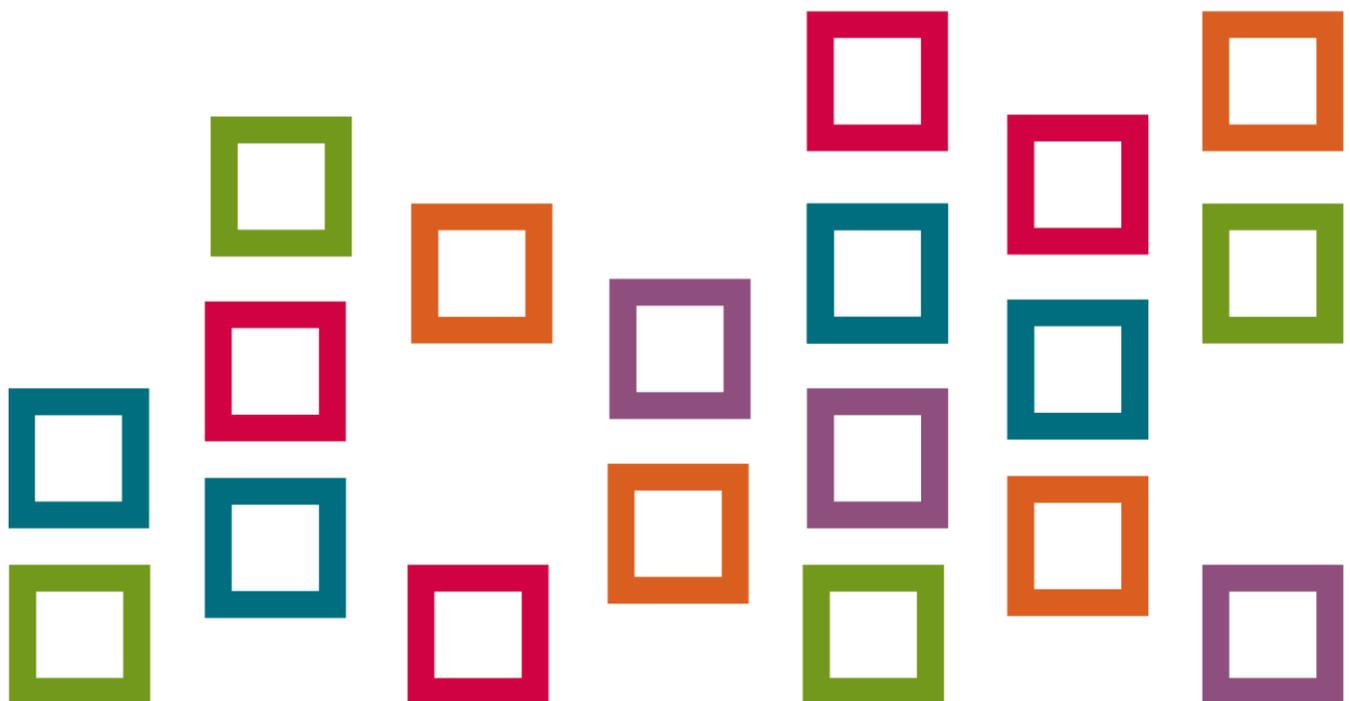# Informed Scotland

HOT TOPICS

- COVID-19 – impact & response
- National Qualifications exams & results
- Apprenticeships & youth guarantee
- Technology ecosystem
- Online & technology enhanced learning
- Rethinking education
- Outdoor education

Produced by

Contents

Business

COVID-19 IMPACT & RESPONSE

■ (16 July) Scottish Government announced £100m for employability for 2020/21 comprising:

▢ (7 August) The Flexible Workforce Development Fund which supports employers to upskill and reskill staff, will be doubled to £20m for 2020/21, with £13m via colleges.

▢ (12 August) £60m for a new Youth Guarantee (*see page 4*).

The Fair Start Scotland (FSS) support service (see below) has also been extended to March 2023.

■ (19 July) Scottish Government published *COVID-19: Fair work statement*, a joint statement signed by business organisations and unions.

■ (5 August) Scottish Government published:

▢ *Response to the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery* report, with six themes including employment, skills and training, and supporting people and places.

▢ *Addressing the labour market emergency*, its response to the Enterprise & Skills Strategic Board report. Actions are based on four priorities: business retention, helping those facing redundancy, helping vulnerable people into work, and training for the unemployed.

The Advisory Group and Strategic Board reports were published in June 2020 – see Informed 82*.*

EMPLOYMENT

■ Employment in Scotland, April to June 2020:

▢ Unemployment was 124,000, up by 11,000 over the quarter at 4.5% (3.9% for UK), up from 3.6% in 2019 (unchanged for UK).

▢ Male unemployment was 4.7% (4.1% UK), 4.2% for females (3.7%).

▢ Employment was 2.651m, down by 15,000 (by 34,000 over the year) at 74.3% (76.4% UK).

▢ Male employment was 76.9% (80.2% UK), female was 71.8% (72.8%).

*Useful **Skills Development Scotland (SDS)** Labour Market Infographic.*

■ Scottish Government published *Scotland's devolved employment services experimental statistics*. As of end of June 2020:

▢ 24,380 people had joined FSS since its launch in April 2018, 65% of those referred; 7,050 participants had started a job.

▢ 65% of FSS participants reported having a long-term health condition.

▢ 5% were from a minority ethnic background.

■ *Police Officer Quarterly Strength Statistics 30 June 2020* showed that there were 17,273 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in Scotland (up 14 from 2019).

Business

- **SDS** created a new series of monthly _COVID-19 Labour Market Insights_, reports and data, including evidence of the impact on the economy, business, jobs and people. The _Insights_ highlight sectors and regions, and summarise key challenges and SDS's response. A _Dashboard_ provides more detail on real-time data.

A rich new reference and source of information.

- **Scottish Fire & Rescue Service** published _Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics (Scotland) 2019/20_. In March:
  - There were 7,930 staff (unchanged from 2019), including 315 volunteers (down 1.9%).
  - There were 49 trainees (down 18.3%).
  - 86% of staff were male (down 1ppt); 64% of staff were aged over 40 (down 1ppt).

- **Be-IT Resourcing** published _COVID-19 and the IT & Digital Sector: Income, employment and hiring_, a survey carried out in July by **thePotentMix**. 64% had not recruited during lockdown; 72% expect to resume recruitment to some extent. 57% said they were not planning to make redundancies.

- **RBS** _Report on Jobs: Scotland_ recorded marked falls in permanent and temporary appointments and vacancies. There was a further substantial increase in the availability of candidates, and a fourth successive monthly fall in salaries for new permanent joins.

- **OECD** published _OECD Employment Outlook 2020: Worker security and the COVID-19 crisis_, including a comparative review of employment protection legislation across OECD countries.
  - Labour market and social policy response has been unprecedented.
  - Job polarisation is mostly due to fewer younger workers entering middle-skill jobs than to older workers leaving them.
  - Graduates from vocational education and training have strong labour market outcomes at the start of their career, but challenges are in sight.

- **Sutton Trust** published _Social mobility in the workplace: An employer's guide_, covering issues including how to measure the socioeconomic make-up of a workforce, and advice on routes into the workplace for young people, including internships and apprenticeships.

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE (DYW)

- Youth employment figures for 16 to 24 year-olds in Scotland from April to June 2020:
  - Unemployment was 13.5%, up from 7.5% in 2019 (12.4% for UK, up from 11.2%).
  - Male unemployment was 11.8%, up from 9.1% (13.4% UK, down from 13.5%); 14.1% for females, up from 5.8% (11.4%, up from 8.9%).

Concerning rise in unemployment, particularly for young women.

- (2 September) Scottish Government announced details of the Youth Guarantee. It will 'guarantee' all 16–24 year-olds the opportunity of a place at 'university or college, an apprenticeship programme, training, fair employment including work experience, or participating in a formal volunteering programme'. The £60m involves:
  - £30m for local authorities to help local partnerships deliver employability support
  - £10m for colleges to create additional opportunities
  - £10m additional funding for DYW
  - £10m to support pathways to apprenticeships (_see page 5_).

