



NWRC

Draft

College Development Plan

2020-21



north west
regional college
Derry-Londonderry • Limavady • Strabane

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1. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Northern Ireland Further Education (FE) Colleges are required under Article 20 of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 to produce and publish annual business plans (College Development Plans).

The six FE colleges (collectively the FE sector) are Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) and a key delivery arm of the Department for the Economy (DfE). The FE sector is unique in that it has a dual mandate, taking a pivotal role in generating a strong and vibrant economy through the development of professional and technical skills, increasingly at higher levels, and by helping employers to innovate; and supporting social inclusion by providing those with low or no qualifications, or who have other barriers to learning, with the skills and qualifications needed to find employment and to become economically active. This College Development Plan (CDP) is for the financial year (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021) and demonstrates how each of the colleges contribute to the aims included in the sector wide Corporate Plan; *'The Further Education in Northern Ireland Corporate Plan which covers the period to 2021, **Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives**'* which sets out:

- how the colleges contribute to the delivery of key Government Strategies and Policies including Programme for Government (PfG), the draft Industrial Strategy, FE Means Success, and the NI Skills Barometer; and
- the sector's shared values and vision embodying a commitment to collaborative working and with DfE to provide skills solutions that meet current and emerging demands of the economy.

It is vital that the Northern Ireland skills system supports economic growth that is socially inclusive and builds the skills base necessary to fulfil the Executive's PfG aspirations. The FE Sector directly contributes to the following PfG Outcomes -

1. *We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy;*
5. *We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential;*
6. *We have more people working in better jobs.*

The FE sector is an essential component to supporting the delivery of these outcomes as developing a highly skilled and motivated workforce will be at the core of our economic recovery through the provision of high quality education and training. In full support of these goals, the Department's establishment of the seven Curriculum Hubs in key occupational areas (Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing, Digital IT, Construction, Health & Social Care, Life Sciences, Hospitality & Tourism and Entrepreneurship) focussed on priority skills and growth sectors of employment. The Curriculum Hubs concept aims to ensure, as a result of the activity

driven by the Hub Action Plans, the curriculum delivered is high quality, consistent, current and responsive to the needs and demands of each industrial area thereby increasing opportunities for economic development and performance in each field.

The FE sector will support the 'New Decade, New Approach' deal which outlines a series of priorities and ambitions for a reformed Executive including the development of "an enhanced approach to careers advice, curriculum, training and apprenticeships to enhance employability and support economic growth" and the development of "a regionally-balanced economy with opportunities for all".

However, in a very short space of time the global pandemic, COVID-19, has completely transformed the way we live, work and learn. The Department for the Economy has been developing a new Skills Strategy to replace "Success through Skills – Transforming Futures" to address the skills needs across Northern Ireland over the next decade. FE Colleges have played a key role in the development of the strategy. Despite the change in economic circumstances and uncertainty created by the pandemic the underlying key policy objectives over the next period remain consistent:

- Investing in our Digital skills across all sectors of our economy;
- Creating a culture of learning for all ages to include upskilling and reskilling in addition to innovation; and
- Reducing the skills imbalances in the workforce, with a particular focus on those with low or no skills.

What has changed is the pace and scale of the change that will be required and the need for investment in provision to deliver the new vision for our economic recovery. Creating a dynamic ecosystem where Government, Industry and Education providers can work in partnership will be a key priority.

Consideration has already been given to the key sectors in the Northern Ireland economy post COVID-19, as well as the need to improve productivity. Consistent in all of this work is the need to have a highly skilled and agile workforce. Providing support to those who face particular challenges and barriers to engaging in education will be important during the recovery phase of COVID-19. This includes students with a learning difficulty and or disability and students in the 3 prisons in Northern Ireland.

This can only be achieved through investment in high quality skills provision including a renewed focus on Digital skills, particularly for those already in the workforce who will need to adapt to new working practices post COVID-19. We are also very conscious of the need to develop suitable skills interventions that assist all sectors to adjust to the impacts of COVID – 19. This includes those that will:

- contract and consolidate (Agri-food, Hospitality and Tourism);
- need to maintain in order to support recovery, (construction, social care); and
- have potential for growth.

FE Colleges remain committed to maintaining standards and will contribute towards the recovery of the NI economy by providing the highest quality, economically relevant professional and technical education and training provision and delivering the skills needed for the economy. FE Colleges will assist employers to innovate and grow, developing suitable skills interventions that assist all sectors to adjust to the impacts of COVID-19, thereby increasing competitiveness and sustainability across the region.

2. CURRENT OPERATING ENVIRONMENT IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

The FE Sector has been hugely impacted by COVID-19: social distancing has changed the delivery of college provision and will be the new normal for the first term and the basis of the current advice for the foreseeable future. However, the FE sector has demonstrated its agility in responding to shifting economic demands and employers' need. While not without its challenges, the FE sector moved swiftly to online delivery and more than 75% of FE students engaged in remote learning.

A significant majority of the jobs which are keeping our economy afloat now are vocational including key trades like plumbing and joinery, health (and life sciences) and social care work, IT sector roles, manufacturing (including food manufacturing) and construction. These sectors are important now, will be central to economic recovery and are dependent on the FE sector to provide their talent pool. This CDP details how the FE Sector will capitalise on the achievements to date to ensure the needs of students, employers and communities are met as NI responds to, recovers from and renews itself following the pandemic.

The impact of COVID-19 on the labour market is not yet fully understood however indicators relating to April 2020 show the number of people claiming unemployment benefits increased by 26,500 over the month to approximately 56,200. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has ensured thousands of workers remain in employment. The scheme will close in October after which we will understand the full impact on the labour market. Early indications of the impact have though been identified by expert groups:

- Ulster Bank Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) reported a severe contraction in the local private sector in April with a steep decline in staffing levels, while business confidence continued to fall;
- KPMG has projected the Northern Ireland economy to contract by 6.4% in 2020. However, it is expected to be the least affected region of the UK due to hosting a relatively large share of food manufacturing businesses, life science businesses and government employment; and
- ONS data based on a new fortnightly business survey, reveals that 73.8% of NI businesses are continuing to trade, however, 62.7% of businesses have recorded a decrease in turnover.

