

PRESS RELEASE

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COLLEGE FUTURES: SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES HOSTS FURTHER EDUCATION EXPERT CONFERENCE

Scotland's Colleges is hosting representatives from across the sector at its annual conference this week, and is challenging them to help shape the future of colleges in Scotland.

The two day conference will feature key speakers from the political and educational landscape who will describe the context in which Scotland's further education sector finds itself, and identify the challenges which lie ahead.

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC, Advocate General for Scotland, will address delegates on the new UK government's goals and planned measures to strengthen education in Scotland. Other key speakers include John McClelland, Chair of the Scottish Funding Council, the body responsible for funding post-16 education in Scotland. John McClelland will outline the current context for colleges in Scotland, and discuss the implications for the sector.

Graham Johnstone, Chair of Scotland's Colleges' Chairs' Congress, commented: "The annual conference is an opportunity for Principals, Chairs of Boards and other senior representatives from the college sector across Scotland to gather with our stakeholders and partners and assess where we are as a sector, where we are going, and to revise and review our strategy and objectives. At this conference, we will be examining how further education is delivered in Scotland, how we can continue to ensure that Scotland has the skills it needs to recover from the economic downturn and also the ways in which colleges can act as community regenerators across the country."

"It is essential that, as a sector, we constantly seek to learn ourselves and innovate in order to best serve our learners, employers and industry and so play a full and meaningful role in the life and economy of Scotland."

Linda McTavish, Convenor of the Principals' Convention, stated: "The sector fully realises the challenges this country faces. The role of colleges in skills development and economic regeneration is critical for a country seeking to emerge stronger out of recession."

"The immediate future is very challenging for Scottish colleges. College leaders and their staff want the best deal for college students. We look to the UK and Scottish Governments to work together and help achieve that. Wrong decisions could have disastrous effects."

Scotland's Colleges' June conference runs over two days, with a development event for principals and chairs of colleges on the first day and a full programme of speakers and workshops on the second. For further information on Scotland's Colleges, visit www.scotlandscollege.ac.uk

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