Business

■ (2 September) Scottish Government published _Youth Guarantee: No-one Left Behind – Initial Report_ by Sandy Begbie. Proposals include:

◻ Identify employment opportunities in the least-impacted sectors, e.g. financial services, utilities and life sciences.

◻ An incentive model with government paying 50% of wages of those in need of most help.

◻ Public sector to create more opportunities.

◻ Businesses that do not usually take an apprentice full-time to consider sharing one with other employers.

◻ Provide support to encourage SMEs to take on a young person.

■ (2 September) UK Government launched the Kickstart Scheme, delivered by Department for Work & Pensions; it will initially run until December 2021.

◻ 16–24 year-olds in Scotland, England & Wales on Universal Credit at risk of long-term unemployment will be offered six-month work placements.

◻ Government will pay 100% of National Minimum Wage, National Insurance and pension contributions for 25 hours/week.

■ **South of Scotland Economic Partnership** awarded £275k Scottish Government funding to **Better Lives Partnership**'s Bridge to Employment project for 16–24 year-olds with autism. Supported by **SDS**, the project provides access to employability skills training, work placements and enterprise activities.

One of 28 projects awarded over £2.1m funding.

■ **SDS** published _Annual Participation Measure 2020_ for 206k 16–19 year-olds.

◻ 92.1% were participating in education, training or employment (up 0.5ppt from 2019), from 99.0% of 16 year-olds to 84.1% of 19 year-olds.

◻ 72.0% were in education (up 0.6ppt), 18.3% were employed (up 0.1ppt), 1.8% in training (down 0.2ppt).

◻ 2.8% were not participating (down 0.3ppt): 1.1% were unemployed and seeking work (down 0.4ppt); 1.7% were not seeking work (up 0.1ppt).

◻ 92.9% of females (up 0.7ppt) and 91.4% of males (up 0.5ppt) were participating.

◻ 22.1% of males participated in employment compared to 14.2% of females.

◻ 95.2% of those from ethnic minority groups were participating (up 0.1ppt) (3.2ppt higher than those who are white, down 0.5ppt).

◻ 89.0% of those with a disability were participating (up 2ppt) (3.3ppt lower than those who are not disabled, down 1.5ppt).

◻ Those from more deprived areas are less likely to be participating than those from less deprived areas (9.9ppt gap, down 0.6ppt).

Data includes by local authority.

■ **Office for National Statistics** (**ONS**) published _Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)_. April to June:

◻ 765k 16–24 year-olds in the UK were NEET (down 28k from 2019), comprising 11.1% of the age group (down 0.3ppt).

◻ 39.0% of NEETs were unemployed (down 2.6ppt); the rest were classed as economically inactive (unavailable/not looking for work).

APPRENTICESHIPS

■ (11 August) Scottish Government announced £10m for recruiting and retaining apprentices, as part of the Youth Guarantee funding (_see page 4_)

including extra funding for the Adopt an Apprentice programme managed by **SDS**.

Business

■ **SDS** published *Modern Apprenticeship [MA] Statistics, Q1 2020/21*. COVID-19 'fundamentally changed the context in which MAs are delivered' and comparisons with last year (*provided in brackets*) 'should be treated with caution'.

▪ 910 people **started** MAs in Q1 (significantly lower than 4,336 in 2019/20).

▪ 31% were 16–24 (significantly lower than 53%); 13% were 16–19 (29.2%), 69% 25+.

▪ 41% were female (48%).

▪ 87% were at SCQF level 6+ (72%).

▪ 10.3% had a disability (14.7%); 2.4% were minority ethnic (2.6%); 1.8% were care experienced (1.7%).

▪ For the first time, IT and other services had the highest proportion of starts; hospitality & tourism saw marked reductions.

▪ 35,706 MAs were **in training** (down 1,061): 72% were 16–24 (down 1ppt); the highest proportion were in construction (32%) and sport, health & social care (15%).

▪ 83% were at SCQF level 6+.

▪ 130 were made **redundant** (up 45) – likely to be masked by the furlough scheme.

▪ 2,609 **achieved** an MA (84% of leavers, up 11ppt).

▪ 17 **Adopt an Apprentice** places were approved (down 75).

In March the target of 30k new places per year by 2020/21 (including Graduate Apprentices) was on track.

■ The **Apprenticeships in Scotland** website has been renamed **Early Careers Scotland** and includes internships and traineeships.

■ **OECD** published *Strengthening skills in Scotland: OECD review of the apprenticeship system*, commissioned pre-pandemic by **SDS** and produced in consultation with the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board and stakeholders. It makes four key policy recommendations, described as 'ambitious reforms, based on benchmarking … against the strongest apprenticeship systems internationally':

▪ Introduce demand-led funding for apprenticeships.

▪ Establish minimum requirements for the length of apprenticeship programmes and for the proportion of off-the-job training.

▪ Develop a non-apprenticeship route to the qualifications gained via apprenticeships, for experienced adult workers.

▪ Develop master craftsperson qualifications to provide higher level technical learning opportunities for apprentices.

■ (21 July) **Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards** published *Briefing note: Quantifying the hit to apprentices during lockdown*, based on data from **HMRC**, **ONS** and England's Department for Education.

▪ Apprenticeship starts reduced by 47.9% in lockdown compared to the same time 2019.

▪ Younger apprentices are more likely to have been furloughed – 35% of under 19s compared to 24% of over 25s.

▪ Workers who at some point completed an apprenticeship were more likely to be 'away from work' (furloughed) during lockdown.

Although much of the data is specific to England, the findings are of interest.

SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING

■ **SDS** published *Making Skills Work summer 2020*, a summary of how SDS is performing in each local authority, including in apprenticeships and careers service.
SDS also published its Annual Review 2019/20.

■ **City of Glasgow College** has created a short bespoke online COVID-19 prevention and control course for businesses. It aims to help address concerns employees and customers may have in returning to activities.

Business

- **SDS** published *Employability Fund [EF] Statistics Q1 2020/21*; the Fund combines a number of national training programmes that include 'real' work experience. (*As with MAs, treat comparisons with last year with caution.*)
  - There were 575 EF starts (significantly lower than 2,015 in 2019/20).
  - 79% were 16–17 (significantly lower than 52%), 14% 18–24 (25%), 9% 25+ (23%).
  - 34% were female (down 1ppt).
  - 26.5% had a disability (down 1.7ppt); 2.8% were ethnic minority (down 0.4ppt); 6.4% were care experienced (down 1.1ppt).
  - 72% of leavers achieved a positive result (down 1ppt), e.g. further training, a job, an MA or self-employment.

- **Edinburgh College** launched a new suite of Virtual Professional Training courses to help business across the UK to reskill and upskill their staff. Themes include managing remote teams, holding virtual meetings and working from home.

- **Support in Mind Scotland** launched new mental health training courses for employers. Available at three levels, from introduction to a Mental Health First Aid accreditation, the courses aim to develop participants' knowledge, skills and confidence to provide support to colleagues.

- **Good Things Foundation** launched a Make It Click small business hub, free online learning resources to build digital skills, backed by **FSB**. Make It Click includes courses, tools and templates selected from established websites providing reliable digital skills content. It was launched UK-wide earlier in 2020 as part of Learn My Way, a website of digital courses funded by **Google.org**.

- **eCom Scotland** is running a series of online Rapid Expert Forums, on topics including creating eLearning to support productivity and building data fluency for those in learning & development.

- **City & Guilds** launched the Skills Bridges programme with **FutureLearn** to help unemployed workers from sectors affected by COVID-19 to reskill and move into industries that are growing or facing labour shortages.
  - There will be a phased roll-out, with courses planned in digital, infrastructure, engineering and manufacturing.
  - The first phase is Step into Social Care.
  - Candidates will receive a City & Guilds digital credential on completion.

- **Reform Scotland** published *Back on Track: Retraining in the COVID-19 Era*. Recommendations include:
  - Retraining and upskilling programmes should be developed with industry; the new **Scottish National Investment Bank** could be used to help identify possibilities.
  - Government retraining programmes must adapt for the lockdown generation; while there are huge opportunities from embracing technology, there are data, device and space barriers to some who need the help most.
  - Scottish Government should hugely expand its programme of Individual Training Accounts.