The UK Government's short to medium term approach to exiting COVID-19 charts three phases: **Response, Recovery, Renew**. This CDP is set in the context of the **Response** phase, focusing on ensuring the skills 'infrastructure' is maintained and that all students are not disadvantaged, as well as moving as much delivery as possible on-line. In readiness for the Recovery and Renew phases, the wider FE sector will take a more medium-term approach to planning.

NI's future economic and social success is predicated on its ability to access a highly skilled, talented and flexible workforce to deliver a vibrant economy and inclusive society. Further Education Colleges will play a crucial role in supporting NI to move through to the Recovery and Renewal Phases. We will realign delivery models and adopt a digital first approach that will maximise reach, provide value for money and close potential inequality gaps.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles have been developed to set the direction for the 2020/21 CDP in light of the current operating environment:

1. There will be immediate short-term challenges, for example staff upskilling for delivery of high quality remote learning across all curriculum areas. This may limit the scale of delivery and our ability to achieve similar levels of value for money as we rapidly transition to remote delivery across the sector.
2. Social distancing is the new normal and delivery will be structured to reflect this. Classes will be balanced across the college week to optimise opportunities for students to enjoy face to face learning in a safe environment, in line with the agreed set of principles and guidelines developed through the work of the Departmental Advisory and Oversight Group on the safe resumption of onsite delivery.
3. The FE Sector will deliver the planned curriculum to the maximum number of students that is achievable in the current circumstances and will adopt a range of approaches including face to face.
4. Level one and Level two programmes will mostly take place through on-campus delivery. However, all full-time Level two programmes will include some online delivery to prepare students for progression.
5. Level three and Higher Education programmes must be blended for year 1 and year 2.
6. High quality and accessible on-line delivery will continue to be used during the phased return of on-site provision to deliver teaching and learning, provide student pastoral support, provide support to businesses, and upskilling programmes for individuals who wish to retrain or upskill.
7. Work with local employers will continue to provide apprenticeship and placement opportunities whilst ensuring the safety of staff and students.
8. Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 we will engage with businesses to:
 - Support employers through the provision of fully funded, tailored solutions through the Skills Focus Programme to increase the skills levels of the workforce; and
 - Facilitate small businesses in acquiring the skills to innovate, by delivering up to three InnovateUs upskilling projects per business, through which they work on developing new products, services or processes.
9. FE Sector recognises that every student will not have the same access to broadband and IT facilities to support remote learning from home and as such we will explore appropriate strategies to ensure that these students are not disadvantaged.
10. The FE Sector will continue to support the most disadvantaged in communities across NI by ensuring access to learning opportunities that lead to sustainable career pathways.

11. The Curriculum Hub Action Plans, if required, will be reviewed and revised in agreement with DfE, to ensure that actions are reflective of the most pertinent needs of the economy in each curricular area. The quarterly reporting of progress against targets will continue to provide the Department with robust assurance of each Hub's performance.

4. REGIONAL OPERATING CONTEXT - CHALLENGES

North West Regional College (NWRC) is the main provider of professional and technical education and training in the North West region with the main campuses located in Derry~Londonderry (Strand Road and Springtown), two campuses at Limavady (Main Street and Greystone) and a campus at Strabane. NWRC operates across two district councils, namely Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) and Causeway Coasts and Glens Council (CCG).



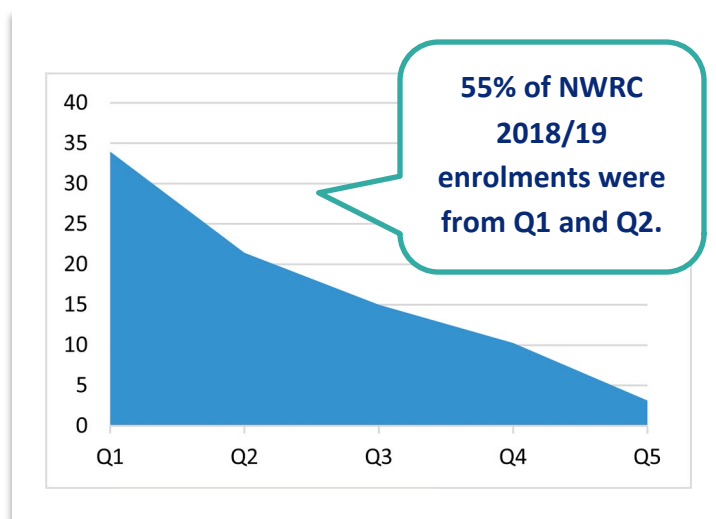
The industry standard learning and teaching facilities on our campuses provide aspirational and realistic environments for learning and we continue to be well placed to take on the challenge of enhancing the skills set of the population of the city and region. NWRC is particularly focused on enhancing the skills of those most impacted by COVID 19 by providing mentoring and bespoke offerings to meet the needs of businesses, learners in employment and those returning to employment to help revive the economy as well as helping people of all ages to compete in what will be a tougher labour market during and following COVID.

NWRC already operates in a very challenging socio-economic environment due to:

- High deprivation (Figure 1)
- High unemployment rates, with systemic long-term unemployment and disengagement from the skills escalator (Figure 2)
- Declining population rate of those aged 16+ in the NWRC catchment area impacting on Full Time enrolments (Figure 3 and Figure 4)
- Higher than average claimant counts (Figure 5)
- Skills gaps. In particular, Strabane working age population have very low rates of achievement of qualifications at Level 4 or above (Figure 2)
- Further competition from local schools in delivery of 14-19 vocational programmes reducing College recruitment to Entitlement Framework collaborations (Figure 6)
- Further competition from local universities adding to the impact of lower population numbers on recruitment to NWRC Higher Education programmes. (Figure 7)

➤ High Deprivation

Figure 1. NWRC Enrolments by Deprivation Quintile 2018/19¹



NWRC has the highest number of enrolments across the sector of students residing in areas identified in Deprivation Quintiles 1 and 2. These students can require additional support and guidance during their time at the College. Our Student Services team provide “*a team around the student*” support intervention service across all campuses aimed at supporting students who are struggling with their studies to overcome the barriers they face to their education and training.

