mid Ulster; ie Dungannon and Cookstown, provide a wide range of engineering/advanced manufacturing programmes, with 600 students enrolled during 2023/24 in this provision which is aligned with the progressive industrial cluster in this region. The Dungannon Campus and the Industrial Training Facility in Cookstown support a range of advanced manufacturing pathways across levels 1 - 6; which are skills based and technical. Maintaining alignment with the evolving needs of the sector is resource intensive with DfE capital funding in 22/23 totalling £300,000 supporting investment to create the Automation, Robotics and Connectivity centre (ARC) at the Dungannon Campus.

## STAFFING PROFILE

The delivery of high quality professional and technical education to align with industry and communities across the region is underpinned by a committed staff body. In 2022/23, South West College employed an average number of 620 permanent full-time equivalent (FTEs) staff members on a full and part-time basis; with 305 (49%) on the lecturing side and 315 (51%), delivering a range of business support services. Of the 616 staff (which excludes part-time lecturers) employed as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023, the College had a gender ratio of two to one with 35% male and 65% female (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Staff Gender Breakdown

### STAFF COMPOSITION | 31 JULY 2023



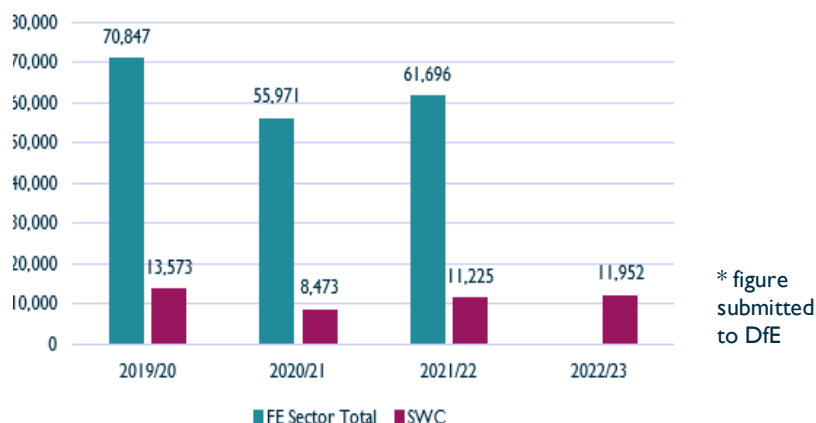
## STUDENT PROFILE

The Further Education sector is central to the success of the Northern Ireland economy through its ability to support the development of a highly skilled and productive workforce; whilst also engaging with those citizens who are most distant from the labour market to support their development and movement into, or towards employment. Whilst student numbers were impacted by the Covid pandemic, contracting from 13,573 individuals in 19/20 (representing 19.16% as a percentage of the sector) to 8,473 in 20/21 (15.14% of the sector), the trend has been towards pre-pandemic levels (Figure 5) with



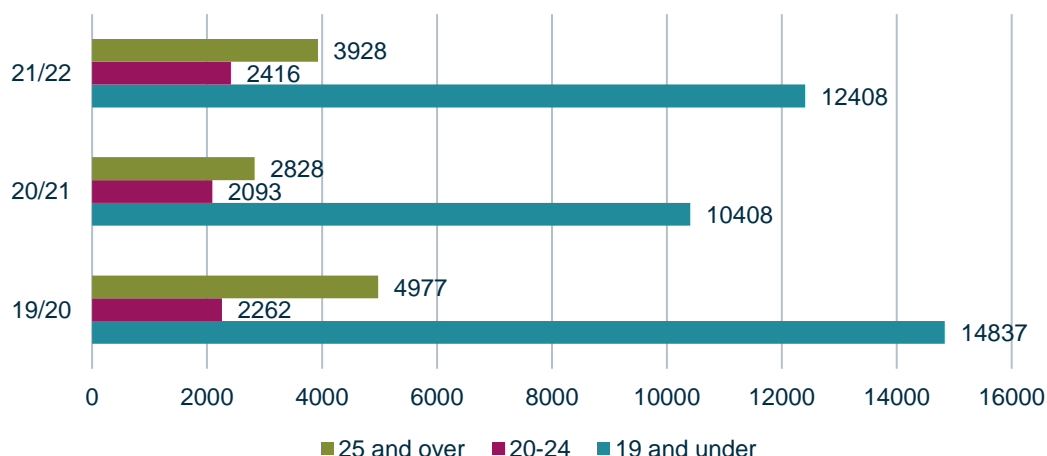
11,225 students (18.19% of the overall sector) enrolling in 21/22<sup>6</sup>. Whilst a modest decrease is predicted in 2023/24, recovery post pandemic is still evident.

**Figures 5– SWC Students v Sector 2019/20 - 2022/23**



In terms of the age demographics of our student population, the majority of students are in the post-secondary age group of 19 years old and under (Figure 6); representing 66.1% of all South West College enrolments in 2021/2022<sup>7</sup>. Whilst there has been an overall growth in all age groups, the challenge moving forward will be to increase enrolments in the 20-24, and 25 and over categories, in line with the 10X Lifelong Learning priority with a focus on encouraging individuals to re-engage with education and availing of opportunities to upskill and reskill, with the aim of changing the overall skills profile in our region.

**Figure 6 – SWC Enrolments by Student Age**



Despite increasing competition and budgetary pressures, in the academic year of 2021/22, South West College had 2,636 Full Time (FT) enrolments and 16,127 Part Time (PT) enrolments reflecting our proactive marketing drive and recruitment exercises (Figure 7 below) and consistently maintaining an

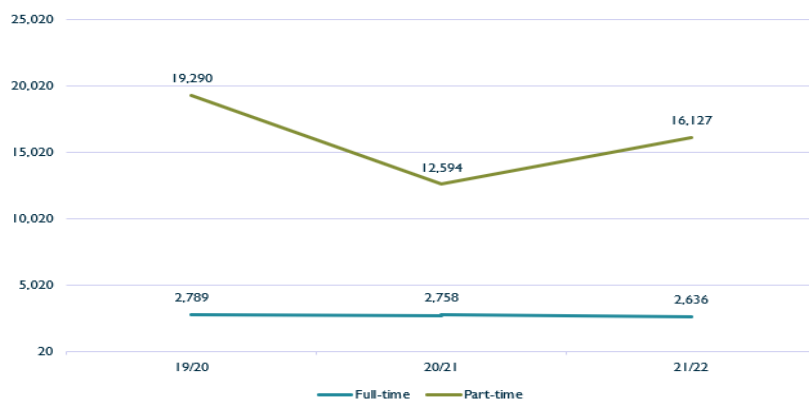
<sup>6</sup> DfE (2023) Further Education Sector Activity in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22

<sup>7</sup> DfE (2023) Further Education Sector Activity in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22



FE market share of approximately 11% of all FT and 17% of PT sector enrolments. This is against an overall sector picture of declining enrolments with FT enrolments decreasing from 25,145 in 2017/18 to 22,507 in 2021/22 and PT enrolments decreasing from 130,365 to 88,326 during the same period. Following a dip in PT enrolments during the Covid to 12,594, our part-time provision continues to grow

to pre-pandemic levels with 16,127 PT enrolments in 2021/22<sup>8</sup>.



**Figure 7 – FE Sector Enrolments by Mode of Attendance 2019/20– 2021/22**

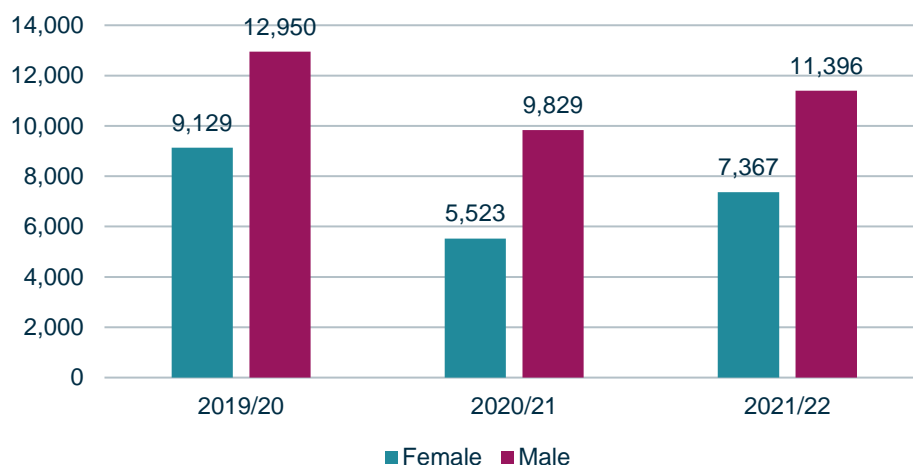
Of the 17,808 enrolments recorded in 21/22 CDR return, 7,910 or 44% were enrolled in Priority Skills Sector Areas (PSSA) related subjects, predominantly from the areas of Construction (2,218), Engineering (1,951) and Finance (2,491) demonstrating alignment with the regional industrial profile and the demand for skilled labour to resource the projected workforce job growth in priority sectors.

The significant male representation in the Construction and Engineering sectors is indicative of the college student gender profile. The large cohorts of construction, engineering and automotive apprentices is reflected in the College’s student gender breakdown, with 11,396 (or 61%) of the 18,763 enrolments being male (Figure 8)<sup>9</sup>. During the 2023/24 year, the College will be seeking to increase the number of women participating in narrow STEM related subjects through initiatives including the targeted marketing of welding academies and the Engineering Hub women into industry initiative.

**Figure 8 - Breakdown of South West College Enrolments by Gender**

<sup>8</sup> DfE (2023) Further Education Sector Activity in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22

<sup>9</sup> DfE (2023) Further Education Sector Activity in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22



South West College continues to provide a positive learning environment for our students. Analysis of the College’s 2023 FE Leavers Survey provides positive feedback from students on their experiences at the College. A total of 95% of students surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that they were learning new skills and abilities and 96% of students surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that they believed the College is committed to promoting an inclusive learning environment.

The College continues to perform well within the FE sector, with our retention rate the second highest in the sector in 2021/22 at 90.9% and our retention, achievement and success rates all increasing between 2018/19 and 2021/22, with the College’s overall success rate increasing by over 2% from 74.6% (2018/19) to 76.8% (2021/22). Our success rate in 2021/22 was on par with the sector in both FE (79.6%) and HE (80.3%) against a sector average of FE (81.0%) and HE (83.2%)<sup>10</sup>.

**Table 2 – SWC Performance Rates Final Year Regulated Enrolments 2018/19 to 2021/22**

SWC - Overall	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Retention	90.4%	92.1%	90.6%	90.9%
Achievement	82.5%	82.3%	82.8%	84.4%
Success	74.6%	75.8%	75.0%	76.8%

Positive outcomes not only increase the employability of our students, they also support businesses through the provision of a highly skilled workforce. The College is embedded in the region collaborating with Government Departments, Councils, local industry, and the Community and Voluntary sectors to enhance the skills and employability profile of local citizens. The College partners with local industry to deliver apprenticeships which, during 2022/23, equated to 1,758 apprentices including 442 at higher levels (level 4 and above), employed by local companies whilst participating in college programmes.