- **Service Design Academy** at **Dundee & Angus College** is the first organisation in the world to be accredited by **Service Design Network** for its education and qualifications.

- **Robert Gordon University** (**RGU**) launched RGU Knowledge Bites for Business and a suite of upskilling online short courses on topics reflecting industry needs and post-pandemic challenges.

- **University of Aberdeen** is to run free online short courses on leadership, digital/data, energy, life sciences and health for anyone employed, unemployed or furloughed in Scotland from January 2021. The courses are funded by **Scottish Funding Council** (**SFC**).

Business

ENGINEERING & MARINE SECTORS

■ Scottish Government published *Supporting the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the UK's marine sectors: A research report for Marine Scotland* by **Ekosgen** carried out in 2019. 'Skills and workforce' is one of seven 'challenges and constraints' faced by the marine economy.

▪ Inadequate supply of skills is a critical market failure.

▪ Key issues include: out-dated misconceptions of the sector and the career opportunities available; and ensuring skills supply via education and training provision meets industry requirements.

▪ Aquaculture and seafood processing should be promoted as increasingly technology-driven.

▪ Governments and agencies need to ensure that the infrastructure is in place to attract and retain a skilled workforce in coastal areas.

Marine Scotland is a Scottish Government directorate responsible for 'the integrated management of Scotland's seas'.

■ **Engineering UK** published The economic impact of COVID-19 on UK engineering enterprise, an interactive 'dashboard' of real-time information, including on the job retention scheme and furloughed staff.

■ **Engineering UK** published *Educational Pathways into Engineering*, its annual report of trends in science, technology, engineering & maths (STEM) participation and attainment in academic and technical routes, as at March 2020.

▪ There is widespread lack of awareness – 47% of 11–19 year-olds in the UK said they knew little about what engineers do.

▪ Young people often doubt their ability to succeed in STEM – 62% of 16–17s felt STEM subjects were more difficult than non-STEM.

▪ There is a shortage of STEM subject teachers in secondary and further education in the UK.

▪ Scotland offers a wider range of STEM subjects at school than other UK nations.

▪ There were 'worrying' falls in entries in some National 5s in 2019, e.g. engineering science, design & manufacture and computer science; however Advanced Highers in engineering science and design & manufacture saw large increases in pass rates.

▪ Gender remains a stubborn issue, e.g. engineering-related apprenticeships in Scotland represented 34% of all starts in 2018 to 2019, however only 4% were women, a figure that has changed little in five years.

▪ 21% of all engineering & technology entrants in UK higher education (HE) were women compared to 57% of all students.

▪ 30% of entrants were from minority ethnic backgrounds – above the student population (26%); however 73% achieved a first or 2.1, compared with 83% of white students.

BUSINESS CONFIDENCE & THE ECONOMY

■ The latest **CBI** *Scotland Industrial Trends Survey* reported that output and orders fell at a record pace in the quarter to July, although manufacturers expect to see slight growth in the next quarter. Firms plan to increase spending on innovation, training & retraining in the next year.

■ According to the latest **RBS** *Purchasing Managers' Index* the downturn in business activity 'eased noticeably' in July, with signs that the economy is 'approaching stabilisation'. Output expectations and confidence rose to a five-month high.

Business

■ (14 August) **Scottish Chambers of Commerce** (**SCC**) published *Phase 5 survey*, snap polling of 412 members in July (96% were SMEs).

◻ 89% had not made any redundancies so far; 60% had employees on furlough and 38% intend to bring back 76–100%.

◻ 86% said the threat of local/national lockdown was a key concern.

◻ 30% said that 76–100% of their staff have been working from home during lockdown.

■ **SCC** *Quarterly Economic Indicator: Q2 2020* 'confirmed the economic pain' felt by businesses across all sectors and the country. Confidence levels fell to historic lows in many sectors, with construction, retail and tourism most affected.

■ **FSB**'s *Small Business Index Scotland Q2 2020* reported a significant increase in confidence, but overall levels remained below the UK and both were still negative. A record high 23% reduced headcount in the last three months, and a record low 1.5% created jobs. Businesses in Scotland are most negative about the potential impact of COVID-19 on future performance.

■ Scotland's Chief Economist published *Monthly economic brief: August 2020*. It continues to show 'the scale of the economic shock' from COVID-19 alongside some stabilisation in economic activity as parts of the economy have reopened.

■ **Highlands & Islands Enterprise** published *Business Panel Survey: Responding to COVID-19* carried out in June.

◻ 79% said confidence in the economic outlook in Scotland had fallen in the past six months.

◻ 85% reported a decline in or no sales but 75% believed their business will still be viable in six months' time.

◻ 35% had conducted staff training.

ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

■ Two final Growth Deals were announced by UK and Scottish Governments, with investment themes including skills and innovation in both:

◻ Islands, £50m from each government, focused on the Outer Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland.

◻ Falkirk, £40m from each government.

Scottish Government published a National Islands Plan in December 2019.
The Moray Growth Deal, launched in 2019, was signed on 24 August 2020.

■ **FSB** published *Unlocking Opportunity: The value of ethnic minority firms to UK economic activity and enterprise*, reporting that ~250k ethnic minority-led businesses (EMBs) contributed £25b to the UK economy in 2018.

◻ EMBs in all parts of the UK were more likely to export than non-EMBs.

◻ 30% engaged in recent product or service innovation, 11ppt higher than non-EMBs.

◻ 17% of all EMBs were led by women.

◻ Scotland had low overall ethnic minority representation among the self-employed (3.7% compared to 12.3% UK).

Business

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE & RESEARCH

◼ **National Centre for Universities & Business** published _Showcasing collaboration: Collaboration in crisis – Highlighting university and business partnerships formed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic_, the first of a new quarterly series featuring partnerships on different themes. Ten case studies from across the UK include **University of Dundee** with **NHS Tayside**.

◼ A new UK Productivity Institute is being created at **University of Manchester**, with eight partners including **University of Glasgow** which will establish a Productivity Forum for Scotland. Backed by **UK Research & Innovation** (**UKRI**) funding, the Institute will aim to find solutions to the imbalances in productivity between sectors and regions.

◼ **UKRI** published its _Action Plan_ for implementing the revised _Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers_ published in 2019, aiming to foster 'a positive research culture that supports researchers to reach their full potential'.

◼ **Glasgow Caledonian University** researchers are working with **Precision Tooling Services** on a £211k Knowledge Transfer Partnership in electrochemical machining. The aim is to develop a more sustainable process and embed training for the company's staff in using it.

◼ **University of Glasgow** signed an agreement with **Rakuten Mobile** to carry out collaborative research in edge computing.

Schools

PEOPLE

LESLEY BROWN
Chief Operating Officer –
Education, **East Lothian Council**,
is new Head of Education &
Children's Services.

NICKY GRANT
Interim Head of Education,
Highland Council since October
2019, is now Interim Executive
Chief Officer Education & Learning;
Paul Senior left at end of August.

COVID-19 & SCHOOLS

■ Scottish Government published:

▪ (30 July) *COVID-19: Support for continuity in learning*, relevant to blended as well as face-to-face learning.

▪ (10 September) *COVID-19 Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues: Advisory note on physical education, music and drama in schools*.

▪ (11 September) *COVID-19: Guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020 – Version 3* (*Version 2* was published on 25 August, including on the use of face coverings).

See page 26 for updates on the route map and guidance for school age childcare.
See concerns for outdoor education, page 24.
See the surge in 'rethinking education' on page 27.

■ (2 August) **Association of Directors of Education in Scotland** (**ADES**) published a summary of the reopening plans for all local authorities.

■ **Education Scotland** published:

▪ (7 August) *Re-connecting school communities: Term 1 2020* for senior school staff and teachers planning whole school return, with a focus on wellbeing, mental health and engagement in learning.

▪ (7 September) *COVID-19 Return to educational establishments: Practical subject guidelines – PE*.

▪ Global responses to education recovery during COVID-19, a webpage sharing other countries' approaches to similar challenges, with reports from international, national and local levels.