The support team are made up of staff from:

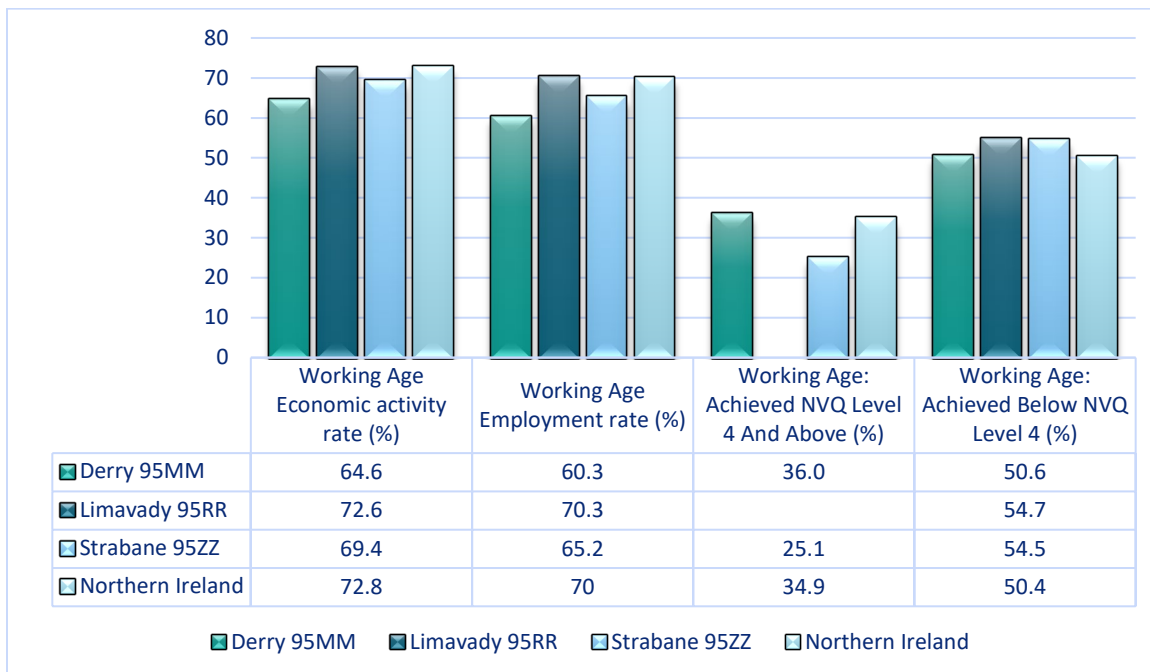
- Widening access
- Safeguarding
- Careers
- Learning Support
- Student Finance
- Students Union
- Student Health & Wellbeing.

The common purpose is improving the success of the student.

¹ Source: FE Activity in NI 2014/15 to 2018/19 Excel Table A17 <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/further-education-activity-northern-ireland-201819>

➤ High Unemployment

Figure 2. 2018 Economic activity and qualifications (administrative Geographies)²



NB: Limavady - data not sufficient to calculate an accurate % at Working Age: Achieved NVQ Level 4 and Above.

The percentage of working age population in Strabane that achieved NVQ Level 4 and above was 25.1% in 2018 this is almost 10% lower than the Northern Ireland average. The working age economic inactivity rate in the Strabane area is 31.6% and 35.4% in Derry~Londonderry these are both significantly higher than the Northern Ireland average of 27.2%

² Source: NISRA <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Home.aspx>

➤ Declining Population

Figure 3. Population of 16 year olds 2013 – 2021 in NWRC Catchment Area³

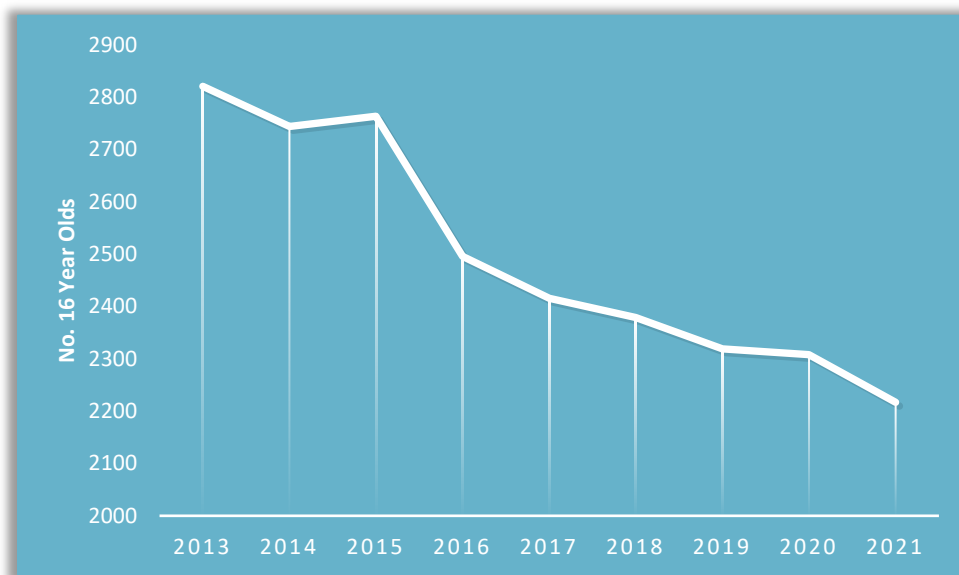
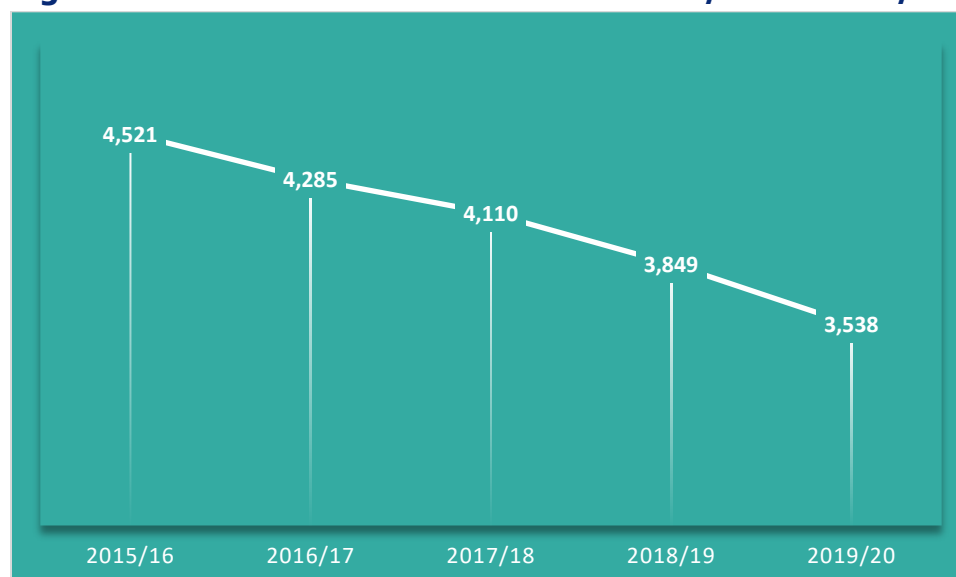


Figure 4. NWRC Full Time Enrolments 2015/16 to 2019/20⁴



It is evident from the graphs above that the reduction in the population of 16 year olds in the NWRC catchment area has had a negative impact on the Full Time enrolments at NWRC. According to the 2011 Census this trend is set to continue until 2022.

