

WE ARE HIRING!

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

WELCOME FROM WAIYIN

Chair of the Board

JOB DESCRIPTION

Find out about the role
and responsibilities



Welcome FROM THE CHAIR

and organisational structure to meet the growing needs and meet the expectation for value for money from members. The substantive Chief Executive Officer (CEO) role offers an exciting opportunity for an exceptional leader to lead and grow this revitalised organisation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN THIS EXCITING OPPORTUNITY WITHIN COLLEGES SCOTLAND.

Colleges Scotland represent and connect colleges, and enable a strong foundation to the future, providing impactful advocacy for the best outcomes for their students, communities and the economy.

Colleges are the anchor points of local communities, supporting individuals of all ages and backgrounds to gain skills and qualifications, helping the most disadvantaged and furthest from the labour market and powering regional economies by delivering the skilled workforce that businesses need.

This dynamic sector – consisting of 24 colleges and 13 college regions – is the largest skills and training provider in Scotland. Colleges invest in the futures of almost 240,000 students and over 94% achieve their qualifications, moving onto positive destinations of further study, training, employment or starting their own businesses. Colleges are also essential employers within their respective regions, employing more than 11,000 staff.

Colleges have an intrinsic role in enabling the Scottish Government to deliver its priorities on eradicating child poverty, tackling the climate emergency, increasing economic growth and in being robust public bodies. Now has never been a more important time, as the college sector is at the heart of the Scotland's social and economic recovery by providing people with employability skills, as well as reskilling and upskilling the workforce to deliver what employers specifically require, and in helping to lift people out of poverty.

This is an exciting time to join Colleges Scotland. Following a review of the organisation by the Interim Chief Executive Officer, Colleges Scotland have a new governance structure, refreshed business model

The CEO must be passionate about college students and the college sector, with influencing skills to position Colleges Scotland as the voice of the sector. They must be able to build rapport with our diverse membership. They are a confident leader, able to champion the sector at the most senior level with key stakeholders, elected members, the Scottish Government and funders to secure the best possible outcome for the college sector. They have a track-record of leading and driving organisational excellence in a transformational and results-focused way. They are adept at organisational strategy delivery; working within a governance mode; and supporting, developing and leading a small staff team.

We are delighted that you have taken the time to consider this exciting role and wish you well in your application.

Dr Waiyin Hatton
Chair of Colleges Scotland





About Colleges Scotland

Colleges Scotland is the collective voice for the college sector, and as the membership body, represents three regional strategic bodies and all 24 colleges in Scotland, which deliver both further education and around 13% of the provision of all higher education in Scotland.

The 24 colleges operate in 13 regions across Scotland, allowing them to plan nationally and regionally, as well as deliver locally, while three regional strategic bodies currently co-ordinate approaches for colleges in the Highlands and Islands, Glasgow, and Lanarkshire regions. The Minister for Higher and Further Education has announced that the Glasgow and the Lanarkshire Regional Strategic Boards will be dissolved, and the five colleges in their regions will become incorporated colleges.

Our board is currently made up of the 13 regional college chairs, four nominated college principals, and the CEO of Colleges Scotland. This will become a smaller Board of Trustees by no later than the end of 2025, subject

to change to Articles of Association and recruitment of Trustees. They will focus on the business of the charity. A separate Council of Members is to be established to focus on the voice, development and transformation of the sector.

Colleges Scotland's primary role is to support colleges and regional strategic bodies in achieving their aims and objectives, and to cultivate the strength of the college sector in Scotland. This is achieved through advocating and campaigning on behalf of the college sector, co-ordinating sector-wide engagement on major issues, policy development, and maintaining strong and proactive relationships with government, sector agencies and industry bodies. Colleges Scotland is driving new business development opportunities to increase benefits to its members.

College Employers Scotland is a committee of the Colleges Scotland board and has delegated decision-making responsibilities on all matters related to National Bargaining.