■ **Children's Parliament** published Back to School: A rights-based approach, a website for educators working with children in P5 to S2 developed with schools in **Aberdeen**, **Clackmannanshire**, **Dundee** and **Scottish Borders**. A complementary resource, *Adventures in Wellbeing*, was produced for learners.

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXAMS

■ 2020 **Scottish Qualifications Authority** (**SQA**) results:

▪ (4 August) SQA published attainment statistics; candidates received results based on a 'combination of teacher judgment and national moderation'.

▪ (11 August) Scottish Government announced 'pupils whose results were downgraded by the

SQA' were to receive 'new grades based solely on teacher estimates', after 'listening to the concerns' of those affected: SQA statement. Those whose entries were adjusted up by SQA retained the higher grade. SQA provided new grades to admissions bodies, and Scottish Government was to ensure there were enough places at colleges and universities (*see page 17*).

Schools

- (14 August) SQA published an update on the appeals process for centres.
- (19 August) SQA published appeals details.
- (31 August) SQA published revised statistics (*see below*).
- (7 September) Revised certificates were issued.

SQA statements, support and resources are here.

- (31 August) **SQA** published revised 2020 results including *Attainment Statistics* and *Chief Examining Officer's Report*.
  - Over 138k students received certificates (133k in 2019).
  - **SCQF level 4**: 91.0% passed National 4 (88.5%).
  - **SCQF 5**: 89.0% passed National 5 (78.2%).
  - **SCQF 6**: 89.3% passed Highers (74.8%).
  - **SCQF 7**: 93.1% passed Advanced Highers (79.4%); 152 sat the Scottish Baccalaureate (down 5), 86.2% passed (69.4%).
  - 31,428 **SQA Awards** were achieved (up 4,693).
  - 16,230 **National Progression Awards** were achieved (up 3,094).
  - 4,284 **National Certificates** were achieved (down 589).
  - 12,332 **Skills for Work** courses were achieved (up 2,670), 84.3% attainment rate (80.9%).

- (11 August) Scottish Government:
  - commissioned Prof Mark Priestley, **University of Stirling**, to conduct an independent review of the events following cancellation of the 2020 SQA exams. An initial report was due within five weeks.
  - asked **OECD**'s ongoing Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence to include recommendations on how to transform the approach to assessment and qualifications.

The Scottish Practitioner Forum for the OECD Review held its first meeting on 27 August 2020.

- Plans and arrangements for 2020–21:
  - (14 August) In a joint statement with Scottish Government, SQA launched a consultation on modifications to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments (*closed on 24 August*) and a targeted consultation on contingency arrangements for the 2021 exam timetable. The exam timetable was scheduled to run from 26 April to 3 June 2021.

Modifications to course assessments and the 2021 exam timetable were yet to be published.

*A group of individuals set up **Exam.Scot** to explore the future of exams – see page 27.*

TEACHER EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP

- **General Teaching Council for Scotland** (**GTCS**) published *draft Professional Standards 2021* for teachers.
  - They provide a benchmark of competency and a framework for initial teacher education, probation and leadership, and support career-long professional growth.
  - Focus groups will gather feedback on the draft from teachers, parents, partners and learners from 19 October to 13 November.

The final version will be used from August 2021.

- **Educational Institute of Scotland** (**EIS**) and Scottish Government launched the PACT programme, to 'support and deepen the development of a whole-school anti-poverty culture'.
  - It offers online research-based professional learning opportunities for all teachers.
  - The main themes include understanding poverty, the human rights approach to poverty and pedagogical approaches to mitigating its impact.

Schools

■ **Education Scotland** opened its In Headship professional learning programme for new applications. The programme is for headteachers who are normally within their first two years of headship.
Applications close on 25 September 2020.

■ **Scottish Council of Deans of Education** published *The National Framework for Digital Literacies in Initial Teacher Education* for all in the sector. It sets out details on how staff & students can support the Scottish Government's aims to:

- develop the skills, behaviours and dispositions of prospective teachers to become effective practitioners with digital tools and spaces
- address digital literacies expectations of the **GTCS** Standards for Provisional Registration
- ensure that digital literacies are embedded in the foundation skills of early career teachers.

■ **Education Scotland** and **GTCS** launched Stepping Stones, a new professional learning programme for teachers in their first four years post-probation. Participants can choose from online workshops, webinars and networking on themes including coaching, mentoring and an introduction to the education system.

■ **GTCS** launched an Equality & Diversity Hub to support teachers to develop their professional knowledge and understanding, promote equality and diversity, and challenge inequalities or discrimination they encounter in schools, colleges and across learning communities. Resources include a guide and professional learning modules.

ScotEd 2020 online professional learning conference, created by two teachers, takes place on 19 September 2020.

CURRICULUM

■ **Education Scotland** published two thought papers on curriculum design, developed with **NoTosh**, to support the Refreshed Curriculum for Excellence Narrative, following a series of events in early 2020 with 40 school leaders:

- *Learner Pathways: A key to successful curriculum design*
- *Interdisciplinary Learning: Ambitious learning for an increasingly complex world*.

■ **e-Sgoil**, in partnership with Scottish Government, **ADES**, **Education Scotland**, Regional Improvement Collaboratives and local authorities, launched the e-learning National Offer.

- It provides free, live, interactive webinar lessons for National 5 and Higher courses.
- Webinars are delivered on Glow by subject specialists assisted by a second teacher.
- Courses include: business management, chemistry, computing science, English, French, Gaelic, history, maths, music, physics & RMPS.

Sessions started on 7 September 2020.

■ **Education Scotland** published:

- *Numeracy Professional Learning Resources* to support all practitioners with responsibility for teaching and learning of numeracy in all levels of the broad general education. Each resource explores learning, teaching and assessment.
- *What is working in numeracy and mathematics*, a summary related to 'the Scottish Attainment Challenge and beyond'. It shares information on emerging pedagogy and research demonstrating an impact on improving outcomes for learners. Case studies include approaches in **South Ayrshire**.

■ **Education Scotland**'s digital learning community, DigiLearnScot, published Learning Paths, providing details of digital tools to support learning and teaching, including Office 365 and GSuite.

Schools

PARENTS & CARERS

■ (7 September, updated from 23 July version) **National Parent Forum of Scotland** (**NPFS**) published _Back to school guidance 2020/21: A guide for parents and carers_.

■ (28 July) **Connect** published _Next steps (back to school) & How are you doing now?_ a survey of parents and carers from 27 May to 30 June with 7,858 responses. Topics included views on part-time school, communication, resources and support. Conclusions include:

- Help must be appropriately targeted in future lockdowns with the challenges of blended learning.
- Families should be able to self-identify as being in need of support to get the help they need.
- Families struggle with school work at home when facing multiple challenges and conflicting priorities, e.g. ill health, additional support needs, financial stress, work, lone parenting.
- These factors must be reflected in local and national planning.

■ (30 July) **NPFS** published initial findings from its _Parent Survey July 2020: Parents' experiences of learning at home and looking ahead to the new school year_ with 2,472 responses.

- 91% already had a device at home to access the internet (excluding smartphones); 3% now have a device due to local authority help.
- 46% felt the volume of work sent home was about right, 20% that there had not been enough, 15% that there had been too much.
- 91% said their child's school used online learning; only 28% said they had access to live or recorded video lessons by their school. 65% used Glow, 55% Microsoft Teams and 32% Google Classroom.
- 65% were satisfied with the planned full-time return to school; 24% were dissatisfied.
- In the event of a future widespread COVID-19 outbreak, 43% would be satisfied with at least 50% blended learning in school, only 28% with less than 50% time in school; 26% would be satisfied if schools remained open full-time.

VULNERABLE LEARNERS

■ (29 July) **MCR Pathways** published _Lockdown Survey – How to build back better: Listening to the voices of our young people_, a survey of 1,025 disadvantaged 13–18 year-olds across Scotland in June and July 2020. 56% are care experienced.

