

## REVIEW OF SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES

### WORKING GROUP: STAFFING, LEARNERS & LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

#### LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS

#### Purpose

1. The Working Group was tasked with examining opportunities for the further modernisation and improvement of learning and teaching methods in the college sector. This discussion paper provides members with:
  - background information on some of the reviews conducted by HMIE on the learning and teaching processes within colleges;
  - an outline of the activities colleges are undertaking to further improve the existing high standard of learning and teaching taking place within the sector; and
  - areas for further modernisation which may require additional research.

#### Evidence Base

2. In February 2005, HMIE reported<sup>1</sup> that, over the four year period 2000-01 to 2003-04, all of the then 46 colleges had been reviewed and that almost all of the grades awarded for their staff were either 'Very Good' or 'Good'. One section focused on the two subject review quality elements which arguably provide the most direct evidence of the quality of the learner experience. These are the learning and teaching process and student achievement.
3. Furthermore, the HMIE report identified a number of particular strengths in the learning and teaching process. These included:
  - the use of a wide range of stimulating learning and teaching approaches that have fostered and maintained the interest of learners;
  - staff links with external agencies and individuals, which incorporated within curriculum delivery many innovative externally-based activities (such as placements, which give learners valuable insights into real-world situations);
  - skilful questioning techniques, and other effective methods of interaction that have helped to encourage learners to be active participants, take responsibility for their own learning and obtain regular feedback on their progress; and
  - imaginative use of ICT and other modern learning aids, which has enhanced learning opportunities, extended the scope of student activity, and helped to develop investigative and employability skills.

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<sup>1</sup> Reviews of Quality and Standards in Further Education: An Overview: Academic Years 2000/01 to 2003/04:

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/HMIE%20Reviews%20of%20Q&S%20in%20FE%2000-01%20to%202003-04.pdf>

4. The report also identified a number of particular strengths in student achievement. These included:
  - building on helpful initial guidance and sensitive support, allowing many initially hesitant learners to gain in self-confidence, acquire essential core skills, and develop self-esteem;
  - in most instances, learners were progressing well within class and through coursework; and
  - on many programmes, most, or almost all, learners were obtaining the named award associated with their chosen course of study.
  
5. The report also identified factors which can hinder the learning and teaching process and student achievement. These included:
  - poor accommodation and outdated or insufficient equipment, which provided a serious disincentive to learners;
  - excessive or inappropriate assessment practices that obstructed rather than aided learning and teaching, burdened students unnecessarily and demotivated staff;
  - insufficient staff development and ineffective career review processes that left subject staff not well-enough equipped to provide learners with the help and support needed for a relevant and rewarding education and training experience; and
  - the use of a narrow range of learning and teaching approaches.
  
6. It is important to note that some of the factors detailed above have subsequently been addressed. In particular, significant estates development is underway in colleges and universities, with funding totalling some £600m. The renewal of college buildings and facilities will help to provide modern and flexible learning environments for learners and staff, potentially leading to significant improvements in the student experience.
  
7. The table below, which is taken from the report, highlights the overall distribution of 'Very Good' and 'Good' grades for all subject review elements. It clearly shows that teaching and learning processes achieved a consistently high percentage of those two grades. HMIE uses the term 'Very Good' to mean 'major strengths' and 'Good' to mean 'strengths outweigh weaknesses'

| <b>Review element</b>           | <b>2000/01</b> | <b>2001/02</b> | <b>2002/03</b> | <b>2003/04</b> |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Quality assurance & improvement | 50%            | 55%            | 65%            | 81%            |
| Student achievement             | 63%            | 69%            | 71%            | 74%            |
| Accommodating for learning      | 78%            | 75%            | 65%            | 90%            |
| Assessment                      | 87%            | 80%            | 81%            | 89%            |
| Programme design                | 95%            | 86%            | 92%            | 89%            |
| Equipment & materials           | 84%            | 87%            | 90%            | 96%            |
| Guidance & learner support      | 87%            | 95%            | 96%            | 100%           |
| Staff                           | 95%            | 95%            | 97%            | 100%           |
| Teaching & learning process     | 96%            | 100%           | 100%           | 99%            |