It is a crucial time for the college sector as reduced government funding in real-terms continue, while cost pressures and meeting employer skills-gaps increase. The need for an even stronger and united voice of the sector is crucial in advocating for adequate funding across government portfolios where education and skills development are inherent and needed to achieve Scottish Government's priorities. In parallel, sector leaders have been working together to present solutions and not just problems to Scottish Government. Recognising the need for transformations, colleges do so at the local level and collaborate in different ways at regional and/or sector-level as well as cross-sector level.

Over the coming years we will have challenges to overcome and opportunities to capitalise on. The Chief Executive Officer will lead the continued development of the organisation in harnessing the expertise, ingenuity and drive of sector leaders; building even stronger alliances with related and business communities; and influencing funders and decision-makers.

“With our unique strengths, Scotland’s colleges will continue to lead by example and support people at all stages of their career journey and contributing to a stronger, fairer and more sustainable Scotland.”

(The Colleges - Anchor Institutions Fuelling Scotland’s Economic Success, November 2024)

Colleges Scotland has four core values that underpin its work:



RESPECT



TRUST



WELLBEING



SUPPORT

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ROLE

01 ROLE OBJECTIVES

The objective of Colleges Scotland is 'to promote the advancement of college education for the public benefit'.

The postholder will be the Accountable Officer for Colleges Scotland and responsible for the leadership of the organisation to ensure the sector's views are reflected and its interests effectively represented. Acting as the advocate and champion for the college sector, the Chief Executive Officer will work closely with key stakeholders to influence, debate and shape policy and position of the members.



02 KEY RESULT AREAS

Providing Visionary, Transformational and Inspirational Leadership

Leading with authenticity, integrity, openness and transparency, with demonstrable commitment to organisational excellence and inclusivity:

- Timely refreshing of a future vision for Colleges Scotland aligned to the needs of the college sector in an inclusive way, inspiring staff and stakeholders to engage in shaping this vision as well as making it a reality, so that the organisation is recognised, valued and adequately resourced to be the strong voice for the sector.
- Ensuring Colleges Scotland's strategic and implementation plan are approved by the Board of Trustees. Subsequently reporting on performance to the Board based on agreed targets, measures and/or indicators.
- Having an outward-looking and global mindset, bringing current thinking, best practice and positive challenge to the operation and development of the organisation and its aims, embedding Colleges Scotland as a thought-leader in its role "to promote the advancement of college education for the public benefit'.
- As the CEO and also a Board Trustee, ensuring the Board operates in an effective and efficient way, based on the Nolan Principles of standard in public life.

Strengthening an Impactful Voice for the Sector

- Working as a triumvirate with the Chair of the Colleges Scotland Chairs Group and Chair of the Colleges Principals Group, harnessing the passion, diverse and expertise of the sector through:
- Ensuring Colleges Scotland provides the sector with:
 - a strong and effective voice as directed by sector leaders to produce greater impact and more influence in advocating for continuously improving learner experience, sustainable funding and developing opportunities for colleges.
 - proactive advice, support and evidence to contribute to and influence national policies and debates in improving tertiary education for their learners.
- Developing and maintaining effective working relationships with sector leaders, elected members, key external stakeholders, funders and regulators to proactively influence decisions in the best interest of the membership.
- Ensuring the voice of the sector is at the highest strategic levels in government, with regulators and across Scotland and the rest of the UK.
- Proactively and creatively seeking ways to increase the profile and influence of the sector

APPLICATION PACK

Driving Business Development for Organisational Resilience and Growth

Leading with a growth mindset to future proof Colleges Scotland, adding value to a company:

- Providing customer-focused strategic leadership on membership satisfaction and brand loyalty – development, review, recruitment and retention.
- Proactively expanding offerings to the membership which both promote and create opportunities for colleges as the provider of choice.
- Creating sustainable business models and generating new income streams rapidly outside of membership fees to enable resilience and growth of the organisation in achieving membership aspirations.
- Progressively bolstering relationships with external stakeholders, community leaders, corporate and other partners to amplify the organisation's reach and impact.

