

# Strategic Plan 2021-2030



# Our Guiding Principles

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Our Purpose  
**Let Learning Flourish**

Our Way  
**Inspiration | Excellence | Innovation**

## Our Values

- **The Individual**
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness**
- **Integrity, Honesty and Transparency**
- **Excellence and Achievement**
- **Partnership**
- **Innovation and Enterprise**



# Our Strategic Priorities

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## Priority 1

To be an inspirational place of learning

## Priority 2

To enable individuals to excel and realise their full potential

## Priority 3

To live our values, value our people, and innovate in partnership

## Priority 4

To be a valued partner of the city region, supporting the national economy, and the international learning community

## Priority 5

To deliver excellence in performance

## Priority 6

To be efficient, effective, innovative and vigilant

## Priority 7

To maintain our long-term financial stability

## Priority 8

To secure diversity of income and sustainable development

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# Introduction

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## The College

At the heart of Glasgow's Learning Quarter, and spanning the River Clyde, City of Glasgow College is the largest and most diverse tertiary education establishment in Scotland. It is regarded as pioneering the blueprint for successful multiple college mergers, combining the richness and historic legacy of four specialist colleges across nautical, commerce, building, printing, and catering curriculum areas.

We are proud of our historic industry links, and valued reputation for developing professional skills for modern industry across many specialisms, with over 100 international partners across 28 countries. Our history dates back generations. However this College is committed to the education and industry of the future, ready to adapt to the changing needs of this and future generations.

City offers a wide range of educational, technical and training opportunities, at levels ranging from foundation courses through to Higher National Diplomas and degree programmes, in association with our Higher Education partners. There are opportunities to study at a level that encourages success and progression, enabling our students to reach their full potential. The College produces 8000 skilled graduates every year, from over over 2000 courses across the four Faculties of:

- Creative Industries
- Education and Humanities
- Hospitality and Leisure
- Nautical and STEM

We maintain a commitment to Let Learning Flourish through the inspiration, excellence, and innovation of our sector-leading learning and teaching methods, and world class facilities. Our unique collaborations with industry partners, matches the skills of students with the needs of employers through our sector leading Industry Academies. As a result our students graduate with industry-relevant skills and highly valued qualifications.

The College's twin site Super College campus became fully operational in 2016, and represents a £228 million investment in tertiary education for Glasgow, Scotland, and beyond.

This is the single largest college development in Europe, meticulously designed to offer state of the art facilities and superb opportunities to our students, as we seek to fulfil aspirations, support industry, build communities, and in so doing, enhance people's lives.



# Strategic Plan

This is the fourth Strategic Plan for City of Glasgow College since its creation in 2010, following the merger of specialist city centre colleges which were crucial to the technological advances of the mid-20th century. The often-quoted reference to the “the white heat of technological change” refers to the rapid integration of applied science to industry, highlighted by former Prime Minister Harold Wilson, who officially opened the College’s North Hanover Street campus in 1964.

Having begun by setting out the vision we had for a new pathfinder college - merging three specialist colleges in the heart of Glasgow, on the River Clyde and in the City Centre - our ambition was realised beyond the expectation of many following our formation in 2010.

The College Strategic Plan of 2013-2017 set the bar even higher - to establish City of Glasgow College as a world-class beacon for college education. We delivered that and more with the creation of a college that is truly on a national scale – a £228 million supercampus – a powerhouse of skills; the largest such campus development not only in Scotland and the UK, but in Europe.

However, this was only part of the accomplishment of a world-leading technological and professional institution which has redefined the experience of a college education in the UK and beyond. We are a College that is there for the forgotten not just the fortunate, with a focus upon the needs of the individual; a college where individual students matter more than the subject they are studying, and where personalised learning flourishes through inspiration, excellence and innovation.

In 2017, we confidently set our sights to a further horizon, with our distinct and internationally renowned approach to learning delivering an impressive supply chain of over 8000 graduates annually, to drive our economy and to enhance the prosperity of all our students, and through them, their families and communities. In doing so, we positioned the college as Scotland’s first Super College, with a clear purpose to equip our students for 21st century professions, supporting a Glasgow City Region economy comprising 855,000 jobs.

As we prepared for further development and the revision of this strategic plan in 2019-20, the world was confronted by an unprecedented and unimaginable challenge. None of us had previously faced the seismic health, social, economic, and personal impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Even as we vacated our City and Riverside Campus building in March 2020, it became apparent that these impacts would require a radical redesign of college, and indeed tertiary provision in Scotland, not just another round of institutional changes. As serendipity would have it, the Scottish Government had, in 2019, commissioned a review of the tertiary sector by our own Principal Paul Little, in partnership with Audrey Cumberland, Principal of Edinburgh College, and the Cumberland-Little Report was published less than five weeks prior to Covid-19 lockdown.

That report goes a long way towards providing a blueprint for the change required in the sector, and the refreshed national role for colleges in supporting a skills-led recovery, through agility, collaboration, and inclusivity. It should be no surprise then that these principles are at the core of this Strategic Plan for 2021-2030, with this College as a pivot for the required upskilling and reskilling of many thousands of people of all ages, in support of recovery.