<sup>10</sup> DfE (2023) Further Education Sector Activity in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22

The 2023/24 intake is predicted to increase by 171 or 9% on 2022/23 and is driven by the College’s industry engagement strategy including the GET Engineering and Apprentices Connect initiatives.

South West College is a community college, where the community is the region’s citizens and industry. The College has developed a very comprehensive upskilling and reskilling offer supported via progressive targeted social inclusion programmes (Going Places, Youthscape and SUSE) and our Essential Skills offer, which facilitates re-entry to education and opens up progression. A wide range of part-time study options are available, many funded through Skills Focus and Skill Up, supporting unemployed citizens into work and providing employees with the skills to progress in employment.

Between 2018-2022, the College led a consortium consisting of Donegal Youth Service and TIDES Training to deliver the Peace IV funded Youthscape programme, supporting 800 disengaged young people across the counties of Fermanagh, Tyrone, and Donegal. The College has been successful in a submission to PeacePlus for a continuation of Youthscape to support a further 1,200 participants during 2024-2028. In addition, the College is currently leading the development of three additional PeacePlus funding applications with 16 partner organisations to support the development of Green Skills, Sustainability, and Community Innovation. The College has also built a partnership with statutory, community and voluntary partners (Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP), First Step Woman’s Centre (FSWC), and Fermanagh Rural Community Initiative (FRCI)) to deliver the Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP).

Embedding a skills-culture across all professional and technical areas is a key focus for the College. In 2022/23; 25 staff were appointed as Skills Champions, supporting the development and delivery of 21 internal skills competitions where 258 young people honed their skills. The strength of the skills agenda in South West College was evident in 61 students being selected to participate in the NI finals in 2023, with 8 participants advancing to represent Northern Ireland at the UK skills competition. Participation in skills competitions, both internally and at a sectoral level, enhances the participants’ skills, motivation, and self-esteem—all essential attributes for a thriving 10X Economy.

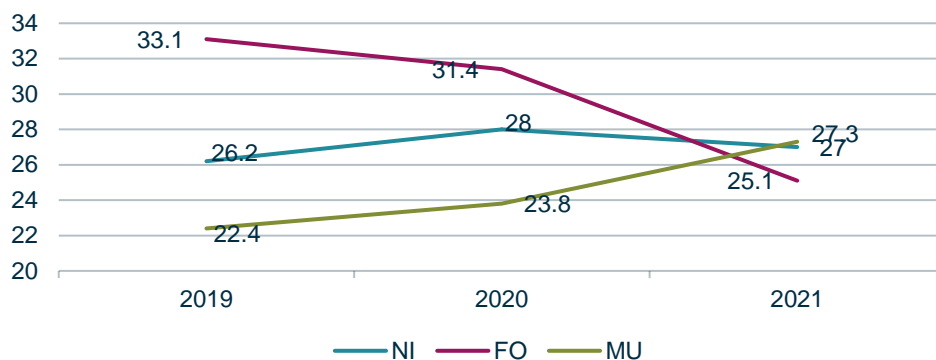
### **c. SUB-REGIONAL OPERATING CONTEXT POPULATION PROFILE**

Whilst this region is recognised as entrepreneurial, there remains significant challenges to industry. Of the 18,115 businesses in the area, the majority fall under the classification of micro-businesses, employing fewer than 10 individuals<sup>11</sup>. Mid Ulster stands out as one of the most entrepreneurial areas in Northern Ireland, boasting the highest concentration of businesses outside of Belfast, driven by the presence of a cluster of high-growth manufacturing businesses. However, economic inactivity remains a persistent issue for the region with some 43,000 individuals presenting as economically inactive (NISRA 2022 Labour Force Survey), posing a long-term challenge for the local economy. Although the trend is downward in Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, it is increasing in Mid Ulster Council, from 23.8% to 27.3%, in 2021 (Figure 9)<sup>12</sup>.

**Figure 9 – Economic Inactivity Rates ( % )**

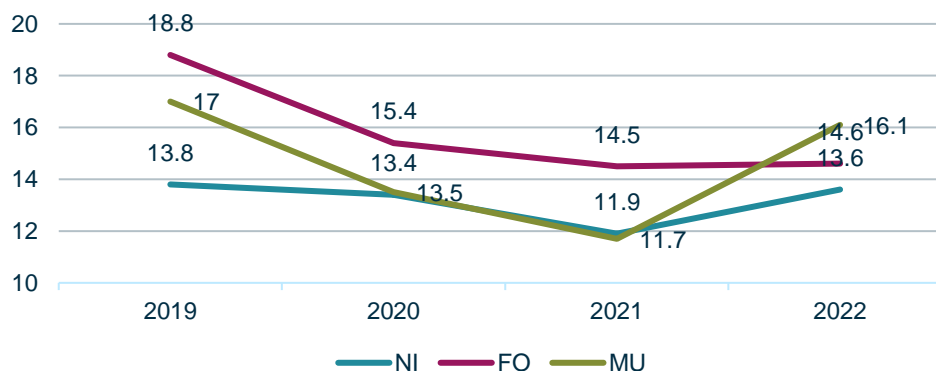
<sup>11</sup> IDBR (2023) Northern Ireland Business 2023

<sup>12</sup> NISRA (2021) Labour Market Status – sub population breakdowns, NI



Both Council areas are further impacted by low qualification attainment rates, with the rate of the working-age population in the Fermanagh and Omagh holding no formal qualifications remaining stubbornly high at 14.6%, above the NI average of 13.6% (Figure 10). The rate in Mid Ulster has increased to 16.1%, well above the NI average. There is considerable effort required to address those challenges and to improve the employability and skill sets of local citizens. The region is also challenged in respect of higher-level qualification attainment; Fermanagh and Omagh at 29.8% and Mid Ulster achieving 34.1%, both below the NI average<sup>13</sup>.

**Figure 10 – Percentage of the Working-age Population Holding no Formal Qualifications**

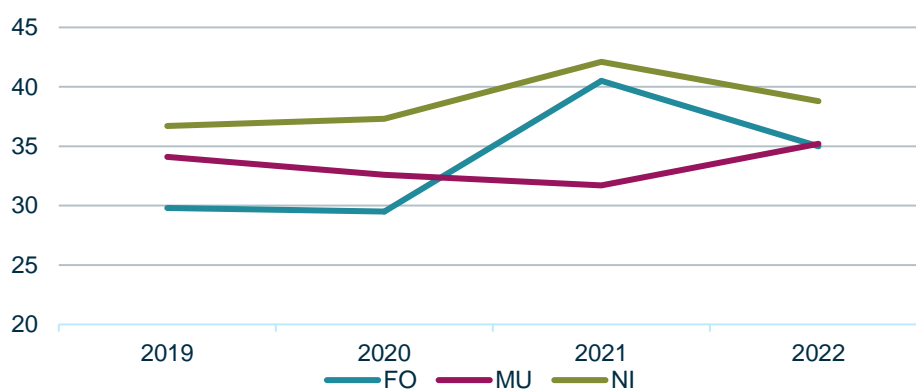


The current imbalance in the labour market, characterized by an oversupply of low-level skills and a shortage of mid and high-level skills, does not align with future demand. It is crucial to minimize the number of people with low-level qualifications to better support upcoming skills needs. Presently, a quarter (25%) of the employed population hold qualifications below NQF level 2. However, the NI Skills Barometer forecasts a significant decrease in the future demand for employees with low-level qualifications (below NQF level 2) to 11%. Simultaneously, there is a scarcity of mid-level skills (NQF level 3-5) due to a decline in individuals pursuing qualifications at this level and subsequently entering the labour market. In 2022, 35% of the population of Fermanagh and Omagh and 35.2% of Mid Ulster held qualifications at RQF level 4 and above, against a NI average of 38.8% (Figure 11)<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> NISRA (2023) Labour market status by LGD

<sup>14</sup> NISRA (2023) Labour market status by LGD

**Figure 11 Labour Market Structure and Qualification Level by District Council Area, ages 16 to 64 Achieved RQF Level 4 and above**



The expected profile of future demand also emphasises a greater need for graduates compared to the current skills inventory. According to the latest Sub-Regional Skills Barometer<sup>15</sup>, 22% of employed individuals possess NQF level 6+ (HE) qualifications, compared to a forecasted 29% required in the coming decade. Higher Education emerges as the predominant choice for school leavers, as the education system succeeds in retaining young individuals for an extended duration, witnessing higher proportions progressing to Higher Education (HE) institutes. The most recent school leavers' survey indicates that in Mid Ulster 24.7 % and in Fermanagh and Omagh 30.1% of leavers continued to an institute of Further Education, while between 44% and 48% pursued university education<sup>16</sup>. The trend of a diminishing proportion of leavers opting for institutes of Further Education is evident in both districts, mirroring a broader trend across Northern Ireland, which sees high achieving young people moving to the east of the province or to UK based universities to undertake Higher Education.

Enhancing opportunities for young individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds is a key focus for the College. The majority of regulated enrolments come from students residing in highly deprived areas, with 49.5% of those in the 2021/22 academic year belonging to the lowest 2 quintiles, above the sector average of 44.9%<sup>17</sup>.

The College remains committed to implementing interventions aimed at enhancing basic literacy and numeracy skills, addressing social inequities, and removing barriers, especially in the more deprived areas of the region. South West College is also becoming more diverse learning environment reflective of the wider demographical change in the region, with people migrating to the area for work including in the food processing and manufacturing industry. The College offers a range of supports to those students where language barriers may present and provides English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) across all campuses, with 250 enrolments in 2023/24 currently and with daytime and evening options to meet identified needs. In addition, the College-led REAP programme includes a specific initiative for migrants delivered by FSWC.

<sup>15</sup> UUEPC (2020) Sub-Regional Skills Barometer 2019

<sup>16</sup> Department of Education (2023) School Leavers – 2021/22 – Qualifications and Destinations of Northern Ireland School Leavers

<sup>17</sup> DfE (2023) Further Education Sector Activity in Northern Ireland 2017/18 to 2021/22



## INDUSTRY PROFILE

The UU Sub Regional Skills Barometer Report West<sup>18</sup> – Fermanagh Omagh and Mid Ulster, provides an analysis of the projections in a high growth scenario. Significant employment sectors such as manufacturing, (3,070), professional scientific and technical (1700) and construction (1,530) are expected to contribute to the largest increase in jobs between 2017 and 2027 in absolute terms, with health and social care (1,200) also a significant contributor. According to this report, the health, public services, and care sector accounts for the largest demand in mid-level skills at NQF level 4 -5 in the region (22%), followed by engineering and manufacturing technologies (13%) and business, administration, finance, and law (13%). This mid-level skills demand is largely mirrored in high levels of employment by those sectors in both districts. In 2021, the top four industries in terms of employment (aged 16 to 64) in the local government districts of Fermanagh and Omagh and Mid Ulster were:(employment numbers are in brackets):

- Public Admin, Education and Health (35,000).
- Manufacturing (22,000).
- Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants (17,000); and
- Construction (14,000).