³ Source: 2011 Census <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/census/2011-census>

⁴ Source: FE Activity in NI 2014/15 to 2018/19 Excel Table A4 <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/further-education-activity-northern-ireland-201819> 2019/20 data from NWRC CDR.

➤ High Claimant Counts

Figure 5. June 2019 and June 2020 Percentage Claimant Count by District Council⁵

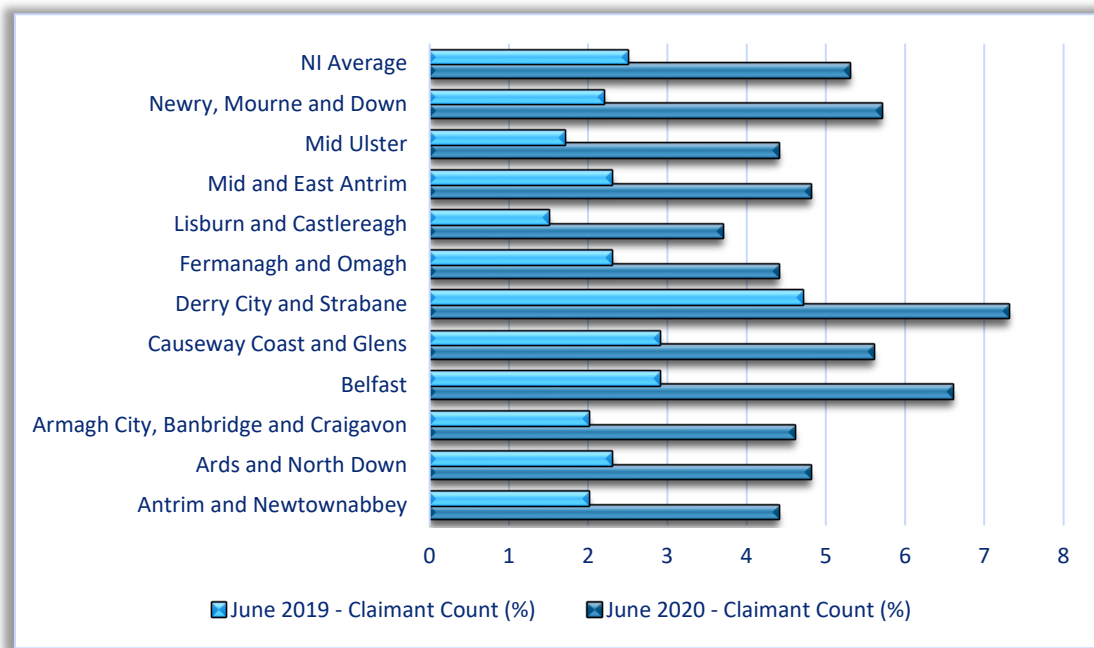


Figure 5 above shows that the impact of COVID 19 has led to an increased number of claimants in DCSDC region – the claimant count was 4.7% in June 2019 and has increased to 7.3% in June 2020. (note the NI average claimant count in June 2019 was only 2.5%)

The claimant count in the CCG region was 2.69% in 2019 (closer to the NI average) and this increased to 5.6% in June 2020.

If the city and region within which the College is located is to prosper then we need to continue in our dual mandate of helping to develop a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy and supporting social inclusion. We also need to continue to provide a balanced curriculum and an economic support service across the urban and rural districts that we serve. It is important that we assist all sectors to adjust to the impact of COVID 19 during this recovery phase by helping to address the skills needs of the city and region.

NWRC continues to play a central role in delivery of Local Government Community Planning. We are active members of Community Planning partnerships in both Derry City and Strabane

⁵Source: <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/InteractiveMapTheme.aspx?themeNumber=18&themeName=Labour+Market>

District Council (DCSDC) and in Causeway Coast and Glens (CCG). We remain central to the implementation of a shared plan for promoting better outcomes for everyone and continue to collaborate through these strategic partnerships during this phase of recovery.

Economic Consequences of COVID19

Figure 6. Estimates of economic impacts, by Council area and NI⁶

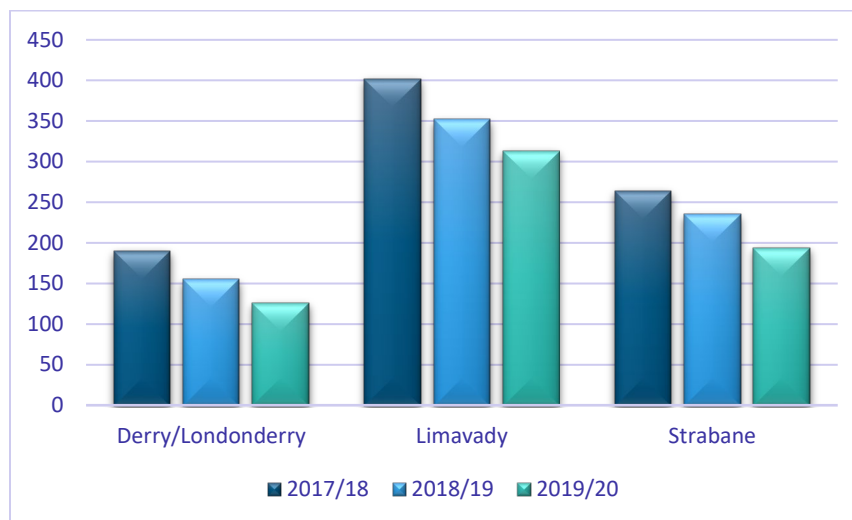
	Total Furloughed & Laid Off Employees	% decline in GVA, 2020
Antrim and Newtownabbey	21,200	-11.5%
Ards and North Down	12,400	-10.6%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	25,200	-10.6%
Belfast	67,200	-10.6%
Causeway Coast and Glens	14,300	-13.3%
Derry City and Strabane	15,900	-9.5%
Fermanagh and Omagh	13,000	-11.9%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	19,600	-9.3%
Mid and East Antrim	15,800	-15.2%
Mid Ulster	22,900	-16.3%
Newry, Mourne and Down	22,000	-12.0%
Northern Ireland	249,500	-12.7%