8. The high level of these grades is reassuring. In order to continually maintain this level, colleges actively address the areas highlighted for improvement during the review process. The effectiveness of this approach is evidenced by the improvements between academic sessions 2003-04 and subsequent reviews detailed below.
9. In academic year 2003-04, 13 colleges were reviewed. The quality grades awarded for teaching and learning in the subject reviews were 73% Good and 26% Very Good. Overall, this was a positive outcome. In order to grade the learning and teaching process, reviewers used observation of learning as an integral piece of evidence. 933 episodes of learning were observed and graded, of which 40% were Very Good, 53% Good, 6% Fair and less than 1% Unsatisfactory. Since 2005, HMIE have conducted another 18 college reviews. The results from these showed that, out of 128 subject areas reviewed, the learning and teaching process was Very Good in 56 subject areas (44%) and Good in 71 (55%). Only one college had a subject review which was neither Very Good nor Good.
10. In February 2005, HMIE published its 'Analysis of HMIE Reviews of Quality and Standards in Further Education Academic Year 2003/04'<sup>2</sup>. This highlighted areas of good practice in the teaching and learning process in subject reviews and advised on further improving the systematic evaluation of learning and teaching.
11. More recently, HMIE published its 'Analysis of Reviews of Quality and Standards in Further Education: Academic Year 2004/05'<sup>3</sup>. The review model introduced in 2004-05 has evolved to match the progress made by colleges in taking forward quality assurance arrangements during the previous review periods. For example, reviewers no longer grade the individual lessons that they observe, but award only overall grades for learning and teaching in each of the subject areas being reviewed.
12. The main themes which emerge from HMIE reviews in relation to the learning and teaching process (A5) are as follows:
  - That learners displayed high levels of motivation and engagement. Colleges were successfully motivating their students to be involved in classroom activities and adopt positive attitudes to their studies.
  - That colleges had planned and deployed effective and appropriate learning and teaching approaches. This contributed significantly to fostering and maintaining learners' interest, and generally enriching the learning experience.

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<sup>2</sup> Go to:

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/Analysis%20of%20HMIE%20Reviews%20S&Q%20FE%200304.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Go to:

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/Analysis%20of%20HMIE%20Reviews%20of%20QSinFE.pdf>

- That Staff were well qualified and generally kept their subject knowledge up-to-date. Most staff combined an appropriate level of subject knowledge with an understanding of current sector practice to provide students with a good quality learning experience.
13. The use of ICT resources to support learning shows both good practice, such as that demonstrated by Dundee and Angus Colleges, and the need for specific colleges to improve. This theme accounted for 19% of all recorded weaknesses across subject reviews and was the main weakness reported for A5 in three out of the seven colleges reviewed. Colleges have been working hard to improve their performance in this area and examples of current projects and CPD training are detailed later on in this paper.
  14. In February 2006, HMIE published 'Improving Scottish Education'<sup>4</sup>. This stated that most college environments and teaching and learning approaches fostered and maintained the interests of learners and highlighted areas of sector-leading and innovative practices, worthy of dissemination. These have been incorporated in the 'Good Practice' section of the HMIE website. The Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU) works across all colleges, and in partnership with HMIE, to share and support good practice.
  15. Retention and achievement levels of students are a key priority for the college sector. Work by SFEU has shown that there is no single factor underlying retention and achievement levels. It also suggests that approaches to improving these factors must be tailored to particular circumstances supported by a college-wide culture of continuous improvement and recognition of the value of self-evaluation.
  16. The Scottish Funding Council recently published the student and staff performance indicators for further education colleges in Scotland 2004-05<sup>5</sup>. These show that the overall retention, completion and achievement rates for 2004-05 have also increased from the levels achieved in 2003-04. One area which is not fully reflected in this report is the contribution of colleges to those students who do not complete qualifications but leave to take up employment. This may be worthy of future examination by the sector and the SFC.
  17. The Scottish Funding Council also published, in September 2005, the results from a survey of the experience and satisfaction of students in all types of further and higher education institutions across Scotland<sup>6</sup>. This included the key findings that 92% of college students were satisfied with the overall quality of their learning experience and that 91% were satisfied with the college as a whole. The corresponding figures for HE institutions were 88% and 90%.
  18. Evidence shows that the college sector is, in the main, delivering a high quality service to students, which continues to improve both the learning and

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<sup>4</sup> Go to: <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hmieise.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Go to: [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications/FE\\_Staff\\_and\\_Student\\_PI's\\_2004-05.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications/FE_Staff_and_Student_PI's_2004-05.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Survey of student experience (2005) (previous 2001, 2003).