- Since lockdown, 68% did not use any learning materials provided by school – 49% said the materials were hard to understand, 43% were too stressed/anxious, 27% had caring duties.
- Concerns about returning to school included getting back into school routine (81%) and being behind with school work (76%).
- 82% said meeting their mentor regularly would help, 75% asked for one-to-one time with their teacher, 67% said they needed extra help with learning at home.
- 15% don't have IT and internet access at home and 20% don't have the space.

- 65% say that COVID-19 has not changed their plans for when they leave school; 19% now want to stay on in school for longer.
- 67% feel low, anxious and stressed, 50% feel more anxious and stressed than pre-COVID.

■ **Child Poverty Action Group** published a set of Cost of the School Day resources for the new school term and beyond, including short films presenting examples from schools and pupils, and guidance on setting up a Cost of the School Day working group.

■ **Education Scotland** published _Domestic abuse information for educators_, a set of resources for staff in all settings including a guide and a professional learning presentation.

Schools

■ **University of Strathclyde** published *Socioeconomic inequalities in school attendance in Scotland*, a summary of research carried out with **GTCS** and **Poverty Alliance Scotland**. Pupils from more deprived areas or socially rented housing, those with lower levels of parental education or registered for free school meals, missed school more frequently than their peers.

LEARNING RESOURCES & PROJECTS

■ **Play Scotland** launched Playful Pedagogy, a set of resources and case studies for school leaders and teachers to support 'learning adventures' across the school.

■ **Barclays** announced a three year commitment as part of its LifeSkills programme to support secondary and all-girls schools across the UK with content on starting a business, including on gaining transferable skills, such as creativity, problem solving, proactivity, leadership and resilience.

Maths Week Scotland 2020 takes place from 28 September to 4 October.

Libraries Week 2020 takes place 5–10 October.

Further & Higher Education

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PEOPLE

PROF IAIN GILLESPIE
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research & Enterprise, University of Leicester, will be new Principal & Vice-Chancellor, **University of Dundee**, from January 2021.

LUCY MEREDITH
Interim Vice-Principal (Learning, Teaching & Students), **UWS**, is new Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

PROF JONATHAN POWLES, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of New England, Australia, is new Vice-Principal (Learning, Teaching & Students), **UWS**.

SUE MACFARLANE
Director of Transformational Change, University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI), is Interim Principal & Chief Executive, **Lews Castle College UHI**; Iain Macmillan retired in August 2020.

DONALD MACBEATH
Principal, **North Highland College UHI**, is to retire at the end of September 2020.

ALLAN ATLEE
Dean of Academic Strategy, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, will be Deputy Director (Academic), **Glasgow School of Art**, from December 2020.

PROF PAUL HOPKINSON
Associate Head of the School of Social Sciences in Dubai, **Heriot-Watt University**, is new Academic Lead, Heriot-Watt Online.

GRANT RITCHIE
former Principal, Dundee & Angus College, is a new **College Development Network** (**CDN**) Fellow and Associate Director.

JEANETTE EVANS
Head of Corporate & Technical Services, City Property (Glasgow), will be Vice Principal – Operations, **Glasgow Kelvin College**, from November 2020.

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COVID-19 IMPACT & RESPONSE

■ (1 September) Scottish Government published _COVID-19: Guidance for universities, colleges and student accommodation providers_, on helping to minimise the risk of virus transmission.

■ (14 August) **SFC** announced a new £5m digital fund for colleges and universities to help disadvantaged students to access digital devices they need for learning.

■ (23 July) **SPICe** published _The impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on university funding in Scotland_, a summary of the challenges facing the sector, the action being taken to address them and the longer term implications of a funding shortfall.

■ (6 July) **Institute for Fiscal Studies** (**IFS**) published _Will universities need a bailout to survive the COVID-19 crisis?_ a briefing note on the resilience of UK university finances. _Interesting analysis of the IFS scenarios by **Wonkhe**._

■ (July) **EIS Further Education Lecturers' Association** published findings from a survey held in June with responses from 1,902 members.

▫ At home: 97% had broadband, but only 35% had a workspace separated from other areas.

▫ Pre-COVID: although the vast majority had used some form of online system, only 57% had set online tasks and 13% had provided live online teaching or feedback.

▫ During COVID: 28% delivered online classes; only 3% were _not_ involved in online learning.

▫ The main barriers to online learning were low student participation (66%), practical work or courses not applicable (~50%), inadequate workspace (40%) & poor connection (~30%).

▫ Main 2020/21 concerns: implementing social distancing (78%), delivering all aspects of the curriculum (71%) & learner retention (73%).

▫ Key requirements include: clarity on how teaching will be delivered (89%), time to prepare for blended learning (86%) and access to technology by students (82%).

Further & Higher Education

HIGHER EDUCATION APPLICANTS & STUDENTS

■ **UCAS** published <u>applicant statistics</u> for full-time undergraduate HE places in the UK at 4 September 2020 following Clearing.

▪ 48,270 students had been accepted into HE in Scotland (up 7% from 2019).

▪ 35,810 Scottish applicants had been accepted into HE in the UK (up 2,290).

▪ 34,330 Scottish students had places in Scotland (up 6%); 5,200 from England (up 20%); 810 from N Ireland (down 7%); 3,800 from the EU excluding the UK (down 3%); 3,990 from non-EU countries (up 15%).

▪ 1,420 Scottish students had places at English universities (down 7%).

▪ The proportion of 18 year-old Scots entering HE was 27.6%.

■ **Office for Students** published **National Student Survey** 2020 results based on the views of 311k students from 396 UK HE providers. 85% of full-time students at Scottish universities were satisfied overall with their experience (up 1ppt from 2019) (83% UK, down 1ppt).
*Data on **Discover Uni** (which replaced Unistats in 2019) enables institutions to be compared.*

■ **Higher Education Policy Institute** (**HEPI**) published *Student Accommodation: The Facts*, including key definitions for the sector in the UK, a market overview and policy options for improvement on affordability, regulation and cost.

■ A new <u>Pathways Web App</u> was launched by the Regional Learner Passport Partnership of colleges and universities in South East Scotland, supported by **SFC**. It aims to make it easier for students and applicants to find and make sense of study routes.

■ (26 August) **SFC** published <u>guidance on additional funded student places</u> allocated to universities in 2020–21 following the Scottish Government's statement on SQA results (*see page 11*).

▪ Recognising that universities had based admission decisions on initial results, financial penalties were removed for over-recruitment of full-time Scottish or EU students.

▪ The cap was also removed on the number of students enrolling for health related subjects, e.g. medicine and nursing.

■ Scotland's Chief Statistician published *Higher Education Student Support in Scotland 2019–20* on behalf of **Student Awards Agency Scotland** (**SAAS**).

▪ SAAS administered a total of £1.009b funding to support 178,180 students (down 0.4% from 2018–19), at an average £5,660 per student.

▪ £912.7m (up 2.1%) was to support 148,570 full-time students (down 0.2%) – 138,995 undergraduates, 9,575 postgraduates.

▪ 10.3% were from the EU (unchanged), 15,235 students (down 0.5%), receiving £32.1m.

▪ £90.9m was provided in non-repayable bursaries and grants (up 13.4%).

▪ £540.1m was for living cost loans (up 6.3%).

▪ 20,030 part-time students were provided with fee support (down 3.4%) at an average £840.

▪ £79.5m was for 9,580 nursing and midwifery students (up 4.4%) at an average £8,300.

Usually published in October.

TEACHING, LEARNING, QUALITY & STANDARDS

■ **Advance HE** published *On Your Marks: Learner-focused feedback practices and feedback literacy*, a collection of 18 papers showcasing learner-focused feedback practices that make an impact on student learning.

Further & Higher Education

■ **Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education** (**QAA**) **Scotland**'s new Enhancement Theme for 2020–23 is Resilient learning communities, on 'the changing needs and values of an increasingly diverse student community, and a rapidly changing external environment'.

■ **QAA** published new COVID-19 support & guidance resources:

▪ (20 July) *Complaints and appeals in the context of COVID-19*

▪ (23 July) *The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on accredited programmes of higher education: An analysis of surveys of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies [PSRBs]*. There would be significant value in closer collaboration among PSRBs over their response to the crisis, and for the provision of better and more targeted information.