Against that backdrop, the College offers a range of level 4 and level 5 qualifications in response to these predicted high growth sectors in areas such as Healthcare Practice, Health and Social Care, Engineering with Specialisms (Manufacturing Engineering and Mechatronics), Building Services with Sustainable Energy and Construction Engineering with Surveying. Significant continued support will be required from the College, and this is reflected in the College's curriculum offer up to level 6 and delivered on a mainstream basis or through the apprenticeship pathway.

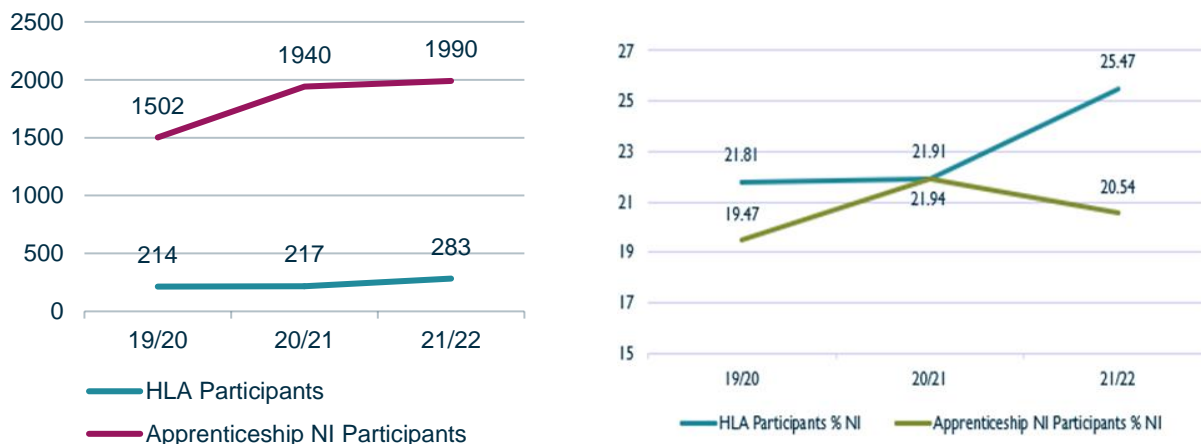
Industry remains talent hungry with a consistent demand for both ApprenticeshipNI and Higher Level Apprenticeship (HLA) provision. Mid Ulster stands out as one of the top-performing regions, showcasing a robust participation in apprenticeships, a reflection of the region's industrial base and the corresponding demand. The Colleges apprenticeship numbers have grown from 1716 in 2019/20 to 2,273 in 2021/22<sup>19</sup>. HLAs, in particular, have grown in popularity and this is reflected across Northern Ireland and in Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh LDG (the West) where the percentage share has increased from 21.81% to 25.47% (Figure 12)<sup>20</sup>. This growth is mirrored in the College's apprenticeship pathways with anticipated growth in HLA students from 442 (2022/23) to 500 (2023/24) and 1316 (2022/23) to 1429 (2023/24) in terms of ApprenticeshipsNI participants.

<sup>18</sup> UUEPC (2020) Sub-Regional Skills Barometer 2019

<sup>19</sup> DfE (2023) ApprenticeshipsNI statistical bulletin 2013-2022

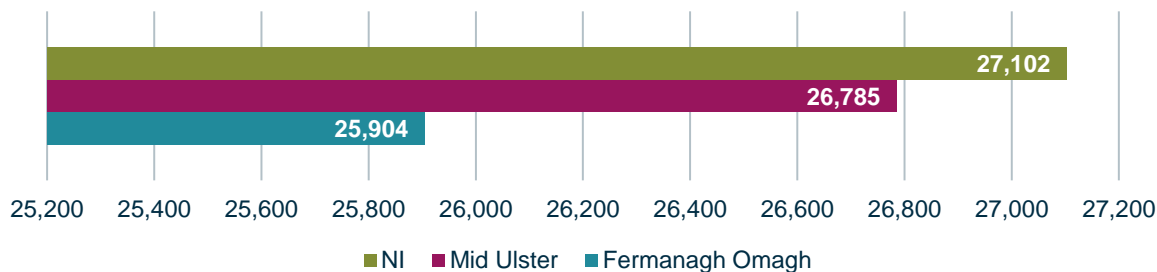
<sup>20</sup> DfE (2023) Higher Level Apprenticeship at NI FE Colleges and CAFRE 2017/18 – 2021-22

**Figure 12 – Annual Growth on HLA and ApprenticeshipNI in the West & the West as a Percentage of NI**



Despite the high level of industrial growth and the percentage of working-age adults in employment in both Fermanagh and Omagh (72.1%) and Mid Ulster (70.3%) being above the NI average of 70.2%<sup>21</sup>, the median wage levels remain low in comparison to the rest of Northern Ireland. An analysis of the median wage levels for the two Local Government Districts that span the college catchment area illustrates this, with a considerable differentiation noted in Fermanagh and Omagh (Figure 13).

**Figure 13 Median Wage Levels**



Productivity levels also pose a significant challenge, particularly in Fermanagh and Omagh, where productivity is 43% below the UK average—the lowest in Northern Ireland<sup>22</sup>. Recognizing that productivity is a crucial driver of economic growth, addressing this gap holds the potential to facilitate increased wealth creation, enhance competitiveness, and elevate wage levels. This transformation would render the region more appealing as a place to live and work and has the potential to grow inward investment.

In 2021, a total of £1.1billion<sup>23</sup> was allocated to Research and Development (R&D) by businesses, HE institutions, and government in Northern Ireland. Despite this growth, innovation activity in Northern Ireland lags behind all other UK regions. Notably, nearly 40% of the total Business Expenditure on R&D (BERD) was attributed to companies in Belfast, while Mid Ulster and Fermanagh & Omagh reported

<sup>21</sup> NISRA (2023) Employee earnings in NI 2023  
<sup>22</sup> ONS (2019) Regional and sub-regional productivity in the UK  
<sup>23</sup> NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland Research & Development Survey 2021

significantly lower levels of expenditure at 10% and 4%, respectively<sup>24</sup>. To foster a more robust environment for R&D, the region must enhance its capacity and capability, translating innovation inputs into tangible outputs. This strategic shift is essential to support the vision of a 10X Economy, aimed at promoting innovation and fostering greater prosperity.

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<sup>24</sup> NISRA (2021) Research and Development Activity in Northern Ireland Findings from the 2020 Northern Ireland Research and Development Survey

#### d. 2023/24 PLANNED ACTIVITY

INNOVATION	
AIM – 1	To increase the number of businesses in Northern Ireland engaging in innovation activities.
10X METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of R&amp;D companies</li> <li>• R&amp;D companies by (employee) size, ownership, location, sector</li> <li>• FTE of R&amp;D workforce (Business)</li> <li>• Number of Innovation Driven Enterprises (IDEs) (subject to data availability)</li> <li>• Number of innovative active firms</li> <li>• Innovation accreditation</li> </ul>
KPI 1.1	To deliver 98 no. innovation-based projects in SMEs in the 2023/24 financial year.
<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Despite a total investment of £1.1billion being allocated to Research &amp; Development (R&amp;D) in Northern Ireland, this region continues to lag behind all other UK regions. In addition, Fermanagh and Tyrone trail other parts of Northern Ireland with just 10% of R&amp;D expenditure reported in Mid Ulster and 4% in Fermanagh &amp; Omagh. To foster a more robust environment for R&amp;D, the region must enhance its capacity and capability, translating innovation inputs into tangible outputs. This strategic shift is essential to support the vision of a 10X Economy, aimed at promoting innovation and fostering greater prosperity.</p> <p>The College harnesses a range of programmes to realise the aim of increasing the number of businesses engaging in innovation activities: InnovateUs, Innovation Vouchers, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and Innovation Boost (formerly Fusion). These programmes enhance company R&amp;D capabilities and foster the growth of Innovation Driven Enterprises and innovative active firms, contributing to innovation accreditation.</p> <p>To address the low levels of BERD in Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh, the College is committed to enhancing the innovation capacity of local companies. During the 2023 college realignment, a 17 strong refreshed Business Industry Services (BIS) team was introduced. This newly constituted team will build on the success of the 2022-2023 year when 90 innovation projects were delivered. College innovation support is aligned with 10X focusing on the sustainability, agri-tech, and advanced manufacturing sectors, and underpinned by support to embed digital technology.</p> <p>The College is well equipped with modern industry standard equipment, which provides the scope to engage in a range of industry projects, broadening the reach and attractiveness to industry. Examples include the use of biomass pelletising equipment at CREST, stress testing equipment in the engineering centre in Dungannon and 3D Printing equipment in the IDEA Centre Omagh. South West College, through its entrepreneurship hub at the Workhouse Enniskillen, is driving innovation in collaboration with key stakeholders including the Council, Invest NI, Catalyst and CynestX.</p>	

**Planned Activity:**

Through the InnovateUs Programme, Innovation Boost, Business Explorer and Innovation Vouchers, South West College will deliver 98 innovation-based projects with SMEs in 2023/24 attracting a budget of £454,000, an increase of 8 projects and £43,000 on 2022/23. Growth in 2023/24 will be driven through enhanced engagement with industry via the Captains of Industry initiative. During 2023/24 the BIS team have scheduled six thematic workshops for industry: Digital Marketing, AI, 3D Metal Printing, Bio Energy, Retrofitting and Carbon Accounting. Staff will engage with attending employers to promote Innovation programmes to support industry and enhance innovation.

**Table 3 – Planned Innovation Based Projects in 2023/24**

<b>Planned Activity 23/24</b>		
<b>Programme</b>	<b>Innovation Projects</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>InnovateUs Programme</b>	82	£350,000
<b>Innovation Voucher</b>	10	£50,000
<b>Business Explorer</b>	3	£18,000
<b>Innovation Boost</b>	3	£36,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>£454,000</b>

As the Innovation accreditation is now mandatory for Innovation Vouchers, it is intended that the College will support five businesses through this accreditation. Key areas of delivery will be aligned to the 10X Strategy in Sustainability, Sustainable construction, Advanced manufacturing and Engineering and Digital Technologies.