In delivering this Strategic Plan, our College will change the life chances of our students, help businesses recover, and rebuild the communities of the city whose name we are proud to bear. We stand ready to respond to the social and economic needs of our City Region and of Scotland, with strengthened sector partnerships of scale and coherence, and a distinct singular vision.

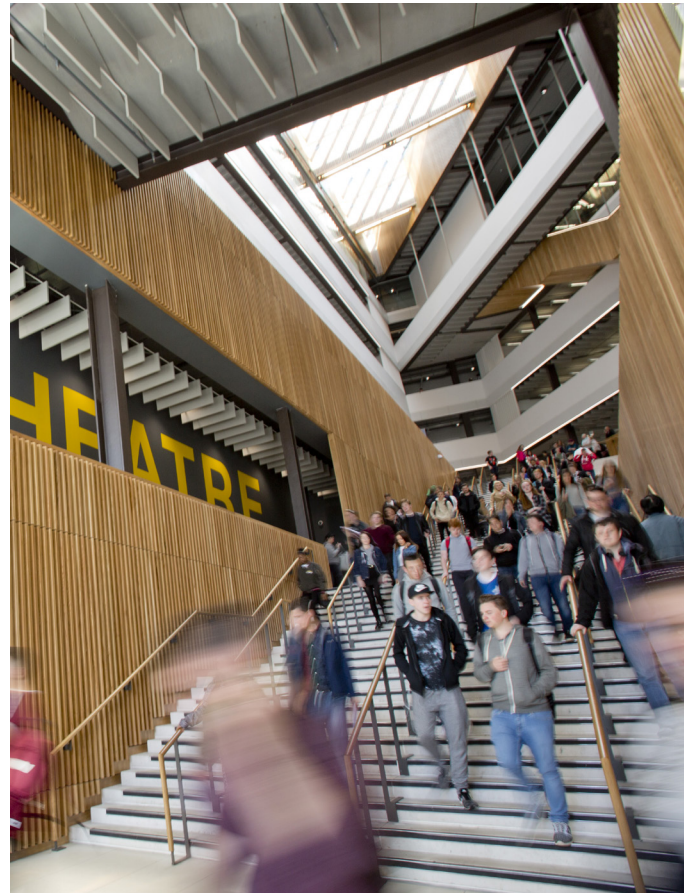
City of Glasgow College Board of Management is confident that the College team, Team City, will shape, lead, support, and deliver. Moreover, in these times of change and uncertainty, City of Glasgow College will be a civic and economic anchor, building upon its historic reputation for excellence. We look forward to a future of innovation and leadership, and of inspired strategic direction.

# Super Campus - Riverside





# Super Campus - City



# STRATEGIC SURVEILLANCE

## DEMOGRAPHIC



With an ageing population comes new and rising demands for retraining, reskilling, and re-energising. City of Glasgow College will prioritise individual transition and transformation, into and through employment, through personalised learning.

Over the period of the Plan there will be longer lifetime learning and working opportunities, and the College will look to enhance expertise with new vocational adult learning approaches and curriculum, from pre-employment micro-credentials to accelerated degrees. College planning will be informed by close monitoring of national demographics across all age groups including the emerging population of younger people.

The College will act on challenges and opportunities in relation to the “triple A” impact of age, automation and artificial intelligence, alongside changes in the Scottish economy and the skills needs of learners, business, and industry. This will affect the volume, type and structure of post-16 education.

We will address the risks to labour supply as identified in the Scottish Government's Future Skills Action Plan (2019) and strengthen individual and community resilience to the new “post-work” - “post-Covid” environment.

## ECONOMIC



The College will be guided by research into Covid crisis impact across sectors in key College specialist areas.

There will be unevenness of impact sectorally, regionally, and over time, with the threat of long-term “scarring”. Young people and disadvantaged groups will be particularly at risk. We will support the re-shaping of the economy, boosting productivity and economic activity, and prioritising key economic sectors.

The needs of industry will vary over the period of this plan, between regions and by areas of economic activity. We will prioritise and target acute industry requirements such as: Retail, Food, Hospitality, Tourism, Care (Health, Community, Child, and Elderly) Construction, Creative Industries, Manufacturing, Maritime, and STEM.

In a time of structural change in the labour market, we will support increased automation in line with industry needs, and the emergence of new industries such as sustainable energy, and digital/data - making innovation useful.

In the period of the post-Covid shock and following Brexit, the College will lead the required elasticity of response, providing an economic anchor role, following the approach proposed in the Cumberford-Little Report. This will include the development of SMEs /micro-businesses in a new

economic landscape, improving and recovering labour productivity and GDP, via up-skilling and re-skilling.

We will target current and emerging skills shortages/skills gaps in a changing landscape, leading and supporting area-based economic clusters driven by private/public sector partnerships and networks, and collaborative development of learning with industry.

In response to labour market structural shifts and increased turnover and change we will support increased automation, supporting and enhancing an innovation pipeline - making innovation useful.

We will further underpin the expansion, and possible evolution, of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) with new approaches including online delivery.

As ever, we remain conscious of the need to demonstrate the impact of our activity. In the economic sphere, the work we have undertaken with the [Fraser of Allander Institute](#) at Strathclyde University tells us much about the broad-reaching contribution of the College to the Scottish economy. In particular, we are heartened by the conclusion that, as a result of the College's activities, Scotland's economy will be £6 billion better off in present value terms over the long term, equating to some £56,000 per graduate.



