Submission to the Education and Skills Committee on the Education Reforms Inquiry

Introduction
On Wednesday 13 December 2017 the Education and Skills Committee will be considering the proposed expanded role of Education Scotland in the context of the Scottish Government’s education reforms set out in the Education (Scotland) Bill.

Colleges Scotland welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed future role of Education Scotland.

The Future Role of Education Scotland
Colleges Scotland acknowledges that, whilst the Education (Scotland) Bill focuses on schools, reform in the pre-16 education system will have an impact on the college sector. Colleges have close working relationships with schools and any proposed reforms should take this into account.

A key area of interest for the college sector is the provisions within the Education (Scotland) Bill to introduce new Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs). We recognise that the Scottish Government’s aim in establishing RICs is to facilitate partnership working across a region to deliver educational improvement and develop a focus on raising and closing the attainment gap.

We understand that, in this context, Education Scotland will have a significantly enhanced role and purpose with a strengthened inspection and improvement function. We note it is proposed that Education Scotland will:

“provide a clear vision and framework within which effective school level collaboration can take place. It will work with partners to develop this framework and support development of resources and tools to support collaborative approaches in the classroom. As part of their inspection process Education Scotland will look at how schools and establishments are working collaboratively with others and we will share evidence about what works”¹.

Further to colleges being involved during the development and operationalisation of RICs, it is of fundamental importance that a regional approach to curriculum and skills development involves both schools and colleges working together, and that there is dialogue and interaction between Education Scotland, schools and colleges at a regional level.

It would, therefore, be helpful to understand how Education Scotland:

- will involve colleges in the development of a framework to support the creation of resources and tools to support collaborative approaches
- intends to help facilitate strong regional collaboration between schools and colleges
- will share evidence of good practice of collaborative efforts between schools and colleges.

Colleges Scotland
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