INNOVATION	
AIM - 2	<b>To meet the skills needs of businesses in Northern Ireland to support increased business productivity and growth.</b>
10X METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>STEM graduates</li> <li>Number of R&amp;D companies</li> <li>R&amp;D companies by (employee) size, ownership, location, sector</li> <li>FTE of R&amp;D workforce (Business)</li> <li>Number of Innovation Driven Enterprises (IDEs) (subject to data availability)</li> <li>Number of innovative active firms</li> <li>Innovation accreditation</li> <li>High growth businesses</li> </ul>
KPI 2.1	<b>To deliver tailored training programmes to 145 no. of businesses in 2023/24 financial year.</b>
KPI 2.2	<b>To deliver 50% of tailored training courses at L2+ in Broad STEM related subject areas in 2023/24 financial year.</b>
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>The College delivered training to 117 businesses in 2022-2023 with 50% of courses delivered being in Broad STEM subjects. Courses delivered included: Level 4 Cert in Advanced Automotive Diagnostic Techniques, Level 2 Performing Engineering Operations, Level 3 Award in Electric/Hybrid Systems Repair, Lean Manufacturing-BIT Level 2, and Level 2 Hydraulics/Robotics.</p> <p>The BIS team all have industry engagement and recruitment targets, in support of the College's Lifelong Learning agenda. Progress against targets will be measured on a monthly basis. The BIS team will attend the annual Get Engineering careers fair and Apprentice Connect events and engage with approximately 100 companies to further understand their skills development needs and to market upskilling options available. BIS staff continue to engage with the local councils and Enterprise Centres in the region including participating in Enterprise week and through sector specific groups e.g. Hospitality and Tourism groups, to share our knowledge and expertise with industry and promote our Innovation and Skills Funded programmes.</p> <p>The College continues to collaborate with MEGA (an industry-led collaborative network to promote the Manufacturing and Engineering sectors in Mid Ulster) to deliver ILM Level 3 Mentoring via Skills Focus. This programme is delivered across the manufacturing sector to support those staff who will be inducting and managing apprentices in their organisations. There are a number of cohorts scheduled in 23/24, yielding approximately 30 enrolments. The Industrial Training Facility in Cookstown provides an industry aligned space for the delivery of welding programmes and staff will continue to collaborate with MEGA to organise welding programmes to address the need for training welders in the Mid Ulster Region.</p>	

**Planned Activity:**

**Table 4 – Planned Delivery of Tailored Training Programmes 2023/24**

<b>Planned Activity 23/24</b>			
	<b>No businesses/Students (FS)</b>	<b>% STEM</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Skills Focus</b>	140 businesses/ 180 Individuals	50%	£250,000
<b>SME Productivity Booster</b>	5 businesses	N/A – mentoring support	£15,000

South West College will deliver qualifications at level 2 and above to industry through the Skills Focus Programme, targeting 140 businesses located in the region, an increase of 23 on 2022-2023. Under the Skills Focus programme, 50% of the tailored training courses delivered at L2 and above will be in Broad STEM related subject areas. Delivery will be focused in key areas such as Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Sustainability/Green Technologies, and Leadership & Management. The area of Leadership & Management has rapidly grown since the Covid pandemic, and this is expected to continue.

SME Productivity Booster will be harnessed to boost productivity, focusing on innovation/creativity and skills including leadership, project planning, communication, entrepreneurship, and automation. The College plans to deliver 5 projects under the SME Productivity Booster programme with a budget of £15,000.

South West College is engaging with Industry via the Captains of Industry initiative. This concept focuses on securing innovation projects and marketing upskilling programmes, supporting the drive to increase the number of innovatively active firms.

**KPI 2.3** **To complete Two Academies in 2023/24 financial year.**

**Background:**

The College has very well developed and long-standing relationships with the manufacturing industry in Mid Ulster and engages proactively with MEGA to meet the skills needs of local companies. During the past 4 years the College has delivered 19 Assured Skills welding academies yielding 170 enrolments and supporting 155 people into employment.

**Planned Activity:**

There are two Assured Skills Academies in Welding scheduled in the 23/24 financial year with a budget of £85,000. One being trialled on a part time basis to aid recruitment levels and target a wider audience to include women returners. Cumulatively these two academies will support 24 individuals.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH	
AIM – 3	<p>Creating a culture of life-long learning - Providing access to FE<sup>25</sup> and HE in FE<sup>26</sup>, to those furthest away from the labour market and those with low or no formal qualifications.</p> <p>Encourage learners to progress to achieve higher industry relevant qualifications and employment.</p>
10X METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of the working age population with qualifications at Level 2 and above or Level 3 and above.</li> <li>• Economic inactivity</li> <li>• Proportion of population aged 25+ who have engaged in education or training in the last 13 weeks.</li> <li>• Proportion of the population (16+) with no digital skills.</li> <li>• Women in narrow STEM - proportion of enrolments in narrow STEM.</li> </ul>
KPI 3.1	The College expects to see a small reduction in overall individual activity from 11, 225 in 2021/22 to 11,009 in 2023/24, equating to 2%
KPI 3.2	To increase FE retention rates <sup>27</sup> from 90% in 2022-23 to 90.1% in 2023-24 academic year.
KPI 3.3	To increase FE achievement rates <sup>28</sup> from 88.1% in 2022-23 to 88.2% in 2023-24 academic year.
KPI 3.4	To increase HE in FE retention rates <sup>29</sup> from 89.7% in 2022-23 to 89.8% in 2023-24 academic year.
KPI 3.5	To increase HE in FE achievement rates <sup>30</sup> from 89.4% in 2022-23 to 89.5 in 2023-24 academic year.
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>Economic inactivity and low qualification attainment rates are issue for this region with approximately 43,000 individuals presenting as economically inactive. The number of those economically inactive is increasing in Mid Ulster Council (from 23.8% in 2020 to 27.3% in 2021), whilst Fermanagh and Omagh has 14.5% of its residents holding no formal qualifications, which is above the NI average of 11.9%. The College curriculum is shaped by industry engagement, via Industry Advisory Boards (IABs). The IAB for the Built Environment sector, includes 22 external industry professionals: Building Services Engineers, Construction Management and Surveyors collaborating to ensure that construction, M&amp;E, and energy related curriculum is aligned with current industry/business needs, ensuring that graduates emerge with an academic qualification and a skill set required by industry. The College maintains positive relationships</p>	

<sup>25</sup> Up to and including Level 3.

<sup>26</sup> At Level 4 and above.

<sup>27</sup> As Per the FE Sector Activity in Northern Ireland Bulletin: The percentage of final year regulated enrolments completed by students.

<sup>28</sup> As Per the FE Sector Activity in Northern Ireland Bulletin: The percentage of final year regulated enrolments completed by students who achieve a qualification.

<sup>29</sup> As per footnote 3 above.

<sup>30</sup> As per footnote 4 above.

with the MEGA network co-designing the content for six Assured Skills Welding Academies generating 55 enrolments in 2022-2023 and the SWC/MEGA Mentoring programme which attracted 23 participants in 22-23. Both initiatives are scheduled to run again in 23/24.

The continuing development of new apprenticeships to meet industry requirements remains a key focus and the College collaborated with 38 Dental practices including Portman Dental and Bupa during 2022/23 to co-design a Level 3 Dental Apprenticeship which supported 30 individuals to upskill.

SWC has collaborated with the manufacturing industry to build a talent pipeline. Growth has been underpinned by new curriculum offerings at levels 4-6 including: Level 4 Pearson BTEC HNC Advanced Manufacturing/Maintenance and a BEng (Hons) Top-Up Degree in Engineering. The introduction of the HLA portal has broadened the reach of the HLA offer facilitating access to an enhanced range of companies and potential students. Increasing local access to HE remains a priority to meet the skills needs of industry, address regional skills and wage imbalances and embed a culture of lifelong learning.

The College, via the Entitlement Framework continued to collaborate with 28 schools to provide 18 programmes of study to 719 students in 2022/23. In addition, the College and its community and voluntary sector partners leveraged £2.8m from Department Levelling Up Housing and Communities for REAP. The REAP programme will yield 1,120 enrolments during 2023-2025, with 400 disengaged young people taking employability courses and 720 participants undertaking numeracy programmes.

The Advanced Manufacturing Hub, led by South West College, co-ordinates employer input into the development of engineering provision to ensure it meets industry needs/government strategies. The Hub's engagement with Traineeship/Advanced Technical is driving transformation of the curriculum by embedding Project Based Learning/Transversal Skills. These activities have raised potential students' awareness of engineering as a career. SWC is represented in all Curriculum Hubs, with representatives reporting on developments and disseminating information to colleagues in the respective curriculum areas. As Secretariat of the Advanced Manufacturing Sectoral Partnership, the College collaborates for the benefit of the NI FE sector reviewing apprenticeship and traineeship provision, ensuring that they meet the needs of employers and yield progression routes for learners. This involves collaboration with employer networks, DfE, Awarding Organisations, the FE/HE sectors, and Manufacturing NI.

Supporting students is a key enabler in enhancing retention on all programmes. The College retains a Student Engagement Officer with specific responsibility for Learner support on each campus, providing support to students including financial advice, managing workload, supporting mental/physical needs, and signposting to counselling services where necessary. Student services staff organise thematic workshops to support students and in 2022/23 1,700 students attended eight workshops covering topics such as positive mental health and anti-bullying. Students at each campus are also supported by six Learning Mentors who provide 1 to 1 support for those students at risk of not completing their course. During 2023/24 290 students availed of this support. The student services team includes an Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator who works to assess the needs of our students to ensure they have adequate support when completing examinations and assessments. There has been an increase in the number of students requiring support during examinations, with approximately 400 students identified and to be provided with additional exams support this academic year. The Advanced Practitioner Teaching and Learning, together with our learning and teaching advisors (10) support lecturers to adapt classroom

practice to align with student learning styles, identify training needs and to provide strategies to help students that have specific learning needs.

The College collaborates with the Councils to support the delivery of Community Planning and Labour Market Partnerships. During 2022-2023 the College delivered 12 academies, supporting 185 economically inactive citizens gain employability qualifications with 102 (55%) securing employment. In addition, during 2022-2023 South West College delivered six Assured Skills Welding Academies supporting 44 participants to secure employment. The College supports the Department for Communities Neighbourhood Renewal strategy via the Going Places initiative in Enniskillen, Omagh, Dungannon, Coalisland and Strabane. During 2022/23, this initiative generated 150 enrolments with 112 (75%) progressing into education and 40 participants (25%) entering employment. The College's extensive Apprenticeship NI (including All Age) and HLA provision continues to provide high quality opportunities for new entrants and existing employees to upskill.

The College, in line with 10x objectives, continues to prioritise student development as Digital Citizens/Workers/Makers. During 2022/23 there were 412 enrolments on the L2 Award in Digital Skills for Life and Work, with the number of enrolments in 2023/24 scheduled to increase. Support for student development as Digital Workers/Makers is a priority for the College. During 2022/23 the Level 4 Social Media/Digital Marketing and OCN Cyber Security level 4 qualifications attracted 43 learners.

Six schools in Mid Ulster participated in Project Enthused, an IT initiative where college staff engaged with schools using PBL, robotics and AI workshops to enhance relationships. This initiative will be rolled out to additional schools. In addition, the College partnered with Mid Ulster Council and Bring IT On to deliver the Future Tech event at the Dungannon Campus attracting 200 potential students.