Leading and Developing a High Performing Team

Embedding a culture of excellence and high performance:

- Effectively managing all the operational functions of Colleges Scotland, ensuring delivery to the highest standards; monitoring performance against key aims, objectives, workplans and performance measures; seeking continuous improvements.
- Effectively leading, nurturing, inspiring and developing a high performing team in an inclusive way, creating a motivating environment and ensuring staff performance and development plans are aligned with the organisation's values and priorities.
- Instilling a culture where staff are results-focused and customer-oriented; work collaboratively as a team; agile and confident in embracing new opportunities; and feel valued.
- Assure well-being and engagement in the workforce, ensuring a deep understanding, connection and commitment in their role and contribution to the organisation's goals.

Ensuring Sound Governance

Leading with sound decision-making, controls and accountability to get consistently great outcomes:

- Being directly accountable to the Board for the proper conduct of Colleges Scotland's affairs, ensuring full compliance with legal, statutory and regulatory requirements; best value and resource effectiveness at all times; and rigorous financial controls are in place.
- Developing Colleges Scotland's financial plan, annual budget and membership subscription model for approval by the Board.
- Meeting all annual income and revenue targets; and maintain the organisation's financial viability.
- Being responsible for the successful presentation and delivery of College Employers Scotland's Business Case to the Scottish Funding Council. Ensuring College Employers Scotland effectively represents, supports and guides the sector throughout National Bargaining and workforce development processes; and enhance its reputation by ensuring credible representation at all times.



03 WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Colleges Scotland is an organisation which has a clear purpose and remit to meet the needs of its members.
- Colleges Scotland is seen as a powerful and impactful membership organisation representing the sector.
- Colleges have a united and stronger sector voice in advocating for the best outcomes for their students, communities and the economy.
- Colleges' challenges are higher on the political and public agenda.
- Colleges have more opportunities to benefit from collaborations and synergies.
- Strengthened organisational resilience to grow and develop services in achieving membership aspirations.
- Colleges see the value in being members.
- Staff feel valued and are nurtured and motivated to exceed their expectations.
- Colleges Scotland is financial resilient and future proofed.



04 CANDIDATE ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

We seek an exceptional leader with a passion for the college sector, high-professional standing and drive to strengthen the voice of our members and maximise opportunities for our learners. They are ambitious for the sector, outward looking and results focused.

- A passion for education and learners and championing the value of colleges.
- Operating effectively at senior and/or board level with track-record of visible, visionary, transformational and strategic leadership, inspiring and achieving outstanding outcomes.
- A clear understanding of the educational and skills development landscape, its impact on Scotland's colleges, challenges and opportunities for innovative solutions.
- Ability and political astuteness in inspiring confidence and building meaningful relationships to achieve outcomes sought with external stakeholders.
- Customer-focus, understanding and addressing their needs and expectations; providing excellent customer service; and consistently delivering customer value.
- Track-record of leading and embedding continuous improvements in an organisation, inspiring and building highly effective and high-performing teams.
- Strong business development experience; financial acumen and resource management in making continuous organisational improvement, driving financial sustainability and growth.
- Sound knowledge of and experience in excellent application of good governance practice.
- Has a degree or equivalent, with demonstrable commitment to continuous and professional and leadership development, including leadership development.



05 REMUNERATION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Remuneration



Annual Salary: £96,567, subject to pay award.



Pension: Falkirk Council Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)



Holidays: 46 Days (33 flexible and 13 public holidays)

Recruitment Process

If you wish to apply for this position, please apply online using the form provided

www.collegesscotland.ac.uk.

Recruitment Timetable

Closing date for applications: Friday 25 April 2025

Panel Interviews and Assessment: Friday 16 May 2025

Short-listed Applicants

Applicants invited to an interview will be asked to make a short verbal presentation (no PowerPoint) of maximum 10 mins to the panel covering the following:

How would you ensure Colleges Scotland advocates on behalf of its members to our key stakeholder, ensuring the College Sector's collective vision is realised now and in the future

Further information



If you wish to discuss the post prior to application, please contact Dr Waiyin Hatton
chair@collegesscotland.ac.uk.





Colleges
Scotland

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