



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education



Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

A' brosnachadh foghlam adhartach agus àrd ìre

25 July 2018

Jane Davidson  
Education and Skills Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Dear Jane

Further to my appearance at the Education and Skills Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> June to give evidence to the Committee's Inquiry into Young People's Pathways I promised to provide clarification on the senior phase vocational pathways data.

The SPICe outline on DYW within the Young People's Pathways report referred to the number of senior phase vocational pathways and the likelihood of achieving the target for 2019-20 on Page 8 in the following excerpt:

*College outcome agreements for academic year 2017-18 were published in summer 2017. These include DYW priorities around the expansion of Senior Phase pathway numbers to over 7,000 by 2019-2020. In terms of progress to date, figures from the SFC indicate that:*

- *The number of SCQF level 5 vocational courses offered at school continued to increase between 2014-15 and 2015-16 with an increase in uptake in the Senior Phase – from 2,169 enrolments in academic year 2014-15 to 3,014 in 2015-16.*
- *In academic year 2017-18, the SFC forecast further increases in recruitment with over 3,500 school pupils expected to take part in SCQF level 5 and above college courses in that academic year.*

*The above figures suggest that, on current trends, it is very unlikely that the target of 7,000 pupils taking part in vocational learning by 2019-2020 will be achieved.*

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The underpinning figures seem to us to have been sourced from the 2016-17 DYW Report (published in January 2018). However, since its publication the *final* outturn for 2016-17 senior phase vocational pathways was established as over 4,500 (a further increase on the position from 2015-16). In addition, the forecast for AY 2017-18 cited in the DYW Report was an estimate based on an in-year position. We will know the final outturn for 2017-18 when the College statistics are published in January 2019. However, early signs are of continued growth.

In conclusion therefore, while acknowledging the need for continued expansion partners continue to make good progress toward the target of over 7,000 senior phase vocational pathways by 2019-20 that leaves us confident the target will be met.

If you have any further queries, don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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