# DEEEPLISTS

## ENVIRONMENTAL



Through efficiency and planned change we will address the impact of the climate emergency on industry and society.

Our aim is to support sustainable productivity and clean industry via a developed curriculum, including support for renewable energy and industrial biotechnology.

The College will implement a green action plan, including a renewed travel policy, with direct impact on our environmental footprint. We will seek to influence as an environmentally responsible civic lead organisation. The travel policy will consider safety concerns as a priority. City of Glasgow College will be an ethical consumer with a (net) zero carbon emissions target in the short-term.

## ETHICAL



There are embedded inequalities to be addressed in the post-Covid world - social, educational and employment outcomes - for which socio-economic exclusion will be challenged by supporting Inclusive economic regrowth.

Our strategic approach will be to challenge positively poverty and structural disadvantage, championing fairness, dignity, and respect, protecting diversity, and optimizing the strengths of all stakeholders.

We will hold as a guiding principle our moral obligations as a civic anchor to respect, protect, fulfill, and enhance human rights.

The College will enhance supported employment through Fair Start Scotland.

Recognising our broader ethical responsibilities, City of Glasgow College will extend its influence to current and potential partners, nationally and internationally, in pursuance of its values.

## POLITICAL



The political position of Scotland will be influenced by significant relationship shifts as a consequence of Covid-19, Brexit, and the Scottish Independence debate. The College's strategy will prioritise the following

- Alignment with policy and the need for more learning partnerships
- Supporting a renewed Economic Action Plan and National Performance Framework

- Demonstrating clear Return on Investment by the College to Government

The College will take a lead role in working with Government and its agencies, and with other senior stakeholders in influencing and leading policy and political thinking, particularly in the reform of Scotland's tertiary learning system following the 2020 review.



## LEGAL



The College is responsible for a wide range of compliance relating to applicable legislation including:

- Corporate Parenting
- Safeguarding
- Human rights; Rights of the Child
- Equalities
- Charitable status
- Health and Safety
- Ethical Conduct
- Freedom of Information and Data Protection

- Public Disclosure
- Public Finance and Accountability,
- Staff/ Employer Relations.
- Conditions of SFC/SG grant
- Core Governance Legislation

The College's Board and Senior Management Team has established a prominent reputation as a standard-bearer of good practice in relation to these responsibilities, and seeks to enhance and exceed compliance. The College's strategic priorities, aims and established practices reflect this ongoing commitment.

## INTERNATIONAL



The College faces challenges in managing short and medium term threats to current markets, and will endeavour to seek new opportunities via new partnership arrangements and delivery models. Our aim is to export education/curriculum development through our many partnerships, and we will remain alert to the different pace of post-Covid recovery in our established and potential international markets.

We will support:

- Scottish College International Group approaches

- E-learning for increased remote learning opportunities and income
- Global trends and demand post-Covid and in the context of a climate emergency
- Technological and vocational education and training (TVET)
- International events: training and facilitating
- Talent flow
- Supporting inward investment



## SOCIAL



Recognising changing local labour market demands, and our responsibility as a civic anchor, the College will assess and act to tackle the following challenges:

- Mitigating community disadvantage and deepening inequality
- Addressing student poverty and digital disadvantage, with an immediate focus upon young people, the care experienced, lone parents, those with learning difficulties, and others at risk
- Setting the College's positioning and gearing to support

those from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds

- Respond to renewed demand for social capital via colleges
- Regional economic trends, informed by the improved intelligence emerging from the SFC/SDS Skills Alignment agenda
- Demonstrating public and economic value

These undertakings will prioritise individual well-being and mental health care.

## TECHNOLOGICAL



There is a key role for learning and innovation to support the exponential growth of technology, and economic revival. City of Glasgow College is a certified STEM-assured hub, and as such will continue to collaborate in the development of emerging technologies as a catalyst to re-shape the educational, social and industrial environment for the future.

Key strategic developments will include:

- Digital Transformation – accelerated development to build and promote the highest quality online offer to support domestic and international development
- Enhanced high quality connectivity

- Virtual and augmented reality to enhance simulated work environments
- Development of digital skills e.g. cyber security/resilience, data analytics/ethics, software engineering, via the Digital Start Fund, Digital Growth Fund, and other collaborative initiatives
- Finance technology development (FinTech)
- Using data to improve learning outcomes

The College will further demonstrate its world leading status as a centre of innovation.

## SOCIETAL IMPACT



The College has a long and significant record of enhancing social cohesion by addressing individual and community disadvantage, which is wide-ranging and embedded in many communities of interest and locality. There is a further risk of fractured social cohesion as a consequence of the Covid pandemic and subsequent economic downturn. The College therefore commits to:

- A re-evaluation of social and health care support
- Supporting a resurgence in community development concepts
- Building College capacity, to deliver social and economic

resilience in communities

- Enhancing individuals' contribution to society and community
- Building equality through employability
- Supporting City Deal.

Consistent with our focus on measuring impact, we are currently working with the Institute of Public Policy in Scotland on an analysis of the College's contribution to the wider suite of Scottish Government National Priorities, beyond the economic contribution considered by Fraser of Allander; (Autumn 2021).