[http://www.sfc.ac.uk/library/06854fc203db2fbd00000106ee833b1f/student\\_survey\\_report.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/library/06854fc203db2fbd00000106ee833b1f/student_survey_report.pdf)

teaching process and the student experience. Substantial activity has, and is, being undertaken throughout the college sector to continue this progress. HMIE reviews appear to show two areas, other than external factors (such as finance, family care responsibilities and health status), which affect the student experience. These are **learning and teaching input** and the **learning environment**. The remainder of this paper will examine activity in support of these two areas.

## **Learning and Teaching Input**

19. Learning and teaching can be considered to consist of three elements: the knowledge, skills and behaviour of the lecturer, the resources and environment in which the interaction takes place and, of course, the student. The SFC and colleges have made major investments in estates and resources for learning and teaching. This section of the report examines activity supporting the on-going development of lecturers' knowledge, skills and behaviour.
20. Learning and teaching involves complex human interactions and is neither a rational nor mechanistic process. Nevertheless, it is helpful for lecturers to practice within a pedagogical framework based on sound research. Such a framework reflects the policy and resource context within which teaching takes place and establishes acceptable levels of performance through achievement of assessed competence.
21. Lifelong Learning UK is the Sector Skills Council charged with identifying the national occupational standards against which competence can be assessed. In Scotland, the Professional Development Forum (PDF) has the responsibility to approve teaching awards for college lecturers based on professional standards. Much of a lecturer's success cannot be measured quantitatively, however, and it is often the quality of interactions with students that determines whether the latter stay on course and achieve their objectives. This will be discussed more later on.
22. In November 2002, the then Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning, Iain Gray, announced a review of the occupational standards for college lecturers. These are the standards that underpin both the Professional Development Units and Awards (PDUs/PDAs) that lecturers can undertake for their ongoing training and development needs and the full Teaching Qualification (Further Education) [TQ(FE)].
23. During the review, it was noted that while there was an increase in the use of the Professional Development Awards (PDAs) developed for Initial Teacher Training (ITT), there was very little provision for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The then Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department (ELLD) was particularly keen to ensure that longer serving lecturers who had received their professional training a number of years ago had opportunities to update their knowledge and learn new skills. One of the main aims of the review was therefore to develop a range of provision that could be used for CPD purposes.

24. The second main aim of the review was to update the content of the standards to take account of developments in teaching methods and wider policy and legislative changes. The most important of these changes were:
- The recommendations in the report by the Advisory Committee on Post-school Education and Training for Young People, usually referred to as the Beattie Committee, on the training of teaching staff;
  - The introduction of new diversity legislation such as the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2000 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
  - Developments in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) for learning and teaching purposes; and
  - Changes in the roles and responsibilities of college lecturers which meant that some now had roles as curriculum team leaders.
25. Five expert working groups were established in 2004 to take forward the revision of the standards, and this work culminated, in June 2006, with the publication of new *Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges*<sup>7</sup>. Prior to this, work had already begun on the creation and validation of new Professional Development Units (PDUs) and PDAs based on the new standards. The standards had also been passed to the three universities (Aberdeen, Dundee and Stirling) which provide TQ(FE) in order that they could update their programmes in time for the coming academic session.
26. To date, three new TQ(FE) programmes have undergone formal assessment and will be approved in the near future. The approval process is being overseen by ETLLD in conjunction with HMIE and the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS).

### **First Tranche of New Qualifications**

27. The first tranche of new qualifications, which have been validated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, consists of two initial teacher training (ITT) PDAs and a CPD award. The new ITT awards are:
- *The Advanced Diploma: Teaching in Further Education: An Introduction* – a two unit award which provides a basic grounding in teaching methods.
  - *The Advanced Diploma: Teaching in Further Education* – a three unit (five credit) award which will count towards a full TQ(FE).
28. These new awards will replace the existing *Certificate: Introduction to Teaching in Further Education* and the *Advanced Certificate: Teaching in Further Education*. Uptake of the new qualifications is expected to be at more or less the same level as for the existing PDAs. The latest year for which figures on uptake are available is academic year 2004-05. During this year, a

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<sup>7</sup> Go to: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/06/13164029/0>.

total of 374 lecturers studied for the Introductory Certificate while 294 undertook the Advanced Certificate.

