

# Strategic Plan 2015-18

Leading, Creating, Sharing  
Across Learning



## Foreword



This is the first strategic plan since our de-merger from Scotland's Colleges, and the first opportunity to develop a three-year plan for College Development Network (CDN). It presents a fresh vision for CDN which articulates our aspiration to be the 'go to' organisation for anyone working within, or connected to, the college sector in Scotland.

Our unique understanding of the college sector enables us to be highly responsive in delivering services within the context of the new regional landscape for colleges. This will be key to supporting the enhancement of practice for all college staff and ensuring they have access to the right support in the right way at the right time.

We already offer a rich blend of face to face and online learning, whether open access learning programmes or tailored consultancy services, based on the specific requirements of individual regions and colleges. Over the period of the strategy we will develop our innovative approaches to online learning in response to the needs of the sector.

In addition, we will work closely with key partners to facilitate delivery of the ambitions of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. In this regard CDN has a key role to play in connecting schools, colleges, higher education and employers.

We look forward to working with our partners and stakeholders to help provide young people with the sort of learning experiences which is directly relevant to getting a job and improving their life chances.



Paul Houlden, Chair

## Our purpose

The purpose of CDN is to support and promote the learning community in the college sector to contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of Scotland. We do this through the professional development of their people, resources and approaches to learning.

## Who we are

CDN is a charity guided by a Board with strong sector and industry representation. We are core funded by the Scottish Funding Council and achieve additional funding to support our purpose through our networks and projects. Our mission is to lead, influence and enable change and improvement across Scotland's college sector and beyond. Underpinning this is a commitment to partnership, working across the wider educational landscape to contribute to key economic drivers such as Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.



## Operating context

We are an evolving organisation operating within a sector in which technologies for learning play a developmental and incremental role in how we engage with our stakeholders and learners.

This is an exciting time for learning; seeing the merging of the formal and informal parts of learning, greater demands for flexible and personalised learning, and opportunities for the sector to reach deeper both into community learning and into the workplace to improve productivity.

The period of this strategic plan will be influenced by the:

- Embedding of the new College regional landscape in Scotland
- Refocusing of curriculum planning around regional outcomes
- Priorities around Developing Scotland's Young Workforce
- New sectorial funding and evaluation mechanisms
- Refreshed standards (by 2017) around entry and professional development for teaching staff in the sector.

CDN has a key role in translating policy drivers into practical actions for colleges. We will work in partnership at a college and strategic level to ensure that we design and deliver services that maximise value and benefits to the college sector. Within the context of a regionalised college landscape our work will place a greater focus on tailoring provision to the needs of the sector.

This strategic plan has been shaped through consultation across the sector, including by:

- college engagement
- extensive internal and external review process
- input from our Development Committee, comprising regional Chairs and senior college managers.

During the period of this plan closer partnerships will be built between schools, colleges, higher education and the workplace; and this offers CDN opportunities to forge broader partnerships and strengthen existing relationships.

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## What we do

Our unique position at the heart of the sector means that we understand the needs of colleges and offer high quality responsive services that are flexible, relevant and designed to impact in a positive way on learners' experiences and outcomes.

We develop partnerships that enable us to work closely with schools, colleges, higher education and employers in innovative ways that contribute to key policy drivers, such as Developing the Young Workforce.

CDN plays a pivotal role in leading, creating and sharing to promote and drive change and innovation. We do this by sharing and developing good practice to support high quality learning and teaching across the college sector and beyond. This work includes creating resources and acting as a hub for connecting practitioners across the sector by leading on a wide range of development networks.

Through our network activity we provide opportunities for those working across the sector to connect, discuss and share best practice, thereby supporting the enhancement of practice for all college staff. Working closely with college staff we support continuous improvement for the benefit of current and future learners through the provision of a wide range of professional development, consultation, advice and support to the college sector.



## Our Values

**Integrity** - We will operate at all times with honesty, openness and respect towards each other and those to whom we provide services. This value underpins all the values which follow:

**Passion** - We are passionate advocates that College Development Network can and will make a difference to all those to whom we provide services.

**Responsiveness** - We will respond effectively to fulfil the requirements of all our internal and external customers.

**Imagination** - We will creatively explore opportunities and solutions to the benefit of all our internal and external customers.