# Delivering through Partnership & Collaboration

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## Delivering for the City Region

The College has a long standing and well-established commitment to enhancing employability within the Glasgow region, and supporting the needs of our regional partner industries. With over 2600 industry partners across more than 230 industries, we support the City Council's strategic ambitions to empower and to improve the life chances of all citizens; in a city with a thriving, inclusive, economy where everyone can flourish and benefit from the city's success.

Through our stakeholder collaborations we have further developed our Student Academic Experience Strategy, providing real world work experience for many of our learners in their chosen specialist professional and technological fields in an enhanced learner journey - our "Purple Agenda". As we support economic recovery and growth, we continue our commitment to these regional key themes identified by our stakeholders:

- Consistent, high quality student experience
- Developing students' confidence, well-being, and skills for work and life
- Flexible, linked pathways, widening access and challenging deprivation
- Adding value through regional collaboration
- Industry partnerships providing real work experience opportunities
- Curriculum aligned to skills needs and developing the young workforce
- Fair Work values and behaviours

## Delivering for Scotland

We are living through a Global Education Revolution and the City of Glasgow College is well positioned to influence that revolution - to be a leading light in shaping a more agile, collaborative and inclusive Tertiary Education system in Scotland. The next generation of students will have experienced the seamless and inextricable integration of technology into their lives on an unprecedented scale, and education into the next decade will rely on key elements of increased and improved digital provision and capabilities of staff and students.

The digital transformation, which City of Glasgow College is supporting through its "Blue Agenda", will enhance this flexible and adaptable tertiary response to the challenges and opportunities that Scotland faces, and the delivery of our national priorities. Among our many specialist curriculum areas in which we lead nationally, City of Glasgow College is one of the first STEM Assured education providers in the UK: our industry-backed validation of our science, technology, engineering and mathematics provision, demonstrating our ability to keep pace with emerging technology and the evolving needs of employers.

We support a "national mission" through driving innovation as a 21st Century College, with greater cohesion and collaboration across the tertiary system in the provision of lifetime learning. In doing so, we firmly believe that Scotland can be a globally recognised hub of Technological and Vocational Education and Training, with City of Glasgow College as a leading partner.

## Delivering Internationally

Each year, the College welcomes students from over 130 different countries to our vibrant student population, enhancing the learning and working environment for the whole College community. The College is renowned across the globe for our work in the Maritime and Food and Hospitality industries and recognised for our award-winning activity in Procurement and Creative Industries. We work with over 100 international partners across 28 countries worldwide.

Our City Learning strategy enables the College's whole curriculum, and staff expertise, to work effectively in collaboration with industry partners across our four faculties. This underpins the further development of our commercial and international operations, which are a mainspring of our strategic ambitions to serve the international learning community over the period of this Plan, and which are tangible examples of how City is exporting Scotland to the world.

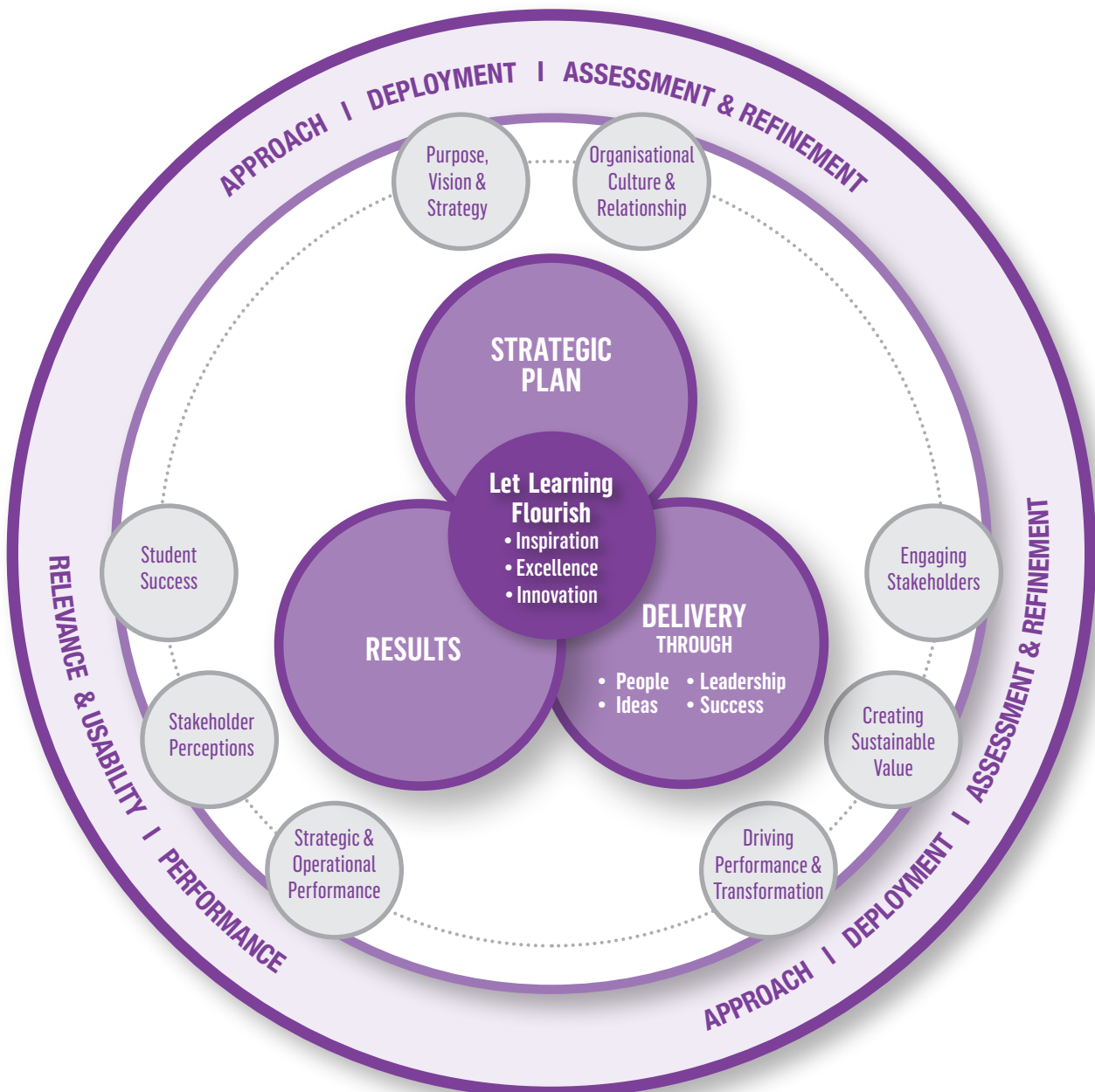
Related to these plans is the ambition to develop a Maritime and STEM Centre supporting the Clyde Mission to create good new, green jobs, with a skilled workforce to secure those jobs; and to use the river to create better places for people and communities - part of our "Green Agenda" of environmental responsibility. As Glasgow becomes the focus for the world's response to the climate emergency at UN Climate Change Conference, COP26, the College will embed its own response in all aspects of its functions and learning.