Internally, the College continues to focus on student support, enhancing the student learning experience and outcomes - the retention of students, achievement, and success rates. In curriculum areas where outcomes have been recognised as requiring improvement, actions will be identified and undertaken to support improved outcomes and progress will be monitored. The College, via the quality improvement planning process, has identified a number of programmes of study for enhanced support, with the intention of improving retention and achievement. Actions will be implemented with the aim of improving performance in those courses where outcomes were not as positive as expected. The College's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) sets out eight key actions for the College which will support students and improve outcomes (Annex 1). Actions include developing our data reports for tracking progress and for timely interventions to improve the success rates of our students, progressing ongoing review of classroom activities to improve student achievement and providing ongoing CPD to ensure Project Based Learning is embedded as an effective learning method in all curriculum areas.

**Planned Activity:**

The College's full and part time offer ranging from Entry level to level 6 will support the growth and development of citizens from across the region, embedding pathways into further and higher education addressing the regional skills imbalance and promoting local access to lifelong learning opportunities.



**Table 5 – Planned 2023/24 by Individual and Enrolments.**

Level	Area of Planned Activity	Planned Activity for 23/24 Enrolments	Planned Activity for 23/24 Individuals	Achieved Activity for 22/23 Enrolments*	Achieved Activity for 22/23 Individuals*
EL – L3	ES	2,300	1,475	2,358	1,513
	PT FE	8,514	6,404	10,233	7,616
	FT FE	1,262	1,262	1,218	1,218
	Traineeships	910	416	646	227
	SfL&W	264	83	308 inc (SFW)	83
	Apps NI &	2,886	1,429	2624	1,316
L4+	PT HE in FE	720	400	721	383
	FT HE in FE	515	515	454	454
	HLA	500	500	442	442
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15,571**</b>	<b>11,009***</b>	<b>16,657</b>	<b>11,656</b>

**\*Data submitted to DfE**

**\*\*Totals exclude essential skills enrolments**

**\*\*\* Total Individuals included individuals enrolled on ES who are not already counted under a different programme**

The College will support the development of 11,009 individual students during 2023/24 via a range of industry aligned programmes of study. The 2023/24 target indicates a slight reduction of 216 individuals or approximately 2% on the 2021/22 figures. This is reflective of the loss of social inclusion funding and a modest reduction in delivery due to budgetary constraints.

Whilst the College is projecting growth in Apprenticeships (1,429 individuals) and Higher-level Apprenticeships (500 individuals) of 113 (8%) and 58 (13%) respectively from our 2022/23 activity and an enhanced full-time intake in HE of an additional 61 individuals (12%) and in FE 44 individuals (4%), there is a projected contraction in part-time FE, due to the impact of increasing budget pressures impacting on the curriculum offer.

Two Social Inclusion programmes - Step Up to Sustainable Employment SUSE (ESF) and Youthscape (Peace IV) concluded during the 2022/23 year. The conclusion of SUSE will result in a reduction of 365 individuals accessing specialist provision – through time this will be addressed as REAP and Step Up become imbedded. The four-year Peace IV funding cycle has concluded, impacting the College’s ability to support the 200 disengaged young people which benefitted from Youthscape. The College remains committed to supporting the most vulnerable in society to meet their full potential and in collaboration with its partners submitted an application to Peace Plus for a continuation of the Youthscape programme during 2024-2028. This application has been successful and, pending a Letter of Offer, will enhance the College’s capacity to support additional young people, equating to an anticipated 100 enrolments in 2023/24. Whilst the loss of any significant Social Inclusion programme has an impact on the ability to support to the most disengaged in society, it also disrupts the progression pathway to FE/Apprenticeships and HE. The introduction of All Age Apprenticeships is a key opportunity, and the College will launch an innovative Accelerator initiative to support upskilling and lifelong learning across the region in 2023/24.

Delivery of Digital Skills will be further enhanced in 2023/24 with the addition of new programmes including OCN Level 5 in Artificial Intelligence, OCN Level 4 Cloud Computing, OCN Level 4 Software Programming and OCN Level 4 Data Analytics, projected to support 90 individuals upskill in higher order digital skills, contributing towards the STEM agenda.

The College acknowledges that students face various disadvantages and is dedicated to delivering a high-quality learning experience in a supportive environment. Recognising that these students often require additional support and guidance, the College's Student Services team provides an intensive support service for all our students including FE and HE students. This service aims to assist struggling students in overcoming barriers to their education and training, covering areas such as widening access, safeguarding, careers guidance, individual learning support, student finance and student health and well-being—all with the overarching goal of improving student retention, achievement, and success.

A new Supporting at Risk Students procedure has been implemented for 2023/24 with an initial assessment completed during induction to identify students who may have risk factors, to be reviewed at monthly team meetings and regularly by the Course Co-ordinator/Pastoral tutor, as necessary. Students at risk of withdrawing can be referred to Learner Mentors who will work with students and can introduce various interventions to support a student to remain on their programme of study. Tutorials are also utilised to provide pastoral support to FE students and assist them with study skills including time management, organisation skills and teamwork.

**Planned Activity:**

**Table 6 – Improving Performance for 2023/24 -Targeted Increases**

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Succes Rate in 2022/23</b>	<b>Planned Increase</b>
<b>Success Rate of final year regulated enrolments</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Essential Skills</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Achievement Rate 2022/23*</b>	<b>Planned Increase</b>
<b>Arts, Media &amp; Publishing (Level 2 - FE FT)</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Business, Administration (Level 3 – FE FT)</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Health, Public Services &amp; Care (Level 3 -FE FT)</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>2%</b>

\* from Whole College Self Evaluation & Quality Improvement Impact Report

<b>KPI 3.6</b>	<b>7,560 individuals enrolled who are furthest away from the labour market and/or with low or no formal qualifications in 2023/24 academic year.</b>
<p><b>Background:</b> The College is fully committed to attracting, recruiting, and retaining the most able students from the most diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Enrolments generated via outreach and recruitment to core college FE, Work Based learning (WBL) and HE provision is complemented by the College's social inclusion provision, co-delivered with a range of community and voluntary partners. The College, in partnership with (Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, South Tyrone Empowerment Programme, First Step Woman's Centre and Fermanagh Rural Community Initiative), has leveraged £2.8m from UK Department Levelling Up Housing and Communities for the Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP). REAP will yield 1,120 enrolments during 2023-2025, with an anticipated 400 NEET young people engaging in employability courses and 720 participants on numeracy programmes.</p> <p>The Widening Access and Participation (WAPP) programme aims to address discrepancies in the take-up of HE opportunities between underrepresented groups in the region. These groups include perspective students from disadvantaged backgrounds with lower household incomes. Annually the College spends £171,417 on WAPP which focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Access:</b> Ensuring access to Higher Education (HE) for students from all backgrounds. Providing information on progression programmes to feeder schools, communities, and industry.</li> <li>• <b>Transition:</b> Academic and student support teams offer comprehensive academic mentoring and pastoral support.</li> <li>• <b>Financial support:</b> Bursary scheme and reduced tuition fees for students who were undertaking full-time courses in Health Care.</li> <li>• <b>Academic mentorship:</b> This initiative provides support in areas such as academic skills/development, research skills, assignment writing, and examination preparation.</li> <li>• <b>Health and well-being:</b> Counselling, mindfulness, and health/ well-being related support.</li> <li>• <b>Employability:</b> Developing confidence to achieve personal goals. Students from quintiles 1 and 2 make up 44.8% of the total students who participated in HE in 2020/21. This is above the sector average where 39.3% of the population reside in Quintiles 1 &amp; 2.</li> </ul>	

**Planned Activity<sup>31</sup>:**

**Table 7 – Social Inclusion Planned Activity 2023/24**

<b>Area of Planned Activity</b>	<b>2023/24 Planned Activity</b>	<b>2022/23 Activity Achieved</b>
<b>Enrolments within Quintile 1 and 2</b>	7830	9296
<b>Enrolments declaring a disability/long term health problem</b>	1530	1802
<b>Enrolments on Entry Level and Level 1 Programmes (including Essential Skills)</b>	6750	8037
<b>Enrolments on Step Up and Skills for Life and Work</b>	382	308 (inc SFW)
<b>Enrolments on Targeted Programmes (REAP and Going Places)</b>	250	695
<b>Enrolments on ESOL programmes</b>	350	360
<b>Overall number of individuals supported by above measure</b>	7560	9011

Given the socio-economic profile of the region, the College is committed to leveraging additional funding for social inclusion initiatives which support lifelong learning pathways into Essential Skills, FE, WBL and HE. Whilst the College delivers the Going Places programme in Enniskillen, Omagh, Strabane, Dungannon and Coalisland supporting 150 individuals each year, the discontinuation of funding for SUSE and Youthscape has impaired the College’s Social Inclusion impact. This will be mitigated by REAP and Step Up and additionally, by the new successful application for Youthscape funding. It is the College’s strategy to further enhance and formalise the links with the Community and Voluntary sector – including the REAP partners STEP, FRCI and FSWC and community groups via the Going Places Programme, to strengthen partnerships and enhance transition into other college provision.

In order to engage and support 299 individuals on the Step Up programme and 83 individuals on Skills for Life and Work<sup>32</sup> in the 2023/24 academic year, staff will participate in sectoral/local marketing of all strands, including engaging with students that are at risk of leaving their existing programmes, and raising awareness of support available to disengaged young people, women returners, and neurodiverse learners; The introduction of the Step-Up programme has partially filled the void left by the withdrawal of ESF and has allowed the continuation of the very successful College Connect initiative alongside Women Returners Access Programme (WRAP) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE).

The College will continue with outreach to new communities and build on the partnership with First Step Women’s Centre established through REAP to support development and facilitate access to FE. The College will continue to deliver ESOL provision across the campuses in line with need and is anticipating a consistent level of ESOL enrolments in 23/24. The College is well-equipped to accommodate this demand within existing resources. Multiple ESOL classes are planned each year across campuses. These

<sup>31</sup> It is acknowledged that enrolment activity in the below measures may be counted in more than one metric.  
<sup>32</sup> Breakdown of activity by programme is included in the supporting Educational Report Card.

courses are available to fee-paying students and are also offered free to those entitled under Department for the Economy (DfE) directives and settlement schemes. Where there might be an increase in asylum seekers, refugees, and Ukrainians across Northern Ireland, especially in urban areas, the College intends to continue providing ESOL provision to all learners who have applied.

<b>KPI 3.7</b>	<b>To increase the percentage of women in narrow STEM related subjects from 22% in 2021/22 (570 females out of a total Narrow STEM of 2,555) to 24% (656 females out of a total Narrow STEM figure of 2,703) in 2023/24 academic year.</b>
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**Background:**  
 The College provides a wide range of provision in narrow STEM related areas including programmes in Biological and Physical Sciences, Information Technology, Technology and Engineering. The College provision is particularly strong in Engineering with increased enrolments year on year in Higher Level Apprenticeships being a feature.

A number of initiatives will support this uplift including the marketing of the Welding Academies as an access route into the manufacturing industry, alongside the women into industry initiative which is being rolled out by the Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing Hub. The College is taking a range of positive steps to promote diversity including the marketing of Welding Academies to females and using previous female participants as case studies. In addition, the College will use the Get Engineering Fair in March 2024 as a vehicle to promote women into narrow STEM programmes.