29. An estimate of the cost of completing the existing Advanced certificate was provided in paper SLEWG–P07. As the new *Advanced Diploma: Teaching in Further Education* requires approximately the same time commitment, the cost of completing it is also estimated to be around £4,800. As *The Advanced Diploma: Teaching in Further Education: An Introduction* has fewer credits, it should take less time to complete. It is estimated that completing this award will cost around £3,200.
30. The third new award, the *Advanced Diploma: Teaching Children and Young People*, fulfils a commitment made by ETLLD to develop appropriate training for lecturers who teach school pupils<sup>8</sup>. Though it could be used more widely, the new PDA is primarily intended to enhance the skills and knowledge of lecturers who underwent their initial teacher training/education some time ago.
31. In early 2005, ETLLD conducted a survey to obtain information on existing levels of school/college partnership working. In the 21 colleges that responded to the survey, a total of 885 teaching staff were involved in these partnerships. The survey also found that 78% of the lecturing staff involved in delivering teaching and training to school pupils at respondent colleges during academic year 2004/05 held some form of teaching qualification and that 53% held a full TQ(FE). These figures suggest that, across the whole sector, this qualification may be appropriate for somewhere in the region of 1,000 lecturers.
32. This new award requires a similar input as the *Advanced Diploma: Teaching in Further Education: An Introduction*. It is, therefore, estimated that the cost of completing it will be around £3,200.
33. ETLLD has already provided funding to help school/college partnerships to become better established. Over the period spanning financial years 2005-06 to 2007-08, ETLLD has identified funding of £41.5m for these partnerships. This funding includes an element to cover the cost of teacher training for lecturers.
34. Work is already underway to provide materials to support the delivery of the three new awards and it is expected that these will become available to colleges early in 2007. In the meantime, colleges have been invited to apply to deliver the new awards. (The process was streamlined for those already approved to deliver existing provision).

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<sup>8</sup> See 'Lifelong Partners: Scotland's Schools and Colleges: Building the Foundations of a Lifelong Learning Society': <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/05/12141846/18473> .

## **Future CPD Qualifications**

35. Work has begun to convert more specialist professional standards into units and awards that lecturers will be able to use for CPD purposes. The plan is that these new units and awards will be available for delivery from the start of academic year 2007-08. Teaching materials will again be centrally procured by ETLLD.
36. New PDUs and PDAs will be developed in the following areas:
  - The use of ICT for Learning and Teaching;
  - Diversity (including race relations and disability); and
  - The Leadership and Management of Curriculum Teams.
37. An audit of college sector CPD activity by the Scottish Funding Council has shown that the “all staff training average” across the sector is 6.3 days of training activity per year and that at least 50% of college staff will experience some form of CPD each year. Colleges are required to be financially secure and therefore difficult decisions must be made in funding CPD for all staff members. Although it is clear that a substantial investment is being made in many colleges, there are specific challenges for all. Providing access to appropriate CPD beyond simple qualifications - for example, releasing staff from teaching to participate in updating of vocational skills and practice - carries significant costs. HMIE have demonstrated the value of such CPD. However, the costs appear prohibitive to many colleges. The SFC also funded a programme of work placement for college staff. However, early feedback has shown the costs of releasing staff to be a major inhibitor to the uptake of such schemes. This may be an area for future investigation.

## **Developments in Learning and Teaching**

38. Learning and teaching is a human and dynamic process responding to external changes which require constant modification of practice. The increasing use of information technology in the working world has brought major changes to the college sector, not just in requiring lecturers to update technical skills within their own vocational area, but also in harnessing the power of information technology to enhance learning and teaching - for example through the use of whiteboards in classrooms or e-assessment. The following examples demonstrate the innovative approaches taken across the college sector to improve the student experience through changing how learning and teaching is designed and delivered.