QAA published its new Strategy for 2020–2025.

■ **Universities UK** (**UUK**), **GuildHE** and **QAA** published *Principles for effective degree algorithm design* on behalf of the **UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment**, including recommendations for universities when deciding final degree classifications and examples of good practice. It sets out six principles agreed by UK universities.

■ **UUK**, **GuildHE** and **QAA** published *Degree algorithm practice in 2020: Research report*, an overview of the current review processes and practice of providers across the UK.

▪ There are many common approaches, however, some differences remain.

▪ For 73%, the method of calculating a degree classification is through a weighted arithmetic mean of percentage marks.

▪ 75% place greater weight on the final year.

▪ 85% have a borderline policy in which a student's classification is reviewed with the potential to be increased in accordance with set criteria and/or exam board approval.

WIDENING & FAIR ACCESS & EQUALITY

■ **Universities Scotland** and **Colleges Scotland** published *National Articulation Forum Final Report 2020* supported by **SFC**. It builds on the Commission on Widening Access's (CoWA's) call for increased articulation of students from college to university. All institutions are now involved in articulation. 14 recommendations include:

▪ **SFC** to expand the definition of articulation to include e.g. students at **Open University** (**OU**) **in Scotland**, **Scotland's Rural College** (**SRUC**) and **UHI**, and students entering Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs) with previous study at SCQF level 7+.

▪ Institutions to work with **SDS** to develop pathways involving apprenticeships.

▪ Universities to consider ring-fencing some places on undergraduate and GA degrees to give articulating students more certainty.

▪ Institutions to ensure that appropriate support is in place for all stages of articulation.

▪ Institutions to use evidence of student demand and skills gaps in the economy to develop new articulation routes.

▪ Highlight articulation as a pathway in all information, advice & guidance.

CoWA's A Blueprint for Fairness was published in March 2016 – see Informed 39.

■ Scottish colleges, universities and public bodies made a public declaration of anti-racism following an **Advance HE** webinar on 'The journey from critical conversations to critical action'. **Universities Scotland** is working with Advance HE on an **SFC** funded project on tackling racism.

Further & Higher Education

■ (12 August) **Disabled Students' Commission** published _Considerations for disabled students when applying to university in light of COVID-19_, a practical guide.

■ **Advance HE** published _Ethnicity and the Postgraduate Student Experience_, examining whether and how experiences differ among students of different ethnic backgrounds. It also considers ethnicity alongside other personal characteristics including age and nature of study.

■ **OU in Scotland** and **Who Cares? Scotland** worked with care experienced students and 15 other HE institutions and organisations to develop Corporate parenting in higher education, a new course for staff in Scottish universities. Participants will gain a better understanding of the challenges care experienced students face. Funded by **SFC**, the modules are hosted on OpenLearn Create with a digital credential available on completion.

EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY & ONLINE LEARNING

■ **QAA Scotland** launched Focus On Diaries, a new weekly series of videos exploring the shift to digital education, featuring perspectives from across HE. They are produced as part of QAA's 2019–20 Technology Enhanced Learning project.

■ **Edge Foundation** published _Education Technology in Further Education Colleges: How are colleges integrating digital technologies into their practice?_ research exploring the work of **Dundee & Angus**, **Basingstoke**, **Belfast Met** and **Suffolk New Colleges** pre-pandemic. Findings include:

▢ Using edtech in teaching allows students to see how digital skills are needed in the workplace.

▢ Staff confidence using new tech is a key challenge, but given time and support confidence develops and attitude shifts.

▢ Digital teams in each college provided constant and consistent support which encouraged staff to use existing and new technologies.

▢ It is important to show how embedding edtech can enhance teaching and learning for staff and students.

▢ Students became more engaged, creative and inspired through using different digital tools.

▢ Many lecturers were surprised that tech helped them develop their activities and allowed for more flexibility in their teaching styles.

■ **Jisc** published _Learning and teaching reimagined: Change and challenge for students, staff and leaders_, developed with **UUK**, **Advance HE** and **Emerge Education** focused on technology-enhanced learning in UK HE. It is the interim report of a new Learning & teaching reimagined project on possible future scenarios. Ten recommendations include:

▢ Universities should consider conducting a skills audit of students and build digital skills training into curricula.

▢ Technology-enhanced learning can amplify some student physical and mental wellbeing issues and should be carefully considered.

▢ Universities should invest in staff digital skills and reward and recognition frameworks as part of professional development.

▢ Universities should ensure they have strong design capabilities and actively involve students in content creation.

A project steering group is chaired by Prof David Maguire, Interim Principal, University of Dundee. A parallel project is looking at Shaping the digital future of FE and skills.
See 'rethinking education' on page 27.

■ An online Making the most of lectures course developed for students by **University of Glasgow** is now available for all on OpenLearn Create.

Further & Higher Education

■ **Association of Colleges** (**AoC**) published _Creating a post-COVID-19 EdTech Strategy with no one left behind_, bringing together lessons learnt from the use of edtech and online learning in further education (FE) (mainly in England) during lockdown. It includes articles by **Jisc**, **National Cyber Security Centre** and **British Council**.

■ **CDN** launched a new _Resource Bank: Online/blended delivery_, five guides on areas including preparing materials, managing the online space, and formative assessment and feedback.

CDN published its Strategic framework 2020–23.

GRADUATES & POSTGRADUATES

■ (29 July) **Sutton Trust** published _COVID-19 and Social Mobility Impact Brief #5: Graduate recruitment and access to the workplace_ exploring the impact on students and new graduates.

- 61% of 1,000 British employers had cancelled some or all internships or work placements.

- 48% think there will be fewer opportunities in their businesses in the next year.

- 33% of graduate employers expect to hire fewer graduates over the next year; however, 27% expect to hire more.

- 44% said employers in their sector were likely to take time missed from education into account in future hiring decisions, however 42% said they were unlikely to.

- 29% said social mobility and socioeconomic diversity would be more of a priority in the next two years (48% in London).

- 46% of **current undergraduates** said the pandemic had impacted on their ability to gain graduate employment.

- 18% had their work experience placements cancelled or postponed; 11% had interviews cancelled; 4% had a job offer withdrawn.

■ **HEPI** published _PhD students and their careers_ based on data for 526 PhD students studying in the UK, extracted from a wider 2019 survey by **Nature**.

- 33% are more and 32% less likely to pursue a research career since starting their PhD.

- Academic research (67%) or research in industry (64%) are seen as probable careers; 40% want to stay in academia due to greater interest in their subject.

- They feel well trained in analytical (83%), data (82%) and technical (71%) skills, presenting to specialist audiences (81%) and writing for peer-reviewed journals (64%).

- Only 26% feel well prepared for managing people, applying for funding (22%) or managing budgets (11%).

- 76% attended careers workshops and 60% networking events; 64% did their own research; only 13% used their careers service.

■ **UKRI** announced that international PhD students will be eligible for all UKRI-funded postgraduate studentships from 2021/22.

PARTNERSHIPS & AGREEMENTS

■ **City of Glasgow College** is working with **Klik2Learn** educational software company to enhance its online learning provision for students. Content from the college's vocational programmes will be made available via a digital learning hub. The first courses developed are for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students.

■ **UWS**'s new BSc Paramedic Science degree has been accredited by **Health & Care Professions Council**. The programme, which began in September 2020, is being delivered in partnership with **Scottish Ambulance Service** and **NHS Lanarkshire**, **NHS Dumfries & Galloway** and **NHS Ayrshire & Arran**.

Further & Higher Education

THE TRANSFORMATIVE ROLES OF COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

■ **Commission into the College of the Future** published *People, productivity and place: A new vision for colleges*, including essays on the transformative role for colleges and case studies about their civic role during the pandemic.

▪ The vision is that 'the college of the future will be central to driving a fairer, more sustainable and more prosperous society'.

▪ To achieve this, colleges will need to have 'a clear and recognised position in the education and skills system'.

▪ People: Colleges will be a touchpoint throughout their lives, empowering them via flexible and blended learning and guidance.

▪ Productivity: Colleges will provide strategic advice and support for employers to drive change, innovation and workforce planning.