The economic impacts are very significant for the Council area of Derry City and Strabane, but proportionally are smaller than in other places. This is likely to be due to a diversity of sectors, the proportion of jobs open to remote working and the proportion in sectors such as Health and Education. The significant impact on Causeway Coast and Glens is likely due the importance of the hospitality and tourism sectors to this area. (CCG ranks 3rd most affected district council in Figure 6 above).

⁶ Source: UUEPC analysis https://www.ulster.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/574204/UUEPC-Economic-Consequences-of-Covid19-Paper-2.pdf

➤ Low Entitlement Framework Enrolments

Figure 7. Entitlement Framework Enrolments by Campus - 2017/18 to 2019/20⁷



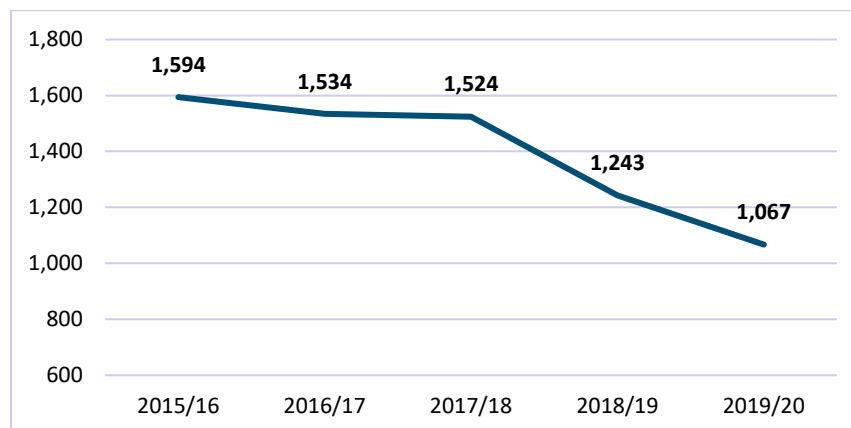
Increased competition from schools who now deliver vocational qualifications has had a negative impact on NWRC Entitlement Framework (EF) enrolments as can be seen in Figure 7 above. The declining trend is also due to the funding schools receive from DE which has reduced substantially.

We hope that the outworking of any new 14-19 Policy Framework will help to address this issue of competition between providers.

⁷ Source: NWRC CDR

➤ Higher Education Enrolments

Figure 8. NWRC HE Enrolments - 2015/16 to 2019/20⁸



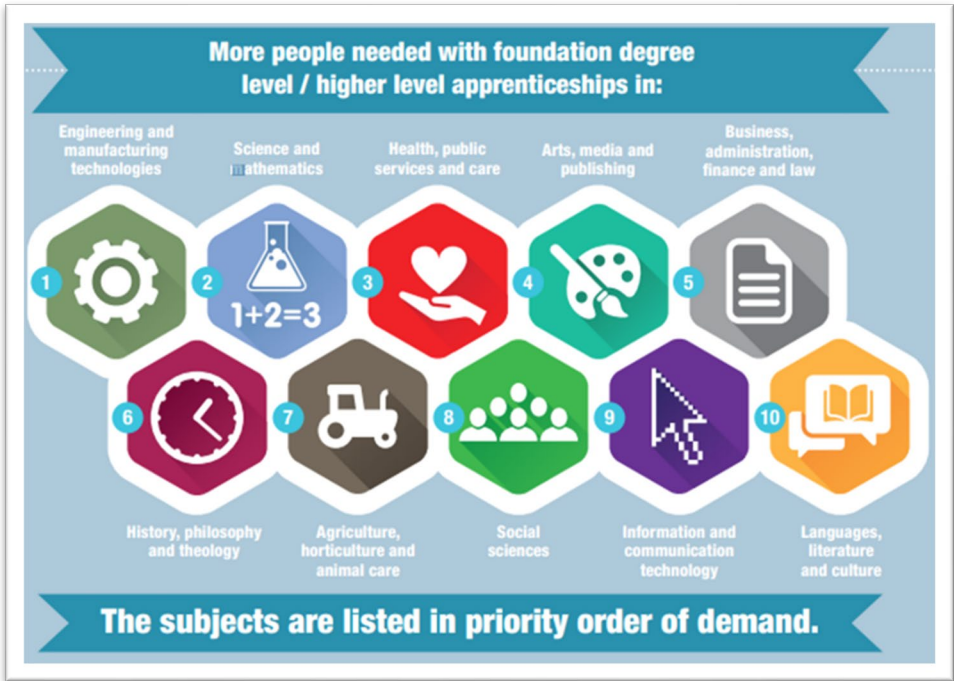
Higher education at NWRC has faced many recruitment challenges over the past three years. The 2018-19 MaSN of 710 was not achieved with only 80% of this target being achieved (568 gross enrolments). As a result of this the DfE reduced the college MaSN to 598 in 2019/20 and again to 541 in 2020/21. NWRC is impacted by the close proximity of the UU Magee Campus and UU Coleraine Campus and:

- Local Universities continue to show a trend in lowering their entry requirements through clearing.
- Over recent years UK Universities have increased the number of unconditional offers they make to applicants.
- Local Universities have committed significant investment to online delivery of learning programmes during lockdown and will continue to target learners, including those in our primary catchment area, as they have now become more accustomed to online learning.
- Recruitment to Foundation Degrees and HLAs with a substantial work placement module will be impacted by COVID 19 as UU advised to mitigate the inability to complete this module would result in these students achieving a Diploma rather than a Foundation Degree. However, the FE Sector has rejected this proposal as it may deter students from applying if it appeared a weaker/reduced qualification.
- The capacity of universities to offer Level 6 and above (Degree and postgraduate programmes) is available to learners, despite the economic implications of Level 4/5.
- We look forward to a new 14-19 Policy Framework and the out workings of the HE in Review.