### ***E-Learning***

39. The Scottish Funding Council developed a strategy for e-learning which identified the need to promote 'transformation' in the use which is made of e-learning by colleges and universities. Transformation refers to the process by which innovation can be embedded in mainstream practice, as opposed to special initiatives. One important aspect of this is achieving economies of scale, which reduce the costs of developing new approaches. The use of

common, often SQA, programmes allows for the shared development of learning materials and offers great potential here. A second aspect is demonstrating that e-learning innovation can generate benefits (such as improved efficiency of delivery, improved learner outcomes, increasing access), which will encourage institutions to mainstream such activities.

40. To test this model, the SFC funded six projects, at around £1m each, to operate between 2005 and 2007. Each project involves large consortia, and in many cases these include both colleges and universities. While some projects focus on specific curriculum areas (e.g. construction, life sciences), some are developing novel ways of supporting students (e.g. e-portfolios), and others are focusing on 'culture change' within institutions.
41. The projects are all being externally evaluated and final outcomes will be available in the autumn of 2007.
42. One such project is BlendEd. This project is a collaborative project, led by Reid Kerr College, which aims to demonstrate that blended learning will enhance the student learning experience whilst introducing benefits such as flexibility and efficiency. The model is currently being developed and implemented within HNC Social Care and HND Business. The emphasis will be on producing a practical working model which clearly demonstrates the benefits for institutions and their students. The outputs from BlendEd will include:
  - Proven implementation and delivery methodology;
  - Advice and mentoring service from the consortium;
  - Standards and tools which reflect the sector's requirements;
  - Fully developed and tested Learning Plans for several mainstream courses;
  - Identification of best practice, issues and potential barriers;
  - National recognition of the innovative and progressive nature of the sector;
  - Quality assured resources to support the delivery model;
  - Robust staff development programmes to support the process;
  - The adoption by the Colleges Open Learning Exchange Group (COLEG) of a new instructional design model to support the sector ; and
  - Availability and demonstration of methodologies for content discovery and re-use.
43. Further information about this and other projects is available from the SFC website<sup>9</sup>.

### **Action Learning Sets**

44. SFEU is currently inviting applications of interest to participate in Action Learning Sets. The overarching theme of this exercise is “*to identify and implement strategies to achieve transformation in learning and teaching through the use of ICLT and blended learning*”. The Sets themselves are small groups of individuals (6-8) who support one another in learning and

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<sup>9</sup> Go to: [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/information\\_learning/transformational\\_change.html](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/information_learning/transformational_change.html)

development in an area where they have an interest and want to increase their expertise. The SFEU will act as 'facilitator' for the Sets, manage the processes involved, and develop a framework that meets individual and groups aims.

45. Action Learning Sets are intended to support participants in:
- Learning from each other and engaging in shared learning;
  - Reflecting on the successful approaches identified through the eMerge programme;
  - Learning more about other institutions and institutional practices;
  - Reflecting on current practice - but encouraging action;
  - Highlighting challenges/areas where they have a special interest, strength or weakness;
  - Dealing with the kind of challenges that cannot be easily resolved through lectures/seminars;
  - Building up strong relationships and networks; and
  - Writing action plans for implementing within their colleges.
46. Action Learning Sets have been successfully used in the SFEU Leadership and Management programme and are seen to be effective as a professional development activity. They are a mechanism of securing change through external mentoring, peer support and provision of any necessary specialist assistance. Participants not only achieve change but their understanding of the change process is enhanced and their capability as change agents is increased. To identify and implement strategies to achieve transformation in learning and teaching through the use of ICLT and blended learning within colleges, it is intended to use the Action Learning Set methodology with a range of college staff that can influence this agenda within their college.
47. Further information about Action Learning Sets can be found on the SFEU website<sup>10</sup>.

### ***Quality and Equality of Learning and Teaching Materials (QELTM)***

48. In March 2004 SFEFC approved the QELTM project. The aim of the project is to raise the capacity of the sector to integrate quality and equality, in terms of inclusiveness, accessibility and diversity, to support educational practitioners in their front line role.
49. Under the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Race Relations Amendment Act, all colleges in Scotland are required to be proactive in ensuring accessibility and diversity. Teaching and learning materials play a role in this.
50. The project team includes representatives from Stevenson College Edinburgh, Universities Scotland, Edinburgh's Telford College, BRITE, the

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<sup>10</sup> Go to: <http://www.sfeu.ac.uk/defaultpage131bcd0.aspx?pageID=1679>

SQA, Adam Smith College, Anniesland College, the Glasgow Colleges Group, the University of Stirling and the SFEU.