▪ Place: Colleges will have the resources and funding to play an even greater role in fostering healthy and connected communities.

The final report will be published in the autumn.

■ **BiGGAR Economics** published *Universities in Advanced Economies: Recovery and Transformation*, commissioned by **Universities Scotland** in 2019. Completed in May, the report states that 'the sector needs to be at the centre of economic recovery and transformation plans' after the pandemic. It highlights universities' role in:

▪ securing and providing high quality employment

▪ reducing and avoiding youth unemployment

▪ providing the human and intellectual capital needed for recovery and transformation

▪ driving innovation for new and existing high productivity businesses and public sectors

▪ building the resilience of the economy and public services (including in health and care)

▪ supporting the net zero challenge and the green recovery

▪ providing leadership in the national and in regional economies and wider civic society.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION & PROJECTS

■ **UUK** and **GuildHE** commissioned **QAA** to develop a new approach to reviewing and enhancing the quality of UK transnational education (TNE). Following a review later this year QAA will launch a programme of in-country enhancement activity in 2021.

■ **QAA**, **UUK International** and **GuildHE** published a short report of a consultation on principles and models for enhancing the quality of UK TNE, based on 105 responses.

▪ There was a 'deep commitment' to the future of UK TNE and 'strong pride' in the way UK HE and TNE are respected around the world.

▪ 95% agreed that any quality enhancement system should retain a UK-wide approach.

▪ Universities want a system involving TNE activities and resources complemented by an in-country review schedule.

■ **Universities Scotland** published *Internationally Scottish: Creating global communities*, supported by **British Council**, a snapshot of international initiatives and projects in universities in Scotland. Key points include:

▪ Each year over 58k international students from 180 countries study in Scotland.

▪ Since 2015 the international student population has grown by 25%.

▪ Scotland is the second most popular UK study destination for EU students (after London).

▪ Universities have committed to: celebrate the diversity of students and staff; increase outward mobility and widen access; enhance graduates' global skills and employment readiness; strengthen relationships with alumni.

Universities Scotland is involved with a Scottish Government Alumni Working Group.

Further & Higher Education

■ **University of Edinburgh** is a founding member of **TenU**, a new group of ten research intensive universities in the UK, US and Europe, funded by **Research England**. It aims to enable improved collaboration between technology transfer offices, responsible for the commercialisation of research.
*Other members include **Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester** and **Leuven, Imperial College London** and **MIT**.*

■ **HEPI** published *UK Universities and China*, essays on the challenges and complexities of the relationship. Topics include self-censorship, the importance of UK–China scientific research and the recruitment and integration of Chinese students.

■ **University of Glasgow** signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Faculty of Medicine at **Chulalongkorn University**, Thailand, creating new postgraduate opportunities for medical degree students from Thailand.

COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

■ **SRUC** is offering new courses from September 2020: BSc/BSc (Hons) Sustainable Food Production & Land Use at the Barony campus and Wildlife & Conservation Management at HNC, HND and degree level at Barony and Ayr campuses.
A new Agricultural Technology degree planned for 2020 will now run from September 2021.

■ **University of Abertay**'s MSc Ethical Hacking & Cybersecurity course has been awarded full certification by **National Cyber Security Centre**.

■ **University of Edinburgh** launched a new Centre for Technomoral Futures as part of the Edinburgh Futures Institute. Its initial focus will be on the ethical implications of data-driven innovation in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning and other emerging technologies.

■ **Queen Margaret University** (**QMU**) is offering a new Graduate Diploma in Integrated Community Nursing at SCQF level 10 from September 2020. Aimed at band 5 registered nurses, it includes workplace and online learning.
QMU published its Strategic Plan 2020–2025.

Community & Adult Learning

COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT (CLD)

■ (2 Sept) Scottish Government updated its _COVID-19: Guidance for the community learning and development sector_, published 31 July.

■ **CLD Standards Council** published wave 3 (19 May to 17 June) of its surveys of CLD practitioners during the pandemic. Findings from 112 respondents include:

- 52% had concerns with wellbeing at work (39% in wave 2).
- 39% had issues with access to technology (45%).
- 53% were involved/expected to be involved in local authority learning hubs (38% wave 2).

■ **CLD Standards Council** published _Review of Career Pathways for Community Learning and Development_, examining the professional learning opportunities currently available for existing and potential CLD practitioners.

- It focuses mainly on accredited pathways, qualifications via national bodies, the extent to which these form a pathway to full registration and barriers encountered by practitioners.
- The next stage will be to engage with providers of CLD qualifications to consider creating a more cohesive framework.

Maths Week Scotland 2020 takes place from 28 September to 4 October.
Libraries Week 2020 takes place 5–10 October.

DIGITAL INCLUSION & SKILLS

■ **OU in Scotland** and **Lead Scotland** launched a new Everyday computer skills: A beginner's guide to computers, tablets, mobile phones and accessibility course on the OpenLearn Create site. It was designed with and for disabled learners, with **Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations** (**SCVO**) Digital Participation Funding.

■ **YouthLink Scotland** has created a £250k Digital Inclusion Fund in partnership with **Lead Scotland** and **Workers Education Association Scotland**. 16–30 year-olds not in full-time education, employment or training and actively supported by CLD are eligible to apply for funding, which can be used to help to buy laptops, tablets, etc.
The closing date for applications is 25 September 2020.

Community & Adult Learning

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

■ **(17 July) Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education** (**SAPOE**) published _Outdoor Education Centre [OEC] COVID-19 recovery: Teacher survey_; 82% of the 350 respondents work in primary schools.

◾ 78% of primary respondents visited OECs with school groups annually pre-lockdown.

◾ 51% of respondents think their school will engage in more residential outdoor learning post-pandemic.

◾ The main concerns for returning to residential outdoor learning included Scottish Government guidance, local authority/employer procedures, cancellation refund policy, insurance and parents' enthusiasm.

SAPOE is a forum where local authority representatives 'consider and debate best practice' in development and safety of outdoor learning.

■ **Girlguiding Scotland** announced the closure of Netherurd outdoor activity centre in Scottish Borders.
Scouts Scotland announced _(26 August) that due to the 'massive financial impact' of COVID-19 it is having to make compulsory redundancies and is refocusing on 'supporting local scouting'._

Scottish Natural Heritage _has been renamed_ **NatureScot**_._

■ (14 August) **SAPOE** published _COVID-19: Reopening and operation of Outdoor Education Centres (OEC) and reintroducing visits by schools_, guidance commissioned by Scottish Government.

■ (21 August) **SAPOE** published _Outdoor Education Centres – Fit for the Future: The educational value of Scotland's outdoor education centres_ in the context of Curriculum for Excellence. It was commissioned by Scottish Government and developed with partners including **Education Scotland** and **YouthLink Scotland**. It aims to:

◾ provide a framework of expectation for the safe reopening and operation of OECs

◾ promote national consistency and ensure local flexibility for OECs, local authorities and schools

◾ provide confidence and reassurance to all service users.

Concerns have been growing about the 'financial crisis' facing OECs due to the restrictions in place – see 1 September open letter from SAPOE.

■ **National Network for Outdoor Learning** is creating a Map of Outdoor Learning and Play Providers in Scotland.

MUSEUMS, GALLERIES & SCIENCE CENTRES

■ (30 July) Scottish Government published updated _COVID-19: Guidance for museums, galleries and heritage attractions_ with good practice advice for reopening, reviewed regularly.

■ Scottish Government provided an extra £2m emergency funding to the four science centres to help with the impact of COVID-19. They have developed and delivered online learning opportunities throughout.
The four are **Dynamic Earth** _and_ **Glasgow, Dundee** _and_ **Aberdeen Science Centres**_._

Community & Adult Learning

YOUTH WORK & YOUNG PEOPLE

■ (4 September) **Youth Scotland** published _Reopening of indoor youth work toolkit: Practical planning for your youth group/organisation to use with the national guidance in Phase 3_.
Indoor youth work activities were allowed to resume from 31 August.

■ **YouthLink Scotland** published:

▫ (7 July) _Detached youth work guidelines_ to provide a structure for refreshing/revisiting detached and outreach youth work in light of COVID-19.