⁸ Source: FE Activity in NI 2014/15 to 2018/19 Excel Table 3 <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/further-education-activity-northern-ireland-201819> 2019/20 data from NWRC CDR.

NWRC remains committed to reducing the skills deficit through delivery of Foundation Degrees and Higher Level Apprenticeships as recommended in the DfE Skills Barometer (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Skills Deficit as per the NI Skills Barometer 2019⁹



⁹ Source: NI Skills Barometer 2019 <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-skills-barometer-2019-update> (Published 31 July 2019)

BREXIT

Our Derry~Londonderry and Strabane campuses straddle a significant national jurisdictional border into Donegal in the Republic of Ireland. NWRC is part of the The North West Strategic Growth Partnership, in partnership with the Ulster University, Letterkenny Institute for Technology (LYIT) and Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB). Funding has been provided to promote cross-border education collaboration projects. NWRC plans to focus upcoming projects on reducing the impact of COVID 19 on cross border education exploring innovative methods of enhancing skills.

NWRC enrolments are made up of at least 10% from learners domiciled in the Republic of Ireland (Figure 10). It is expected that Brexit will negatively impact on these future enrolments.

Figure 10. NWRC Enrolments Domiciled in the Republic of Ireland¹⁰

Academic Year	% of NWRC Enrolments domiciled in RoI
2017/18	10.24%
2018/19	11.68%
2019/20	10.87%

Leaving the EU brings into focus a number of potentially challenging issues and implications. ROI enrolments each year are in excess of 1,600 creating significant income from Department funding and student fees, approximately 100 staff (12.5%) are from ROI and 15% of all job applications are from outside Northern Ireland. This reflects the region we live in, a cross-jurisdictional area.

The College is playing an active part within the EU Exit Working Group and is leading on one of the workstreams – ‘Cross Border and International Students’.

The College has drafted a Risk/Issues register and has developed a Day 1 Planning template.

Also, the differing jurisdictional regulations/guidance during COVID will bring challenges.

¹⁰ Source: NWRC CDR

Challenges faced by NWRC during COVID and actions being taken to reduce the negative impact on our students and staff:

CHALLENGE	COMMENT/ACTION
Securing Enrolments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With GCSE/A Level and many vocational results being “calculated” in 2019/20 outcomes were higher than expected in some areas. This resulted in many local schools retained post GCSE students to complete their Level 3 programmes. It also led to Universities making unconditional offers prior to results being released based on predicted grades and previous achievements. Therefore, enrolments are projected to be lower in both Level 3 FE and Higher Education programmes. Several marketing campaigns were launched throughout the summer months with a view to increasing applications. Pre and Post results dates - Information sessions were available online hosted by curriculum staff from each curriculum area to assist potential applicants with their decisions. Also, webinars and Q&A sessions were delivered online by the college’s Career Academy to assist young people make informed choices and set out the options available to them.
Digital Deprivation, lack of access to broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students at NWRC are domiciled in areas of high deprivation (Q1 or Q2). As a result, some students were unable to engage fully with online delivery due to digital deprivation/lack of broadband provision. However, all students tend to have mobile phones and where necessary teaching staff had engaged via different mobile phone apps e.g. Microsoft Teams. NWRC had provided laptops where possible to those most in need and the FE Sector intend to explore appropriate strategies to ensure that these students are not disadvantaged in 2020/21. NWRC intend to secure additional funding to improve available digital resources for these students. Those most in need will also be given the opportunity to access digital resources on campus at our Learning Resource Centre, computer labs etc. to enable them to participate in any class that is being delivered remotely. The TELs team plan to carry out a survey of student digital resources to assess the digital needs/broadband needs of students and provide support where possible.

CHALLENGE	COMMENT/ACTION
Curriculum Delivery Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College teaching staff, working with the College TELs Team, have developed innovative methods of embedding blended delivery in their provision. This is to ensure that both staff and students are familiar with digital platforms and online delivery should a further lockdown be necessary in 2020/21. The College are working with reviewed contractual guidance for TFS and APPNI along with the likelihood of a reduction in work placements and employment provision in 2020/21. Course teams and the Quality Enhancement Unit are liaising with relevant Awarding Organisations to seek guidance on what mitigating evidence may be applied to reduce the need for work placements should business sectors need to shut down due to a second wave of COVID.
Completion of 2019/20 Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were a lot of delays in receiving guidance from Awarding Bodies on how to mitigate these outcomes and adapt assessments to enable those students to complete their qualification. NWRC course teams and support staff worked diligently in the weeks leading up to July 2020 to assess/calculate grades where possible, following the guidance set out by Awarding Organisations. This proficient work lead to NWRC receiving very few appeals. NWRC is a large provider of work-based learning programmes and this has resulted in some students being unable to complete their qualification in 2019/20 academic year. These students will achieve their qualification once the work-based units are completed in 2020/21. Unfortunately, many of the students affected by this are studying in the areas of Health and Social Care or Childhood studies and at present it is not known when they will be allowed to return to their work placements due to ongoing COVID concerns in these sectors. Course teams are working with Awarding Organisations to seek guidance on how to mitigate this impact. The DfE granted the six FE Colleges access to campuses for small groups of students and staff to enable outstanding practical assessments to be completed before the start of the 2020/21 academic year. To enable this to happen support and academic staff carried out extensive planning and preparation to ensure the safety of both staff and students and full compliance with Government and PHA regulations/guidance. This was successfully delivered in June/July/August for a significant number of those students. However, there have been some delays into September due to COVID restrictions impacting staff availability.

CHALLENGE	COMMENT/ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are around 342 learners expected to complete their qualification by October 2020. ○ There will also be 62 learners unable to complete their qualification due to work placement requirements set by Awarding Organisations.
Student Work Placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As mentioned above, due to an inability to complete the necessary work placement hours some students will not be able to complete the qualification before September 2020. Curriculum teams are currently planning on how to resolve this issue so that those students can complete their qualification as soon as is practicably possible. ● Work based learning programmes require work placements to be secured for our students. As a result of the projected economic downturn it is anticipated that placements will become increasingly difficult to secure for our young people. ● Work is ongoing with local employers to provide apprenticeship and placement opportunities whilst ensuring the safety of staff and students. ● However, the implementation of regional lockdowns may impact on local businesses ability to remain open, impacting placements in these industries. ● Guidance from Awarding Organisations on how the college can mitigate work placement issues is essential. ● Also, some industries are yet to reopen due to current restrictions and this too will impact on student placements for FE, HE, TFS and APPNI students.
Social Distancing and Return to Campus in 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff and students are required complete COVID questionnaires prior to returning to campus. Any Student health concerns are followed up by Student Services staff. Any staff health concerns are followed up by HR Services and Occupational Health, where deemed necessary. All will be encouraged to download the government Track and Trace app.