51. The project hosted a conference in August 2006 to announce the project's outcomes. These were:
  - i. A report. Action research was carried out into the broad range of material and resources used in both traditional and non-traditional course delivery in a number of representative and specific curricular areas. This was based on the guiding principles of accessibility, inclusiveness, promotion of equality, avoidance of bias and quality of production. The research was undertaken collaboratively across college partners to ensure that the findings had the benefit of input from subject specialists from a range of different institutions.
  - ii. Guidelines, procedures and templates for the equality, inclusiveness, accessibility and quality of learning and teaching materials: translating the legislation into practical and achievable structures and guidelines.
  - iii. Exemplar learning and teaching materials.
  - iv. An implementation plan for individual college's integration of guidelines and procedures.
  - v. A programme of staff development opportunities to assist lecturing staff in applying the guidelines.
52. Further information about the project is available from the Stevenson College Edinburgh website<sup>11</sup>.

### ***Learners***

53. The age profile of most colleges shows a substantial number of mature staff. Many of them, as has been shown, undertook the TQ(FE) many years ago. It is also clear that the student population they serve has changed over the last ten years. Policy to improve access and widen participation to universities has moved students who would traditionally have attended college into a different sector. Equally, the same policy has widened the range of students who now attend college.
54. The college sector has always had a remit for "second-chance" learners. However, a number of learners now come with additional learning needs, difficult and chaotic lives and challenging behaviours. Although this group is a minority, the approaches used by lecturers, and the additional time required to support and help these young people, means the adaptation of learning and teaching on a daily basis. College lecturers also serve an increasing number of older people, many of whom return to college in order to change jobs or re-engage with society. The need for personal adaptability and resilience is obvious and additional research would be useful to establish how CPD could best be designed to support the adaptability and resilience of staff in the future.

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<sup>11</sup> Go to: <http://www.stevenson.ac.uk/QELTM/index.html>

55. Colleges, especially in the major areas of population, are experiencing an increasing number of New Scots. Many of these new migrants are highly qualified and want to contribute to their new country. For these students, access to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is of major importance. Others have poor language skills and also need vocational training, all of which means learning new ways of delivering for lecturers. Colleges, both generally and particularly via CPD for lecturing staff, can have a significant impact on the lives of such learners.

### ***The future***

56. Looking forward, we can be sure that our changing demography, along with developments across lifelong learning policy and practice will require our colleges to continue to anticipate and respond to change in a timely fashion. In that regard, the roles of HMIE, the SFC and SFEU, as promoters, funders and developers of good practice, cannot be underestimated.
57. The challenges colleges will face include how and where learning and teaching takes place. As the demographic shape of Scotland changes, learning will take place more often at times and places outwith traditional norms. Work-place and work-based learning bring new opportunities for developing a highly skilled, adaptable work force and colleges will have to respond to these changes, working more closely with employers and economic development agencies. This will mean different preparation for a teaching career in a college along with new pedagogies and technologies.
58. New support for learning and teaching is emerging in the form of para-professionals such as learning assistants, work-place assessors and classroom support technicians. Lecturers are highly skilled and need to be deployed in the manner which provides the best learning experience for the learner and capitalises on their expertise. Working with new team members, including personal care assistants, in a classroom means developing new approaches and skills.
59. The evidence suggests that colleges generally deliver a high quality learning experience to a large, and increasingly diverse learner population. Continuous improvements are being made within and between colleges, which have risen well to the challenge of adapting their teaching methods as learners, and learning, have changed.
60. In conclusion, we recommend that the SFC commissions a report examining, with reference to relevant sections of the RoSCO Strategic Futures report, the major future (short and medium term) issues affecting learning and teaching within the sector. A central outcome of this report should be a list of key recommendations for colleges, their staff and all relevant agencies.

**Reviews Team  
January 2007**