**Planned Activity**  
 During 2023/24 the College will increase the number of women participating in narrow STEM related subjects from 22% in 2021/22 (570 females out of a total Narrow STEM of 2,555 students) to 24% (656 females out of a total Narrow STEM figure of 2,703 students) in 2023/24.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH	
AIM – 4	Upskilling and reskilling learners to progress in life-long learning and to meet employer skills needs through provision of focussed training, providing the skills and qualifications necessary to secure employment.
10x Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of the working age population with qualifications at Level 2 and above or Level 3 and above.</li> <li>• Economic inactivity by gender, age, disability, MDM</li> <li>• Proportion of population aged 25+ who have engaged in education or training in the last 13 weeks.</li> </ul>
KPI 4.1	To upskill/reskill 2,758 individuals on training programmes in 2023/24 academic year.
<p><b>Background:</b>            The College continues to develop employed and non-employed led professional and technical education at levels 2-6, enhancing integration with industry, promoting progression through the levels, ensuring access to the higher order skills which will ultimately impact the low productivity in the region and address the skills imbalance. The College has harnessed existing programmes (Apprenticeship, HLAs and Skills Up) to co-design, with industry, a range of initiatives to attract and develop new entrants and upskilling existing employees. The growth in industry aligned programmes has been built on a range of employer engagement activities:</p> <p><b>GET Engineering:</b> In March 2023, 30 employers offering 100 apprenticeships/HLAs, approximately 300 young people and their parents attended the GET Engineering Careers Fair at SWC Dungannon. The College’s BIS team also attended the careers fair and engaged with businesses to secure innovation projects and upskilling via Skills Focus and Skill Up.</p> <p><b>Apprentice Connect:</b> Each January young people keen to pursue apprenticeships/HLAs complete online applications during the College open days and they are then invited along to an Apprentice Connect event held in May to meet with employers from all sectors keen on recruiting apprentices. In May 2023 more than 500 young people and their parents engaged with 70 employers supporting apprenticeship /HLA commencement in 23/24.</p> <p>The extensive and well-developed links with employers forged through GET Engineering and Apprentice Connect also enables staff to engage with companies to secure work placements for Traineeship and Advanced Technical students supporting their movement towards and into employment.</p> <p>Students at South West College are afforded the opportunity to gain experience of work placement and to study abroad via the Turing scheme. These opportunities support the development of transversal skills sought by employers which boost the employability of participants. Young people participating in the Turing scheme come from a range of backgrounds and given the high proportion of enrolments drawn from quintile 1 and 2, many of the participants would not readily be afforded the opportunity to experience the range of cultures opened to them via Turing.</p>	



Participating in skills competitions with the support of Lecturers and Skills Champions enhances the confidence and motivation of participants alongside building professional and technical skills. Past competitors have highlighted that competing was an enjoyable experience and had a beneficial impact on their overall attitude to learning or work. WorldSkills UK states “Over eight in ten said that competing made them feel more ambitious in pursuing their career. 85% of competitors stated that they had increased their technical skill level and 90% said that competing had given them a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses within their skill area which they can work in when they get back to their college, training provider or employer.”

**Planned Activity:**

**Table 8- Planned Delivery of Training Programmes 2023/24**

Area of Planned Activity individuals	2023/24 Planned Activity	2022/23 Activity Achieved
<b>Advanced Technical Awards</b>	201	131
<b>Traineeships</b>	416	227
<b>AppsNI</b>	1429	1316
<b>HLAs</b>	500	442
<b>Skill Up</b>	200	363
<b>Ignite Your Skills</b>	12	21
<b>Tailored training programmes</b>	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,758</b>	<b>2,500</b>

South West College has established productive relationships with industry and has collaborated to develop a range of professional and technical education programmes. The College expects to see an increase of 258 individuals or 9 % on training programmes, predominantly driven by apprenticeships and HLAs, illustrated in the demand from industry for new talent. This is an increasingly attractive pathway for learners to ‘earn as they learn’ whilst in employment. Whilst apprenticeship provide an employed route to upskill new entrants, increasingly Traineeships and Advanced Technical provide a viable non-employed pathway for young people to undertake industry aligned professional and technical education. Developing the knowledge and competence which will facilitate entry to employment and or higher education. Activity has been positively impacted by a number of curriculum areas moving across to the Traineeship model of delivery -Hairdressing, Travel and Tourism, Health & Social Care and Children’s Care Learning & Development in 2023/24. All other L2 FE areas are due to migrate to Traineeships in 24/25 e.g. Business, Beauty, Media etc, which will increase numbers further.

The College will support 50 Learners<sup>33</sup> through 4 Turing mobility programmes in 2023/24 academic year. These programmes will see the College partnering with four institutions who are each active in the field of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and have a history of mobility collaboration with SWC. Students will travel to Penn State Pittsburgh USA in June 2024 to undertake a 3-week study programme on Passive House Design & Construction, supported by the Penn State Centre, Global Building Network, & Pittsburgh’s Green Building Alliance.

<sup>33</sup> As per footnote 10

Another cohort of South West College students will get the opportunity to participate in a variety of short-term courses at Humber College Canada during semester 2 in 2024, relevant to their studies; including ‘Children, Play and Creativity’, ‘Optimizing High Performance Building Design’ and ‘Transformational Leadership and Advocacy’.

Under Turing, the continuation of the College’s partnership with EPI Colegio, Aruba, will provide three-week work placements for Tourism and Hospitality Management students, whilst Hospitality and Beauty apprentices will undertake a 10-day work placement in Reykjavik Iceland.

Reflective of the growing success of both initiatives in terms of connecting employers with potential apprentices, creating work placement opportunities, and promoting business engagement, Get Engineering and Apprentice Connect events are planned to take place again in 2023/24, supporting the delivery of the College’s training programmes.

SUSTAINABILITY	
AIM – 5	<b>To address the skills needs of the future workforce in green industries through upskilling and reskilling learners in support of a net zero economy in Northern Ireland.</b>
10X METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Employment in the low carbon and renewable energy economy</b></li> <li><b>Turnover in low carbon and renewable energy economy</b></li> </ul>
KPI 5.1	<b>In 2023/24 academic year, to develop curriculum and train staff for delivery on green sustainable skills in 2024/25 academic year.</b>
<p><b>Background:</b> Sustainability is a core pillar of the 10x Economic strategy. The FE sector has secured £299,880 with an allocation of £49,980 per college for an integrated curriculum development project, which will enable colleges to develop a range of accredited provision which will support knowledge and skills aligned to sustainability to implement sustainability into everyday working practices.</p> <p>Action 11.4 of the 10X Delivery Plan 2023/24, outlines the delivery of a Sustainability Programme, delivered by FE Colleges to support businesses to realise the economic and Net Zero Sustainability ambitions set in the 10X Economic Strategy. The action point details the importance of the development of new curriculum and skills support with core common content and approach. The six colleges will collaborate on content design and development in support of this programme and aligned with key industry and economic strategies.</p> <p>In June 2021 South West College in partnership with Southern Regional College secured £458,210 from Department Levelling Up Housing and Communities for a 12-month programme titled Rural Economic Accelerator Programme REAP. This initiative supported the college sustainability drive, enabling staff to develop and secure accreditation for a Level 2 Retrofit Fundamentals qualification.</p> <p><b>Strand 1: Sustainability Retrofit Upskilling Programme</b> REAP provided Retrofit upskilling opportunities (30-hour accredited Retrofit Fundamentals qualification) for 120 existing construction operatives (Joinery, Brickwork, Plastering, Plumbing, Electrical). This</p>	

programme was aimed at addressing the current skills gap in the sustainable housing sector; retrofitting energy inefficient homes.

**Strand 2: Research and Innovation Programme**

Supported nine SMEs develop future-proof decarbonisation strategies and expand their Research and Innovation.

In September 2023, South West College has secured £30,000 from DfE through the Flexible Skills Fund to support the development of Green Skills:

- 30-hour level 2 Award Ventilation Design, Install Commission and Maintain
- 30-hour level 2 award Heat Pumps Install and Maintain
- 30-hour level 2 award Solar PV Design Install and Maintain

In November, South West College has joined the National Retrofit Hub, a UK based nonprofit organisation that brings together all those involved in the retrofit sector to share their expertise and work together to enable a National Retrofit Strategy to be delivered. The College sits on the workforce growth and skills working group collaborating with a range of providers to develop and deliver additional Green Skills/Retrofit curriculum.

The College has a strong history in the delivery of sustainable construction methods and staff continue to engage with industry professionals and employers to build interest in this provision and held a PassivHaus workshop in December 2023 at the Enniskillen Erne Campus to promote training initiatives.

South West College is leading a consortium in developing an application for Peace Plus funding to support the development of green skills in the construction industry. The initiative is entitled Green Skills Accelerator Programme (GRASP), and the College is partnering with the Education and Training Boards in Donegal, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan and North West and Southern Regional Colleges along with the Irish Central Border Region Network (ICBAN) and Atlantic Technical University. If successful, this programme will provide 2,000 existing employees and new entrants to the industry with opportunity to develop the skills required to decarbonise housing stock. Emissions from the construction sector account for 40% of total national emissions, almost all of which will have to be eliminated over the next thirty years. Achieving this goal will require a co-ordinated programme of interventions. These interventions will need additional workers, equipped with the skills required to deliver them – it is this challenge that GRASP will address. The programme has been co-constructed with industry representatives (NIHE, Radius, CITB and CIF/CEF) and is supported by the eight councils across the ICBAN region. GRASP will provide citizens from across the region with access to a range of fully funded upskilling via apprenticeships and micro credentials delivered across the provider network. In addition, GRASP will deploy by a range of cross cutting thematic interventions to underpin the upskilling activities and maximise impact.

Working collaboratively, the Further Education colleges will develop Sustainability modules and short courses that support skills and knowledge transfer across industry. The suite of materials will build a foundational resource, beginning at level 2 and work up to sector specific skills at higher levels, developing pathways throughout. When accredited the content can be used to support individuals through

Skill Up, businesses through Skills Focus, as well as the wider student base, including apprenticeships, where sustainability modules and units can be incorporated into curriculum delivery.

The Sustainability Programme content developed will include a cross-sectoral, common, introductory strand that will form the foundation of knowledge for all businesses and will include topics such as:

- Understanding the different terminologies and their relationship to each other – Sustainability, Green Technology, Net Zero, Embodied Carbon, Circular Economy etc.
- UN Sustainable Development Goals and Economic Strategies – breaking down the strategic goals at local, national, and international levels to show relevance and impact that can be achieved through changes to business practices.
- Pathways to Success – Opportunities to review business strategies and processes, assess goals, implement available tools, and develop roadmaps.

This will set the scene with businesses and individuals, ensuring a core foundational knowledge prior to moving into business and industry specific areas.

Business/Industry Areas for Development:

Each college is leading on a designated area, developing accredited provision at level 2 and at higher levels where possible. Figure 20 below indicates the range of areas where curriculum is required.



