



Scottish Council for
Development and Industry

POLICY SUBMISSION

Response to the consultation on the creation of New College Glasgow

January 2010

SCDI is an independent and inclusive economic development network which seeks to influence and inspire government and key stakeholders with our ambitious vision to create shared sustainable economic prosperity for Scotland.

For more information on this response please contact the SCDI Policy Team at

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Introduction

It is SCDI's view that Scotland's economic prospects depend in large part on the development of a highly skilled workforce ready to take on the challenges of the future. We recognise the vital role the college sector plays in this ambition and the considerable responsibility that New College Glasgow is taking on.

Merger

The business case for merger demonstrates significant benefits arising from the creation of a single, merged college with a world-class reputation and facilities. An organisation of this size would have responsibility to Scotland in the delivery of around 10% of college provision. The merger process therefore must be completed in a timely and efficient manner so as not to lose sight of the central purpose; delivery of high-quality education.

Mission, Vision and Values

SCDI supports the mission, vision and values of the New College as proposed however would like to see more specific incorporation of the strong links that New College Glasgow will make with employers. It is essential that the New College delivers the skills needed by employers and that students are exposed to industry at all stages through their education. This is particularly important during the economic recovery as retraining and up-skilling become crucial activities.

In addition, we would welcome New College Glasgow's active engagement as a partner amongst the education and skills landscape of Glasgow and Scotland. This includes close working with the community colleges around Glasgow who may organically become feeder colleges for higher level courses in the New College. The partnership working should also include close links with the universities, possibly leading to the creation of joint courses and strong articulation links from courses in the New College to courses at the universities.

Employers across the West of Scotland will look to the New College to meet employee training needs. The development of a strong employer liaison unit will facilitate this and ensure employers become aware of the many training opportunities available within the new facility.

Governance, Management and Finance

SCDI has no specific comments on the governance, management and finances of New College Glasgow.

Other comments

The model of education provision in Scotland has traditionally been rigidly structured with limited flexibility. Colleges have recently been at the forefront of flexible delivery and we believe the creation of New College Glasgow will allow a sufficient economy of scale to enable even greater flexibility in education provision.

To meet the needs of modern Scotland, courses must be structured to meet the needs and availability of learners. Effort should be made to maximise the flexibility of provision allowing opportunities for people from all walks of life to gain new skills.

SCDI believes that certain sectors of the economy will be especially important for sustainable economic growth. These include renewables, tourism and retail. We would expect New College Glasgow to be a significant player in delivering the skills for growth in these sectors, such as in STEM and sales and marketing.

SCDI looks forward to working with New College Glasgow as it becomes a reality.