# Delivering Strategy

The College Purpose and Our Way in the centre of the diagram represent the guiding principles which are the foundations of our decision-making and of our strategic journey. This Strategic Plan provides a structure for our strategic priorities and aims and these are delivered by our Team City people – their ideas, leadership, and planning.

We have a firm focus upon improving our performance and delivering the results for which we strive, thereby increasing student success and building our reputation in the eyes of our stakeholders. We will achieve this through inspirational leadership, excellent management, relevant Operational Plans, new technologies, world-class facilities, ongoing success, and the College's enhanced profile. We will recognise success via a framework of outcomes, targets, benchmarks, perception measures (of how others see us) and performance indicators. This establishes a clear "line of sight" from strategy to delivery, and enables effective progress review, assessment, and continuous refinement and improvement.

The College is an EFQM Six Star organisation. The diagram below is closely aligned with the EFQM Model 2020, reflecting our ambition to be recognised as an outstanding organisation that achieves and exceeds the expectations of our stakeholders.

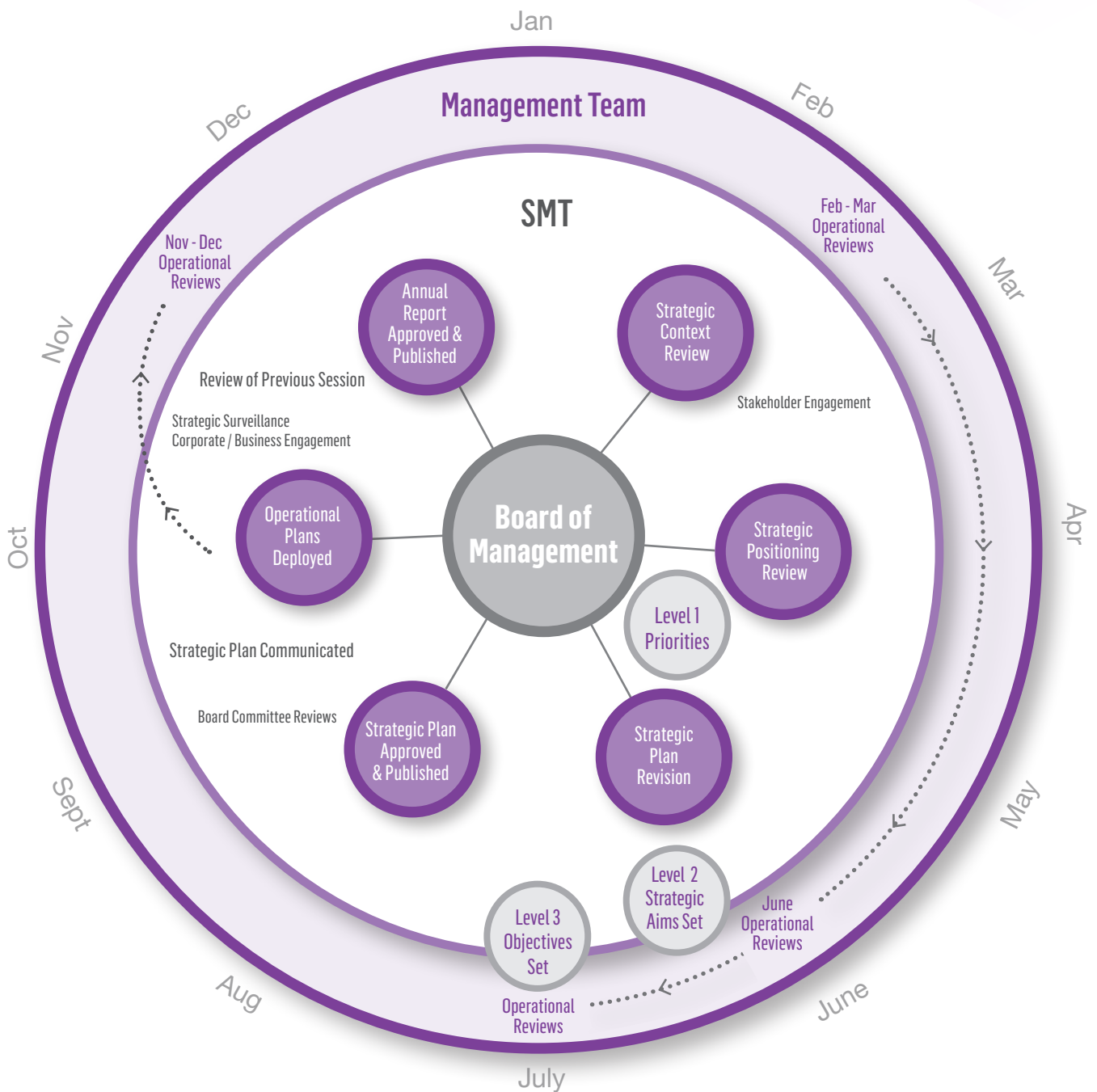




CITY OF GLASGOW COLLEGE

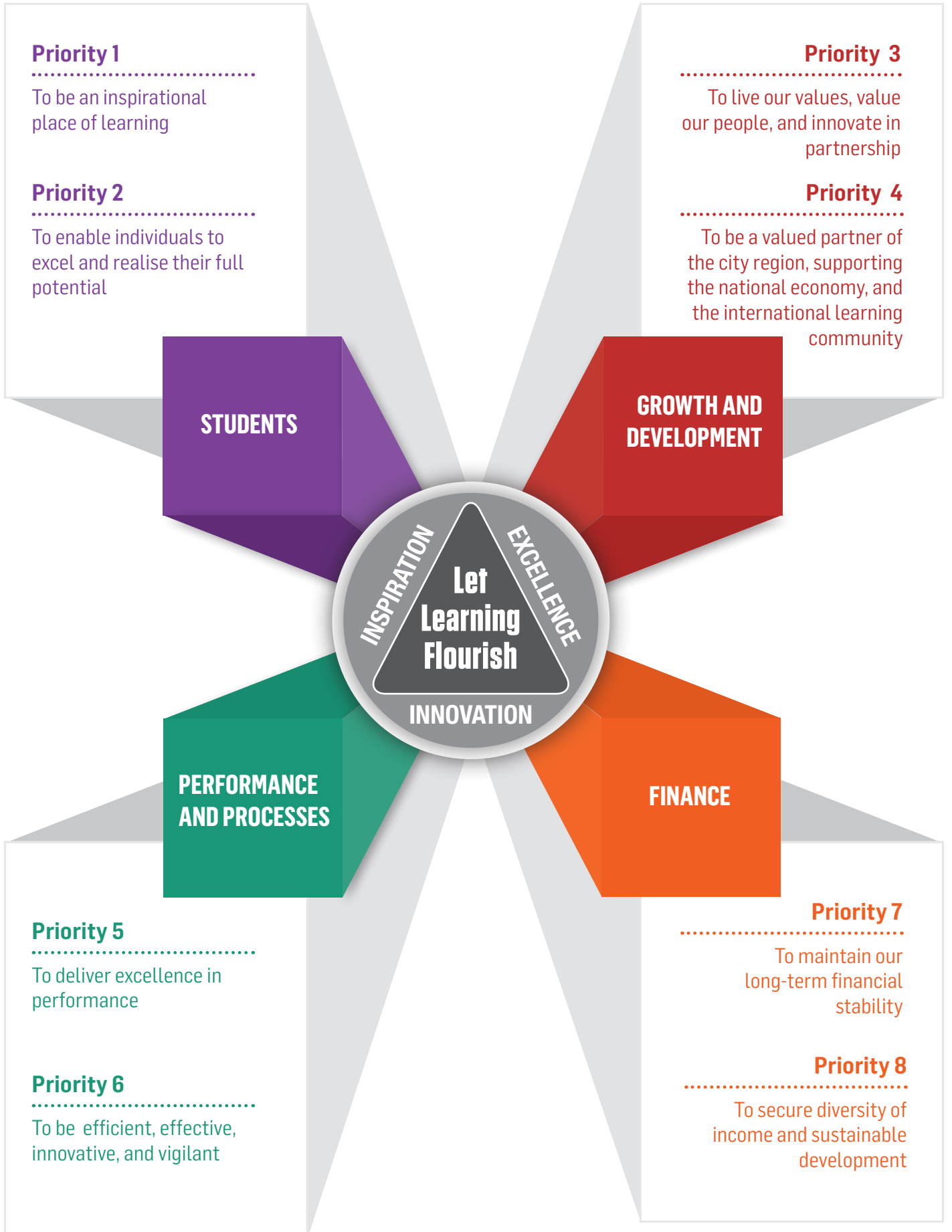


# Planning Cycle



The planning process consists of a cycle comprising:

- Board of Management/Senior Management Team review of the strategic operating environment
- Strategic Plan development with Level 1 Strategic Priorities and Level 2 Aims
- Management of Strategic Plan delivery via Operational Planning within the Delivery Framework
- Evaluative review of progress against operational targets
- Strategic Review of previous session and Annual Report





# Supporting Strategy and Performance

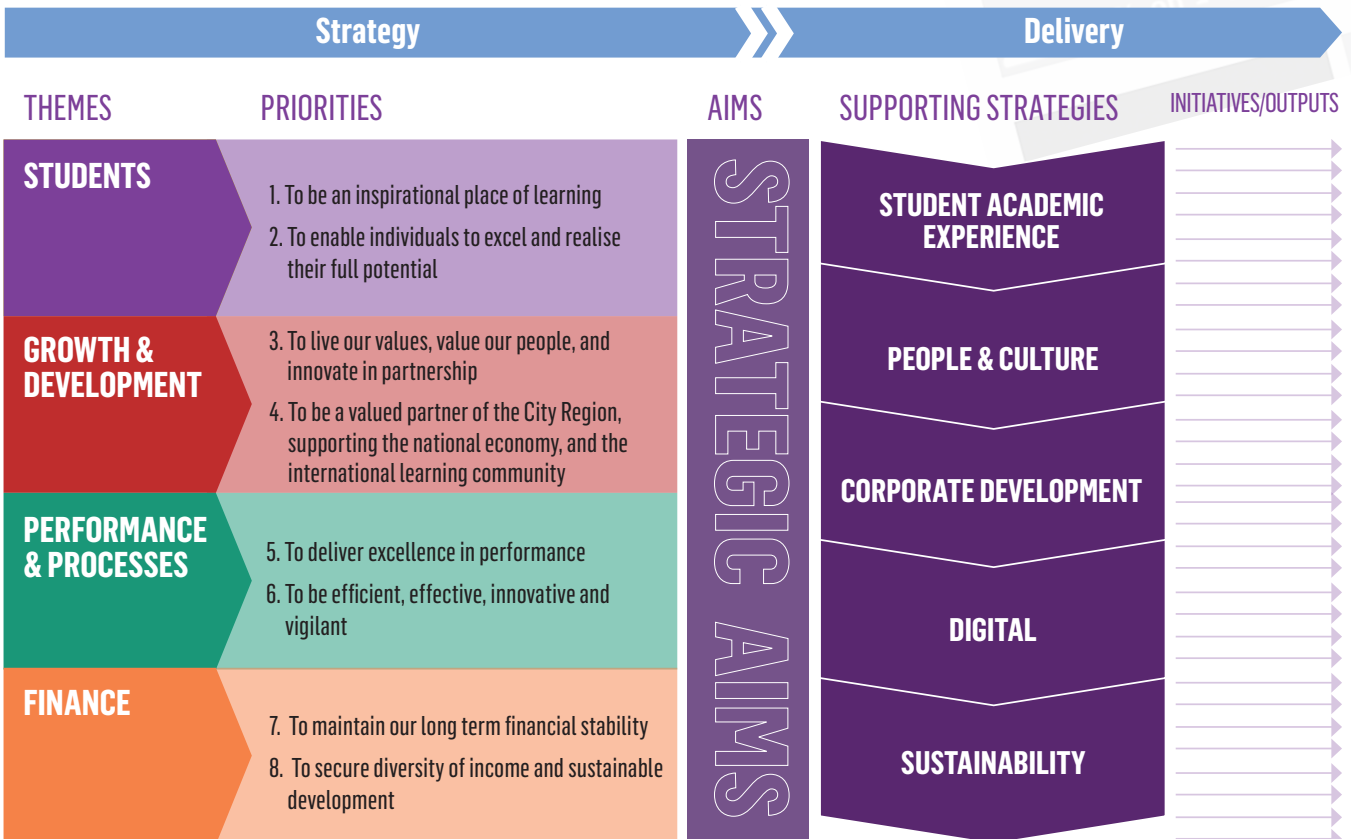
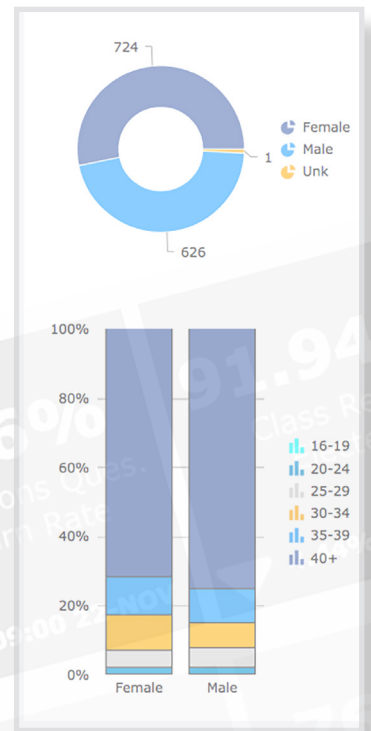
Throughout the life of the previous College Strategic Plan (2017-25), the Board of Management maintained careful scrutiny of progress against the College's strategic priorities and aims. As well as informing the development of this Strategic Plan 2021-30, this focus upon results facilitated a further refinement of key college strategies, and the development of a strategic delivery framework with aligned success measures, benchmarks, and targets, involving extensive stakeholder consultation.