The College’s designated area is Carbon Accounting and progress is ongoing to develop an accredited programme with units covering topics including Regulatory Landscape and Compliance and Carbon Accounting in Practice. The sector has established a Task and Finish Group (T&FG) to discharge this project. The T&FG have adopted a three-phase approach; research, content development and accreditation and are meeting regularly and working through a project implementation plan.

The College has a strong history in the delivery of sustainable construction methods, with the planned delivery of the PassivHaus Tradesperson and Designer training programmes, with 72 enrolments predicted in 2023/24.

**Supporting Actions/Planned Activity:**

**To improve the level of awareness and understanding of climate change through delivery of formal training to 70% of College staff in 2023/24 academic year.**

The College has developed an online Sustainability Induction corporate module. This is a mandatory module for staff and is expected to be undertaken on an annual basis. There is a dedicated Sustainability team which sends out advice to staff on how to be more sustainable including facts about Climate Change and organises regular Sustainability Department initiatives and events.

SUSTAINABILITY	
AIM - 6	To deliver against the Public Body reporting duties of the Climate Change legislation delivering an energy efficient and sustainable estate.
10X METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy Related Green House gas emissions</li> <li>Energy efficiency indicators</li> <li>Circular Economy</li> </ul>
KPI 6.1	In 2023/24 academic year, establish a baseline position for the College.
KPI 6.2	In 2023/24 academic year, establish the key actions to improve/maintain energy efficiency.
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>The College is committed to achieving environmental, social, and economic sustainability, maintaining a healthy environment for students and staff, whilst promoting resource efficiency. Over the last decade, the College has worked towards becoming an environmentally sustainable institution.</p> <p>The College Estate has a total site area of over 100,000m<sup>2</sup> and SWC performs favourably against benchmarked performance indicators relating to management, utility usage and maintenance costs. The College Sustainability Action Plan, in conjunction with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, NI Climate Change Act, Infrastructure Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI), and Department for the Economy’s Energy Strategy – The Path to Net Zero Energy, is integral to our sustainability journey. This document outlines key objectives, targets, and milestones for the next 5 years. The College’s commitment to the 10x Sustainability pillar underpins sustainable growth moving forward.</p> <p>The opening of the Erne Campus in April 2021 was a key milestone on the College’s sustainability journey. The facility provides a world class learning environment achieving Passive House Premium and BREEAM Outstanding accreditations. The campus was the first educational building worldwide</p>	

to achieve these highest international standards in terms of environmental construction, supporting the achievement of carbon reduction targets.

During the last 12 months following a bid for partial funding of £80k via the Invest to Save initiative, a series of 22 KW twin Garo EV charging stations have been installed and commissioned across the College and are available for use by both staff and students to promote the use of low carbon vehicles.

The Dungannon & Omagh Campuses have benefitted from an upgrade to LED lighting and installation of PIR sensors following a financial commitment from our PFI partner, BES. This is impactful as both sites were high-energy users and this upgraded energy efficient lighting offers high-quality lighting for less energy. This change will result in a decrease in energy demand and associated cost savings.

**Supporting Actions/Planned Activity:**

**In 2023/24 academic year, establish a baseline position for each College campus.**

1. Focus on Baseline Energy Usage Data to aid progress towards Zero Carbon including completion of Scope 1, 2 & 3 Carbon Baselines.
  - Scope 1 data; November 2023
  - Scope 2 data; December 2023
  - Scope 3 data; March 2024
2. Establish Baseline Survey on Plastics and Water usage aiding progress towards zero plastic and water conservation targets across all campuses.

**In 2023/24 academic year, establish key actions to improve/maintain energy efficiency of College campuses.**

Apply for £200,000 towards minor works projects<sup>34</sup> in 2023/24 financial year contributing towards a sustainable College estate. The Estates team are focused on minor works bids for 2023/24 and 2024/25 which have specific emphasis on Sustainability, and which will lower overall net energy consumption by 30 % by 2030 and overall to net zero by 2050. The College has planned green initiatives which amount to over £500k if approved. In 2023/2024 the sustainability capital projects will have a value of £200k

1. PV Upgrade installation – Skills Centre
2. Upgrade of UPS system – Omagh & Dungannon
3. Increased Recycling Centres – Omagh & Dungannon Campuses
4. Increased PV Battery Storage Facilities

In addition to the Capital Bids mentioned above, there are a number of key actions which the College will undertake in 2023/2024. These will improve energy efficiency as well as aid progress towards net zero commitments.

**Waste Management:** Engaging with waste contractors to increase recycling across all campuses and procure additional internal recycling bins to promote appropriate segregation for Omagh and Dungannon campuses.

<sup>34</sup> Includes Invest to Save Funded projects.



**Collaboration with Technical Services:** Ensuring maximum energy efficiency to reduce energy usage on all college technical equipment. Use of desktop infographics to highlight the importance of sustainability initiatives such as Energy Reduction and Recycling.

**Energy Audits:** Highlighting areas for continuous improvement including MIS Timetabling data, Technical Equipment, BMS, and Temperature Sensors. Improving energy efficiency in building stock contributing to decarbonising energy.

**Promotion of Sustainable Transport and Sustainable Construction where appropriate:** to establish effective energy processes.

**Restriction of opening hours to three evenings per week:** Introduction of extended building closures/use of remote working around holiday periods allowing for "SITE" Holiday to be selected for greater periods on site BMS.

**Regular review of set points in comparison with external temperatures:** ensuring effective utilisation of heating. Set points enforced campus wide to ensure comfort levels are maintained across buildings while avoiding unnecessary energy wastage.

**Replacement of plastic bottles with canned alternatives.** This initiative will be enforced campus wide in line with the College's aim of reducing single-use plastics.

**Consideration of energy ratings when procuring new equipment:** As highly efficient appliances will save energy.

## 5. Key Challenges/Constraints

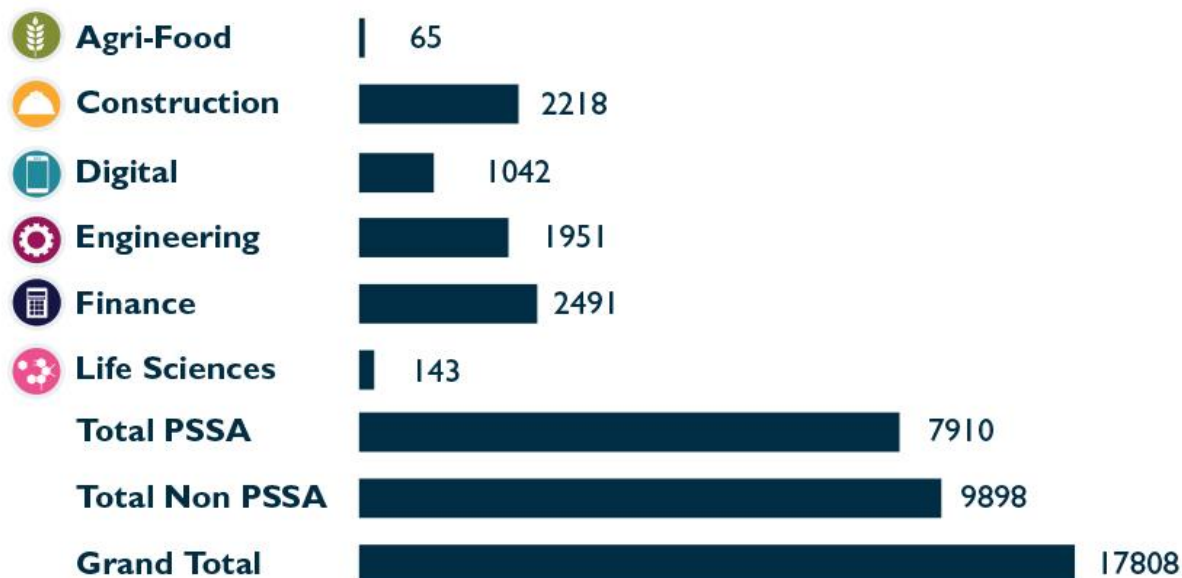
The below table sets out the key challenges/constraints towards achievement of 2023/24 planned delivery set out in section 4 above.

RISK	POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATING ACTIONS
Failure to operate within budget in 23/24 and beyond.	Lack of trust and reputational damage with DfE and FE sector.  Potential qualified audit opinion.	Close liaison with DfE in terms of College budget and sourcing of additional funding and ongoing monitoring of costs.  Cost saving/income generation target for 2023/24 and actions ongoing to achieve.  Strategic alliance set up with NRC and NWRC to explore further efficiencies.
Inability to meet the terms of the College's contract with learners and DfE.	Detrimental impact on learners including poor quality experience.  Negative impact on outcomes - enrolments, retention and achievement and success targets.  Disruption of the quality and assessment process and inaccurate data on Ebs	Contingency arrangements in place including registers are being completed manually and use of the LRCs and Main Hall for supervision.  Some remote learning cross campus undertaken
Failure to prevent a Cyberattack	Breach of security of IT systems.  Loss or corruption of information assets and personal data.  Disruption to services and reputational damage.  Potential fines / legal proceedings and impact on insurance.	Deployment of email filtering software and multifactor authentication MFA in place  Defender anti-virus and threat protection software in place.  Secure access and monitoring solutions in place to identify threats.  Structured account management access and other policies and procedures in place
Failure to protect students (mental health and wellbeing, safeguarding)	Poor attendance and increased withdrawals  Lack of achievement	Mandatory online Safeguarding module, which staff must complete annually.  Trained team of safeguarding assistants led by experienced Safeguarding Lead
Failure to meet targets ie recruitment, retention, achievement	Impact on college income  Negative impact on the College's reputation	Close monitoring of all target figures throughout the academic year by SLT.  Use of RAG system to refer students at risk of leaving to learning mentors. Curriculum Directorate monthly meeting to focus on performance and quality improvement challenges.

The College has a Risk Management Framework in place including Corporate and Operational Risk Registers from which key risks are reflected. Governance meetings take place each term to ensure that governance arrangements operate effectively within the College and consideration is given to risk management including a review of risk registers. Strategic challenges/constraints affecting the sector are highlighted with the use of 'Corporate Risk' and the College's Corporate Risks are monitored and communicated regularly to DfE as part of the assurance process.