**Leadership** - We will empower our staff to lead confidently.

**Confidence** - We take pride that we have the right knowledge and skills to do the job.

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## Our ambitions

CDN is committed to ensuring that what we do aligns with and supports the achievement of the Scottish Government's National Outcomes.

We have a key role in contributing to the objectives of Developing the Young Workforce. This role will be shaped through strategic engagement with the Scottish Funding Council and other partners, supporting the work of colleges with schools and employers to deliver learning that is directly relevant to future employment.

To achieve this, we have identified six key ambitions:

1. We will promote and support high standards in Management, Leadership and Governance through a programme of ongoing support.
2. We will support high quality learning, teaching and assessment across the sector, assisting a greater flexibility in delivery and more opportunities for learners.
3. We will promote and support the effective culture and practice of sharing learning and assessment resources to improve quality and drive efficiencies.
4. We will work with colleges to develop sector wide expertise to support employer engagement and enterprise, and the effective use of labour market intelligence in supporting the Development of Scotland's Young Workforce.
5. We will facilitate closer partnerships with industry and across the public sector.
6. While retaining the high degree of support of our core customers in the college sector we will develop our ability to diversify our income streams to ensure our financial stability.

The following six themes have been created as the vehicles through which we will realise our ambitions.



## Our themes and programmes

### Strategic Theme One: Governance, Leadership and Management

#### We will:

- Assist in developing the sector's leadership and governance capacity at all levels, including emerging leaders, senior leaders, Principals and Board development programmes.
- Lead on effective practice around implementation of the Code of Good Governance.
- Create a framework for leadership CPD with in-service development programmes offering progression opportunities for emerging leaders, senior leaders and principals.
- We will share effective practice in organisational development across a range of disciplines, utilising the experience and expertise of relevant development networks.

### Strategic Theme Two: Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment

#### We will:

- Lead on opportunities for work-relevant, contextualised, appropriate and engaging curriculum design and delivery in the sector.
- Create strengthened relationships with relevant partner agencies to embed developing learning, teaching and assessment approaches across the sector.
- Demonstrate leadership on current and emerging theory and practice in learning, teaching and assessment through networks, workshops, online learning and webinars.
- Lead on opportunities that facilitate a culture of curriculum development and sharing of learning resources to support learning.
- Advance the access, inclusion and equality agenda across the sector.

### Strategic Theme Three: Development Networks

#### We will:

- Lead the direction of networks by increasing the opportunities for professional dialogue through development of online facilities to augment face to face meetings.
- Create opportunities for colleges to participate in relevant and ambitious partnership activities.
- Share best practice and drivers that influence and address current challenges.

## Strategic Theme Four: Employer Engagement and Enterprise

### We will:

- Lead on ambitious partnership initiatives on behalf of the college sector to support the delivery of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce
- Create and develop appropriate materials and opportunities to enhance employer involvement in curriculum development and build the capacity of colleges to deliver to industry standards.
- Share best practice in employer engagement and enterprise through events, webinars and use of social media.

## Strategic Theme Five: Quality and Digital Development

### We will:

- Lead development of content for the Professional Learning in Colleges Moodle platform to support accessible career-long professional development.
- Create a range of accredited learning units to support professional learning, including SQA, CMI qualifications and SCQF credit rated programmes.
- Share expertise across the sector and with key partners, as appropriate, to support sector capacity building in professional learning.
- Improve accessibility of CDN professional learning programmes for all college staff by using video conferencing and live streaming and increasing the range of webinars to include aspects of all key CDN activity.

## Strategic Theme Six: CDN's Sustainability

### We will:

- Demonstrate clear and purposeful strategic direction as an organisation and for the sector.
- Operate best practice in governance and internal management.
- Secure additional funding from a range of sources through high quality delivery.
- Evidence how we deliver a positive impact for the college sector.

## What will success look like?

This strategic plan along with key stakeholder engagement forms the basis of the development of our annual operational plan. Outcomes of our strategic and operational plan will be monitored using relevant performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes which will include quantitative and qualitative data based around our key performance indicators (KPIs).

In May 2015 Quality Scotland awarded us the EFQM Committed to Excellence kite mark and we will build on this achievement over the next three years as part of our commitment to excellence in all areas of our work.