The supporting strategies and related initiatives created by the Senior Management Team cover the following development areas:

- The Student Academic Experience
- People and Culture
- Corporate Development
- Digital
- Sustainability

The Board of Management and senior team access a real-time analysis of progress against these indicators, via a dedicated in-house live dashboard showing “up to the moment” statistical information. The evidence of the College's success will therefore be verified through a set of outcomes, which have been developed in alignment with the Plan.

The new College Strategic Plan, through its delivery framework and enablers, is designed to guide City of Glasgow College as a dynamically evolving, inspiring, innovative, agile organisation - delivering excellence into the next decade for our students, partners, and other stakeholders.





## Priority 1

To be an inspirational place of learning

## Priority 2

To enable individuals to excel and realise their full potential

## STUDENTS

### Strategic Aims

- 1.1 Ensure that the student experience of the College is inspirational.
- 1.2 Foster excellence, digital innovation, and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment.
- 1.3 Equip students with the knowledge, skills and experiences to flourish and continue to learn in an ever-changing and complex world.
- 1.4 Be an industry partner of choice, providing employment and career change opportunities.
- 2.1 Deliver sector leading student attainment for recognised qualifications.
- 2.2 Realise sector leading levels of student satisfaction with Learning and Teaching and the overall student experience.
- 2.3 Provide access and progression opportunities for all, through a broad, industry relevant curriculum for work and advanced study.
- 2.4 Overcome digital poverty barriers as a technology-inclusive college.
- 2.5 Encourage and support student involvement and a sense of ownership in all aspects of the student experience.



National Performance Framework  
nationalperformance.gov.scot

### Supporting the National outcomes:

- Fair Work & Business
- Education
- Children
- Health
- Human Rights
- Communities
- Culture
- Poverty
- International
- Environment
- Economy

### Strategic Aims

- 5.1 Achieve and retain national and international recognition standards of excellence and innovation.
- 5.2 Ensure a student-first culture is maintained and that service level agreements across all College services facilitate higher levels of customer satisfaction.
- 5.3 Ensure the achievement of globally recognised benchmarks for College processes.
- 6.1 Achieve optimum standards for infrastructure management efficiency, sustainability, and innovation.
- 6.2 Encourage innovative, adaptable, and enterprising ways of working, to achieve high levels of effectiveness, efficiency, and governance.
- 6.3 Improve workflow efficiency via a "digital first" strategy and intelligent process automation.
- 6.4 Fully exploit available data insights to meet strategic needs and identify future strategic opportunities.

## Priority 5

To deliver excellence in performance

## Priority 6

To be efficient, effective, innovative, and vigilant

## PERFORMANCE AND PROCESSES

## Strategic Aims

- 3.1 Support collaborative long-term resource planning and talent management to meet strategic needs, inclusive of a strong, visible, empowered, and inspirational leadership team.
- 3.2 Develop an environment that enables and supports world class employee health and wellbeing.
- 3.3 Promote a culture where all staff fully engage in the College Purpose, Values and Behaviours.
- 3.4 Establish systems that develop, recognise and reward service delivery and achievement.
- 3.5 Advance Fairness, Opportunity, and Respect for all.
  
- 4.1 Through innovation, and data insights, encourage collaborative working both internally and externally to the benefit of the College and wider society.
- 4.2 Enhance employability through curriculum development, and investments in "state of the art" industry-standard facilities.
- 4.3 Develop and support national centres of excellence.
- 4.4 Develop and support the College's international partnerships.
- 4.5 Achieve the highest supportive standards in occupational Health and Safety, providing benchmark working environments.

## Strategic Aims

- 7.1 Achieve an annual balanced financial operating position within a rolling three-year period.
- 7.2 Ensure the College continues to maintain a sustainable liquidity position.
- 7.3 Deliver SFC Credit and ROA targets and objectives
- 7.4 Deliver efficiency improvements and optimize teaching delivery resources.
  
- 8.1 Expand international and commercial activity to achieve income targets, maximizing new markets and opportunities.
- 8.2 Renew and develop the College's world-class campus to support recovery and growth, innovation, and emerging opportunities.
- 8.3 Ensure business continuity and value for money.

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

### Priority 3

To live our values, value our people, and innovate in partnership

### Priority 4

To be a valued partner of the city region, supporting the national economy, and the international learning community

#### Delivering for the Region

Diversity of Access  
Addressing Disadvantage

Inclusive

Childcare  
STEM  
Senior Phase  
Work Placement

Responsive

Student Attainment  
Articulation

Effective

GLASGOW  
COLLEGE  
REGION  
Regional  
Outcome  
Agreement

#### Delivering for the Tertiary Sector

Agile

Collaborative

Inclusive

Cumberford-  
Little Report:  
*One Tertiary  
System*

21st  
CENTURY  
COLLEGE:  
A New  
Purpose

## FINANCE

### Priority 7

To maintain our long-term financial stability

### Priority 8

To secure diversity of income and sustainable development

# **CITY** OF GLASGOW COLLEGE

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Let Learning Flourish



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