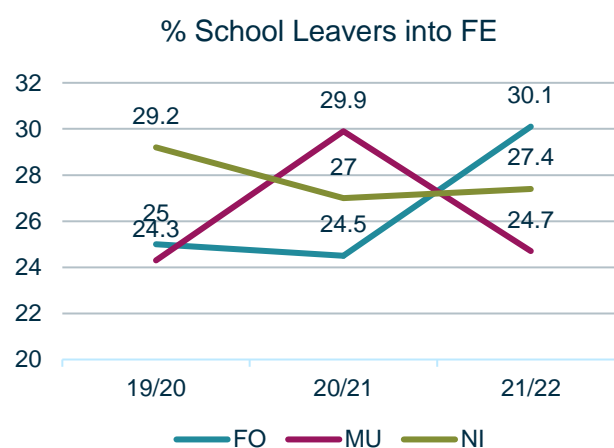
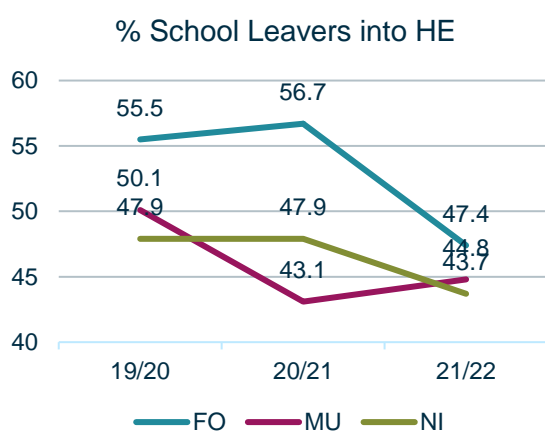
## Annex 1 - College Data Analysis

### Student Profile – Breakdown of PSSA/Non PSSA by Subject Area

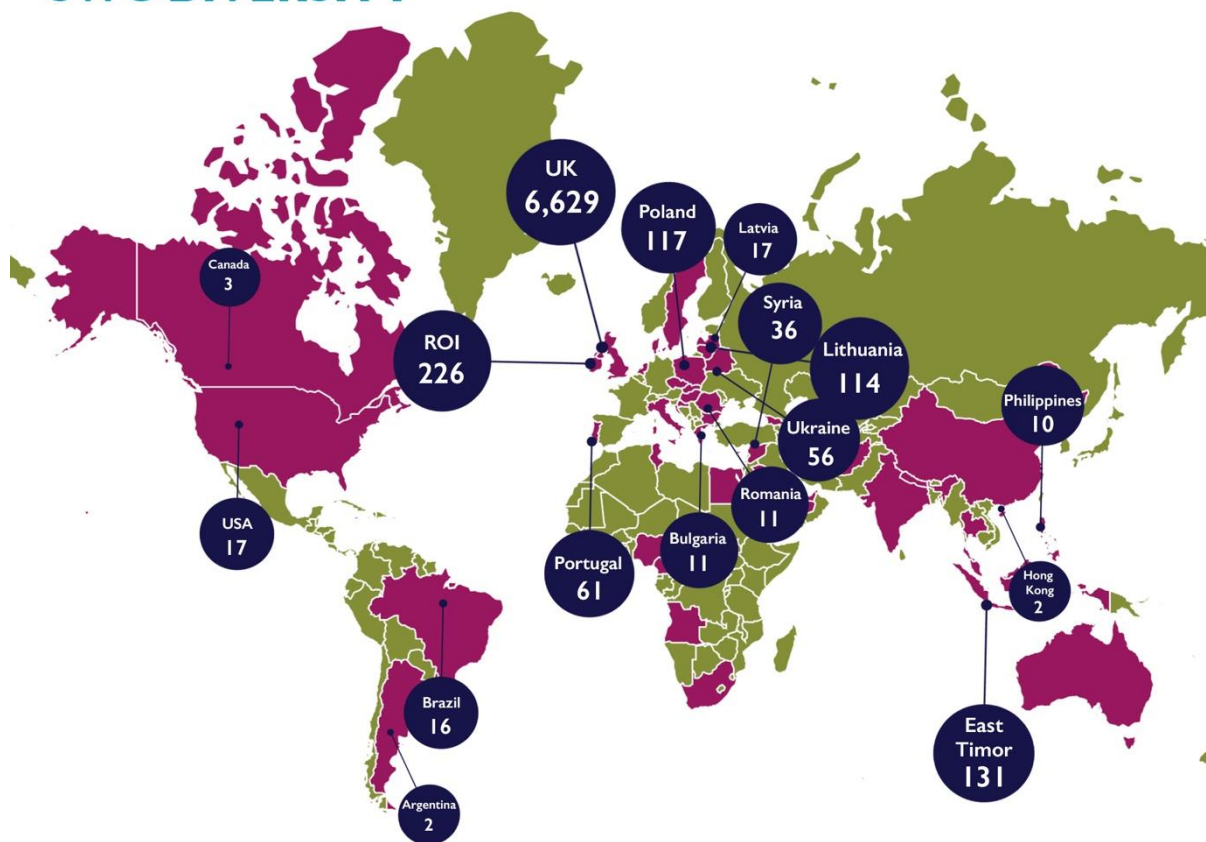


### Population Profile

#### Trend Analysis Destinations of School Leavers to FE Institutions FE and HE



## SWC DIVERSITY



SWC Diversity Enrolments Broken Down by Nationality

College Data	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
<b>Total Enrolments</b>	14727	17808	19004	17140
<b>No of Students</b>	8292	10991	11952	10836
<b>HE FT</b>	577	495	454	470
<b>HE PT</b>	791	700	721	625
<b>HLA</b>	218	294	442	527
<b>Essential Skills</b>	2329	2105	2358	2595
<b>FE FT</b>	1383	1336	1218	1260
<b>FE PT</b>	5853	9503	10652	8431
<b>WBL</b>	3576	3375	2932	2901
<b>Traineeship</b>	n/a	n/a	227	331

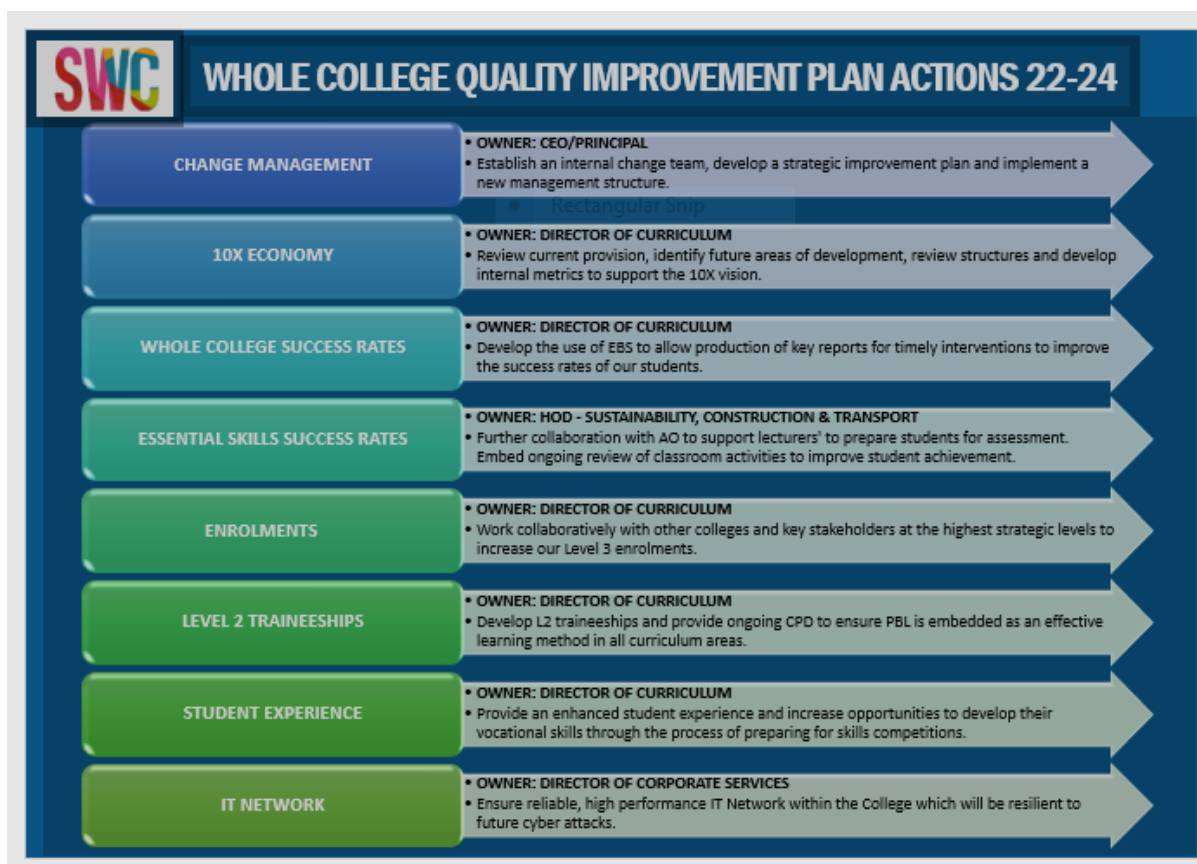
<b>2022/23 Activity</b>			
	<b>No businesses / Students (FS)</b>	<b>% STEM</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Skills Focus</b>	<b>117 businesses/ 177 students</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>£300,000</b>
<b>Skill Up</b>	<b>363 students</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>£200,000</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>£500,000</b>

<b>22/23 Activity</b>		
<b>Programme</b>	<b>Innovation Projects</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>InnovateUs Programme</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>£370,000</b>
<b>Innovation Voucher</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>£25,000</b>
<b>Innovation Boost</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>£36,000</b>
<b>Assured Skills Academies</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>£431,000</b>

#### EF Enrolments 2020/21 – 2023/24

<b>Nvq Level</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/4</b>
<b>0</b>		<b>64</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>1</b>			<b>17</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>356</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>372</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>758</b>





[further-education-sector-activity-in-northern-ireland-2017-18-to-2021-22-tables.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/higher-level-apprenticeships-ni-fe-colleges-and-cafre-academic-years-201718-202122-tables.xlsx)

[The benefits of taking part in WorldSkills UK Competitions - WorldSkills UK](https://www.worldskillsuk.com/)

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/higher-level-apprenticeships-ni-fe-colleges-and-cafre-academic-years-201718-202122>

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/apprenticeshipsni-statistics-august-2013-july-2022>

[NISRA \(2022\) Labour Force Survey - Labour Market Status by 16 to 64 by age and LGD 2019 to 2021](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/TbILFS2043b.XLSX)

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/TbILFS2043b.XLSX>

	Name	Source
1	NISRA (2023) MID-2022 Population Estimates LGD	<a href="https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nisra.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fstatistics%2FMYE22-POP-TOTAL.xlsx&amp;wdOrigin=BROWSELINK">https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nisra.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fstatistics%2FMYE22-POP-TOTAL.xlsx&amp;wdOrigin=BROWSELINK</a>
2	NISRA (2022) Labour Market Structure by district council area,	<a href="https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-tables-local-government-districts-2009-2022">https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-tables-local-government-districts-2009-2022</a>
3	UUEPC (2020) Sub-Regional Skills Barometer 2019	<a href="https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Sub-Regional-Skills-Barometer-2019-West.PDF">https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Sub-Regional-Skills-Barometer-2019-West.PDF</a>
4	NISRA (2023) MID-2022 Population Estimates LGD	<a href="https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nisra.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fstatistics%2FMYE22-POP-TOTAL.xlsx&amp;wdOrigin=BROWSELINK">https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nisra.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fstatistics%2FMYE22-POP-TOTAL.xlsx&amp;wdOrigin=BROWSELINK</a>
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