CHALLENGE	COMMENT/ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing is the new normal and delivery will be structured to reflect this. Classes will be balanced across the college week to optimise opportunities for students to enjoy face to face learning in line with the agreed set of principles in Section 3 and adherence to the FE Colleges Framework for the safe resumption of on-site educational provision and related activity¹¹. NWRC curriculum staff along with the Health and Safety Officer have assessed classrooms for maximum capacity to ensure adherence to the 2-meter rule. • NWRC Student Services now provide a lot of their services online developing informative videos with the TELs team. Induction will be delivered online and students are able to meet with student support staff online or in person to resolve queries in relation to their course, safeguarding concerns, additional support needs, student finance and COVID health queries. • Entitlement Framework students will be required to adhere to College guidelines and an addendum to the Learning Community SLAs has been circulated setting out the agreed responsibility of Schools and the College. • High quality and accessible on-line delivery will continue to be used during the phased return of on-site provision to deliver teaching and learning, provide student pastoral support, provide support to businesses, and upskilling programmes for individuals who wish to retrain or upskill. • COVID induction questionnaires and information videos are available to staff and students and these must be completed prior to arrival on campus. Checks will be made during the phased return of students to ensure every student has completed their COVID induction and responded to the questionnaire. • The College is appointing a COVID officer to develop the COVID management plan for students and staff that commenced under the College Operational Recovery Group and sub committees during lockdown.

¹¹ Source: DfE website - <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/framework-safe-resumption-site-educational-provision-and-related-activity>

CHALLENGE	COMMENT/ACTION
Supporting Local Business and Upskilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Business Support Centre (BSC) at NWRC will continue to support employers through the provision of fully funded, tailored solutions through the Skills Focus Programme to increase the skills levels of the workforce. • In July 2020 NWRC was successful in securing £37K funding to deliver online part time upskilling for workers displaced by COVID 19 in the College catchment area through the DfE COVID Short Term Skills Intervention programme. • In August 2020 NWRC submitted a bid totalling £500K for DfE COVID II Skills funding. This included a range of courses in areas such as IT and Digital technologies, Green Technologies, Life and Health Science, Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Health and Social Care and Leadership and Management. • The NWRC BSC will continue to facilitate small businesses in acquiring the skills to innovate, by delivering InnovateUs upskilling projects with businesses, on developing new products, services or processes.
Delivering HMP Magilligan Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main challenges delivering education programmes in a prison setting at present would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ lack of access to IT for students ○ limited number of virtual classes that can be supported by NIPS ○ Classes can only be comprised of students from the same accommodation blocks (difficulties in getting reasonable numbers in many areas) ○ teaching facilities are small so to ensure social distancing class numbers are reduced ○ Limited access to students (2 days per week) resulting in the need to lengthen course durations (as a result many students will not have sufficient time to complete) ○ Lack of warning from the Prison Service when they schedule a lockdown – this impacts on the time required to prepare students and materials for virtual teaching. ○ Difficulties with introducing Health and Safety measures (PPE, social distancing; cleaning regime) in areas that are not part of the College Estate. • Since March 2020, the college has support student learning through the distribution of materials/workbooks in all subject areas and virtual delivery commenced in six curriculum areas in June 2020.

CHALLENGE	COMMENT/ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new programme of virtual learning (10 programmes) has been designed in was introduced on 3 August 2020. There are plans in place to expand this offer and provide increased blended learning. Face to face teaching was re-introduced in six curriculum areas in September 2020 along with virtual delivery. • Some of the positive impacts during 2019/20 were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All courses delivered were offered to Level 2 with 15% offered at Level 3 ✓ 62% of transferees from HMP Maghaberry that had not previously engaged in education are participating in full award programmes within 30 days of transfer to HMP Magilligan. ✓ 98% of learners in 2019/20 rated their experience of Learning and Skills as being “positive” or “very positive” ✓ Learners won an unprecedented number of awards in 2019/20 in national student competitions in Creative Writing; Art and Barbering (Listowel & Koestler). ✓ NWRC Magilligan delivered the first SkillsBuild competition in October 2019 and it is envisaged it will be the venue for a Northern Ireland inter-prison competition in 2021 and an All Ireland prison competition in 2022.
Delivering Community/Outreach Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWRC will continue to support the most disadvantaged in our communities by ensuring access to learning opportunities that lead to sustainable career pathways. Our Community team are working with our Health and Safety Officer to ensure our staff and students are in a position to adhere to the COVID guidance set out the FE Colleges Framework for the safe resumption of on-site educational provision and related activity¹² at the relevant outreach centres. • Some of the positive impacts during 2019/20 were <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SEN provision, providing an invaluable source of personal, social and education development to participants made up 44% of the community enrolments. ✓ Accredited courses delivered in the community increased by 2% from 2018/19 to 2019/20 ✓ Community enrolments in the Limavady area increased by 47% from 2018/19 to 2019/20 where new centres were engaged to expand the reach of the provision. ✓ Retention on accredited programmes in 2019/20 was maintained in 2019/20 at 98.6% ✓ Achievement and Success rates for 2018/19 were 90.3% and 89% respectively

¹² Source: DfE website - <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/framework-safe-resumption-site-educational-provision-and-related-activity>

NWRC remains committed to maintaining standards and will contribute towards the recovery of the local economy by providing the highest quality, economically relevant professional and technical education and training provision and delivering the skills needed for the economy. NWRC will assist employers to innovate and grow, developing suitable skills interventions that assist all sectors to adjust to the impacts of COVID-19, thereby increasing competitiveness and sustainability across the region.

College Development Plan (CDP) 2020/21

Article 20 of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 requires that each College should prepare a College Development Plan (CDP). This CDP is our business plan for 2020/21 and it has been submitted to the Department for the Economy (DfE) to fulfil our statutory requirement.