▫ (4 September) _COVID-19: Guiding framework to support gradual phased renewal of youth work services_, developed with Scottish Government and **Public Health Scotland**.

■ **YouthLink Scotland** launched the following online resources for youth workers:

▫ Digital Youth Work, a hub of toolkits, guidance, webinars and training events developed with **Youth Scotland**, **Young Scot**, **LGBT Youth Scotland** and **YMCA Scotland**.

▫ Heids Together, a collection of podcasts, e-books, toolkits and lesson plans to help reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

■ (1 September) **YouthLink Scotland** published _Youth Work and Employability_, a position paper outlining the key role of youth work in Scotland's 'social and economic renewal' in the aftermath of COVID-19.
_A_ National Youth Work Strategy for Scotland (2020–25) _is still under development._

■ **National Lottery Community Fund** awarded £660k Young Start funding to nine projects to help 8–24 year-olds gain skills and confidence, including:

▫ **Intercultural Youth Scotland**'s Restless Natives employability skills programme for young people from minority ethnic background

▫ **Falkirk Football Community Foundation**'s Centre Forward personal development programme for those with learning disabilities, with **Forth Valley College**.

■ **PACE** theatre and youth arts organisation launched A Change of PACE, an online platform for young people across Scotland to create, learn, perform and connect.

Government & Wider Society

COVID-19 RESPONSE & IMPACT

■ (10 September) Scottish Government published _COVID-19 Phase 3: Scotland's route map update_. _The country moved into Phase 3 on 10 July._

■ (18 August) Scottish Government announced £15m funding for phase two of Connecting Scotland, aiming to help 23k low income households, particularly families with children and young people leaving care, to get online.

◻ Participants will receive a mobile device, 12 months' data, plus six months' training and support from a 'digital champion'.

◻ Delivered with **SCVO**, local authorities and local, public and third sector organisations.

Phase one was launched in May 2020 – see Informed 80.

■ **SPICe** has created a central hub for its COVID-19 research briefings and blogs on the pandemic and its impact, including on education.

■ **Engender** published _Gender & Unpaid Work – The impact of COVID-19 on women's caring roles_, highlighting 'the disproportionate amount of unpaid work done by women', which is increasing during the crisis. It calls on Scottish Government to do more to 'measure, value and reduce' women's unpaid work.

■ (17 July) Scotland's next census has been postponed from 2021 to March 2022.

EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE

■ Scottish Government published:

◻ (30 July) Updated _COVID-19: Childminder services guidance_

◻ (30 July) Updated _COVID-19: Fully outdoor childcare providers guidance_

◻ (21 August) Updated _COVID-19: Guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services_

◻ (21 August) Updated _COVID-19: Phase 3: Guidance on re-opening school age childcare services_, including for breakfast clubs, after-school care and holiday care.

■ (2 September) **Public Health Scotland** published a set of _COVID-19 Early years resilience and impact survey_ research reports, based on over 11k responses from parents and carers of 2–7 year-olds. Themes include: key behaviours; play and learning, use of outdoor spaces and social interactions; and the experience of parents.

Government & Wider Society

TECHNOLOGY ECOSYSTEM REVIEW

■ Scottish Government published an independent _Scottish technology ecosystem review_ by Mark Logan, commissioned in May 2020 to examine how the sector can support post-COVID recovery.

▢ The overall aim is to increase the creation of profitable tech businesses and reduce the time taken for viable start-ups to reach scale.

▢ The ecosystem's central dependencies are education & talent, infrastructure and funding.

34 recommendations are in five categories, 14 in 'foundational talent pipeline', including:

▢ Treat computing science like maths or physics and follow through on the consequences.

▢ Establish an industry–schools partnership to give computing science pupils summer work experience.

▢ Strategically support school-stage extra-curricular programming clubs.

▢ Overcome gender-stereotyping in early years.

▢ Adjust university incentivisation and funding: to improve tech-entrepreneurial focus…

▢ … and to improve spin-out scale and quality.

▢ Increase university funding to create more local software engineers.

▢ Fund a national, pan-university Tranzfuser-style summer-school.

▢ Increase the number of start-up internships available to students.

▢ Treat **Codeclan** as a strategic asset.

▢ Introduce a Scottish tech-visa.

A compelling, analytical – and very readable – report. The Scottish Government's response is included in the 2020/21 Programme for Government published 1 September (details will be in Informed 84).

RETHINKING EDUCATION

There has been a minor explosion of organisations and individuals in Scotland considering the future of education, particularly, but not exclusively, sparked by the current crisis, including:

■ _**The Herald**_ launched The Future of Education, a new campaign to explore 'what the future of education may look like' and how to achieve it. Current partners include **SDS**, **Young Enterprise Scotland**, **Apple** and **CGI**.

■ **Scottish Institute for Enterprise**'s Future of Learning Innovation Challenge for students closed to submissions at the end of August. A Shaping the Future conference is taking place on 23 September to 'explore the future of education and how educators in HE and FE can empower students to change the world'.

■ **Creative Bravery**, set up by a new collaborative of individuals to 're-imagine education', is holding its first Creative Bravery Festival of learning from 21–27 September, to help 'transform and rethink the way we educate'.

■ **Exam.Scot** was set up by five individuals who discussed 'the need for a clear space' to '[explore] the possibilities for the future of examinations in Scotland'. Input is sought; others have already begun to contribute opinions and proposals.

Fife based **International Futures Forum** is holding an open conversation on exams on 25 September.

■ **Policy Scotland**, University of Glasgow, published _COVID-19: Do we need to re-imagine the purpose of school inspections?_. It presents examples of how (between March & July) 'support and improvement' and 'liaison' were at the forefront of the work of inspectorates of education in a number of countries including Scotland.

Government & Wider Society

- Also see:
  - **Jisc**'s 'Learning & teaching reimagined' and 'Shaping the digital future of FE and skills' on page 19
  - **Commission into the College of the Future** on page 21

- **Edinburgh Futures Institute**, University of Edinburgh on page 22.

Goodison Group in Scotland and *Scotland's Futures Forum*'s *Scotland 2030: Future Schooling, Education and Learning* project, launched in 2017, is nearing completion.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

- (22 July) Scottish Government published *COVID-19: children, young people and families – Evidence and intelligence report*, an overview of evidence about the impact of COVID-19 and lockdown measures on children, young people and families, particularly those facing the biggest challenges.

- (4 August) **Buttle UK** published *The State of Child Poverty 2020: The impact of COVID-19 on families and young people living in poverty*, a survey of over 900 UK support workers in social services, voluntary, housing, education and public health in June. The main challenges affecting children's education at home were:
  - being unable to access food (reported by 33%)
  - digital access (26%), e.g. shared or no computers, no broadband or slow speed, no access to printers, using parents' phones
  - parental mental and physical health issues (24%).

- **Centre for Excellence for Children's Care & Protection** (**CELCIS**) published *Bridging the digital divide for care experienced young people in Scotland: If not now, when?* COVID-19 has further deepened the impact of digital exclusion for care leavers, with restrictions requiring more access online, including for education, banking, socialisation, entertainment and health advice.

- **Young Scot** published its *Impact Report 2019/20*.

- (16 July) **Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland** published *Independent Children's Rights Impact Assessment on the Response to COVID-19 in Scotland*.
  - It states 'Most strikingly… children have been largely absent from the decisions that have so profoundly impacted their lives'.
  - There was no direct input from young people into decisions on the cancellation of exams and changes to assessment, and no representation of children or young people on the Education Recovery Group.
  - 11 recommendations include: target resources on reduction of inequalities in education; communicate to children on all issues affecting them and in a way they understand; and redesign decision-making processes to include their rights to participate at a structural level.

- (August) **Children's Parliament** published *How are you doing? Survey report for April/May/June 2020*, based on responses from between 3k–4k 8–12 year-olds each month, including on: learning; family and friends; health and wellbeing; worries; and access to information, expressing opinions and experiencing rights. *A September survey is currently underway.*

- Scottish Government published *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)*, a factsheet on its 'work to prevent and reduce the negative impact of childhood adversity and trauma'.