5. PLANNED ACTIVITY

The tables below set out the College's planned activity for the 2020/21 year (in-light of an Indicative Resource Allocation of £27.5M) in support of the PfG Outcomes.

RESIDUAL 2019/20 QUALIFICATIONS	
PfG Outcomes to which we contribute: 1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy 6: We have more people working in better jobs	
Area of Planned Activity	Planned Activity
FE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L0-3 • FT & PT • Excluding Essential Skills 	347 No. of enrolments equating to 347 No. of Individuals
HE in FE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L4-6 • F/T 	Completed by adapted assessment/calculated grading prior to September 2020
HE in FE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L4-6 • P/T 	7 No. of enrolments equating to 7 No. of Individuals
TfS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L0-3 	31 No. of enrolments equating to 31 No. of Individuals
AppsNI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L2 - 3 	19 No. of enrolments equating to 19 No. of apprentices registered for training
HLAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L4-5 	Completed by adapted assessment/calculated grading prior to September 2020
Essential Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole College Provision 	Completed by adapted assessment/calculated grading prior to September 2020

2020/21 QUALIFICATIONS <i>(excludes residual 2019/20 activity)</i>		
PfG Outcomes to which we contribute: 1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy 6: We have more people working in better jobs		
Area of Planned Activity	Planned Activity For 20/21	19/20 Activity
FE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L0-3 • FT & PT • Excluding Essential Skills • Data source: CDR 	10,829 enrolments equating to 8,122 Individuals	9,993 enrolments equating to 7,495 individuals
HE in FE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L4-6 • F/T • Data source: CDR 	541 (MaSN) enrolments equating to 541 Individuals	517 (MaSN) enrolments equating to 517 individuals
HE in FE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L4-6 • P/T • Data source: CDR 	523 enrolments equating to 523 Individuals	435 enrolments equating to 435 individuals
TfS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L0-3 • Data source: CRM 	422 enrolments equating to 227 Individuals	610 enrolments equating to 247 individuals
AppsNI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L2 - 3 • Data source: CRM 	371 No. of enrolments equating to 371* apprentices registered for training <i>(* could be impacted by current Government incentive to increase Apprenticeships)</i> The progression of 90% of AppsNI apprenticeships into their final year of study <i>(lower target due to impact of COVID on apprenticeship employment)</i>	420 enrolments equating to 412 individuals The progression of 91% of APPNI apprenticeships into their final year of study

2020/21 QUALIFICATIONS <i>(excludes residual 2019/20 activity)</i>		
PfG Outcomes to which we contribute: 1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy 6: We have more people working in better jobs		
Area of Planned Activity	Planned Activity For 20/21	19/20 Activity
HLAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> L4-5 Data source: CDR 	69 enrolments equating to 69 individual Higher Level Apprentices	85 enrolments equating to 85 individuals
Essential Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole College Provision Data source: CDR 	1,762 enrolments equating to 1,198 individuals. <i>(lower target due to COVID impact on delivery to outreach centres/room capacity)</i>	2,033 enrolments equating to 1,397 individuals
Priority Sector Areas and / or STEM (PSSA)¹³: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole College Provision Data source: CDR 	7,389 PSSA enrolments equating to 6,121 individuals enrolled in in one or more PSSA subjects 5,542 No. of final year students enrolled in one or more PSSA subjects	5,980 of PSSA enrolments equating to 5,497 individuals enrolled in one or more PSSA subject 4,467 final year students enrolled in one or more PSSA subject

¹³ The Priority Sector Area and / or STEM performance measure incorporates not only the Priority Sector Areas as previously measured, but also STEM subjects

EMPLOYERS

PfG Outcomes to which we contribute:

1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy

5: We are an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential

Area of Planned Activity	Planned Activity for 20/21	19/20 Activity
InnovateUs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021 Data source: SPICE 	70 projects delivered through the InnovateUs programme £320K of projects planned to be completed (budget spend)	Target of 70 projects to deliver in Financial Year 2019/2020. Exceeded target completing 75 projects. £325K of projects completed (budget spend)
Skills Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> L2+ 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021 Data source: SPICE 	220 enrolments undertaking a Level 2 (and above) qualification through the Skills Focus Programme	Target of 220 enrolments undertaking a Level 2 and above qualification. Exceeded target with 222 enrolments in Financial Year 2019/2020.
Assured Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> L0-8 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021 	To deliver 4 Assured Skills Academies (Fintru and Alchemy)	Target to deliver 6 Assured Skills Academies in the Financial Year 2019/2020. This was achieved. (Fintru and Alchemy)
Other Programmes		
Fusion Projects	16 Fusion Projects	Target of 24 Fusion Projects which was exceeded with 29 Fusion Projects in Financial Year 2019/2020.
Innovation Voucher Scheme	25 vouchers	Target of 25 Innovation vouchers was exceeded, achieving 30 Innovation vouchers in Financial Year 2019/2020.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

PfG Outcomes to which we contribute:

1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy

6: We have more people working in better jobs

Area of Planned Activity (Data source: CDR)	Planned Activity for 20/21	19/20 Activity
Enrolments within Quintile 1 and 2	7,850	7,839
Enrolments declaring a disability / long term health problem	3,899	3,652
Enrolments on Entry Level and Level 1 Programmes (including Essential Skills)	4,602	4,675
Enrolments on Targeted Programmes i.e. Collect Connect, Prince's Trust	85	76
Enrolments on ESOL Programmes	45	46
No. of Prisoners registered for Accredited Qualifications (HMP Magilligan)	597 qualifications (346 individuals)	541 qualifications (314 individuals)
Community Education Enrolments (including "Returners" programme) (excluding Essential Skills)	1,516 <i>(lower target due to room capacity at outreach centres and impact of COVID)</i>	2,427 (excl. ESK and Skills Focus)
Overall number of individuals supported by above measures	6,508	6,648
% Curriculum that is accredited	85%	85%

OVERALL COLLEGE PERFORMANCE

Performance Indicator	Planned Activity for 20/21	18/19 Performance
Retention Rate: The proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their final year of study to the number of final year enrolments.	90% (as may be impacted by delays with PT payments due to implementation of new LMS)	92%
Achievement Rate: The percentage of the number of enrolments who completed their final year of study and achieve their qualifications to the number of enrolments who completed their final year of study.	89%	86%
Success Rate: The proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their final year of study and achieve their qualification to the number of final year enrolments.	80%	79%