



STRANMILLIS
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

A College of Queen's University Belfast

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 - 18



stran.ac.uk

95%

STUDENT
SUCCESS RATE



65

STUDENTS
UNDERTAKING
STUDY ABROAD



96% RECYCLING
OF RECOVERED
WASTE



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

0.6%

UNEMPLOYMENT
RATE FOR
GRADUATES

63%

OF ACADEMIC
STAFF WITH
DOCTORATES



38

RESEARCH AND
SCHOLARSHIP
OUTPUTS

86%

OF BUILDINGS
RATED B OR
ABOVE

98%

STUDENT
RETENTION



100%

ITE STUDENTS
UNDERTAKING
ALTERNATIVE
PLACEMENT



ESTABLISHED
PROVIDER STATUS
GRANTED

£99K

STUDY ABROAD
TUITION FEES
GENERATED

No.1

HEI IN NORTHERN
IRELAND FOR
STUDENT
SATISFACTION



ECO CAMPUS
STATUS AWARDED

UCAS

325 AVERAGE
ENTRY TARIFF

99%

IT SYSTEM
AVAILABILITY

QAA

SUCCESSFUL QAA
ASSESSMENT



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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Since it was established in 1922, the College's mission has focused on the need 'to transform the lives of children and young people through excellence in teaching, scholarship and research'. To deliver on that mission, our focus is on four key themes:

- **Unlocking Potential**
- **Shaping Education**
- **Building Futures**
- **Connecting Globally**

In keeping with good Corporate Practice, the Annual Report 2017-18 provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress the College has made towards achieving the key targets and priorities set out in the Business Plan for the same period and the learnings from that progress and, at the same time, to inform our Stakeholders of both.

In the year under review, the College substantially achieved or exceeded 91% of the targets set in its Business Plan. Moreover, as this Annual Report clearly demonstrates, behind the raw statistics and numbers, Stranmillis University College is a living, vibrant organisation which delivers effectively and efficiently for its client base and, at the same time, does so within budget. One of the key achievements this year was a successful Quality Review Visit from the United Kingdom Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The review Panel reported "the highest confidence in the College's academic standards". Credit is due to the College's leadership, its academic and administrative staff and its students who were interviewed by the Quality Review Panel.

We have much to celebrate. But the College cannot be accused of complacency: we are very aware of our role in addressing key social and societal issues such as tackling underachievement in Northern Ireland; in lifting the vision of our students to the world beyond our doors; in building effective partnerships locally, nationally and globally; in not neglecting our student and staff wellbeing; and our obligation to demonstrate value for money and generate funding over and above that which is provided by the Department for the Economy (DfE).

The Reviews conducted during the last year – and there was more than the one referred to above – tell the Governing Body that Stranmillis University College has a leadership team and a passionate staff who are committed to making a difference and giving young people the best possible start in life, to achieving the ambitious targets we have set ourselves as an organisation and to building a better future for all.

Professor Sir Desmond Rea
Chair of the Governing Body



PRINCIPAL'S INTRODUCTION

As a College, we believe education can have a transformative power in the lives of children, young people and communities, helping to shape lives, maximise potential and build future prosperity. Since being established as a non-denominational college in 1922, our Mission has been to:

“**Transform the lives of children, young people and communities, through excellence in teaching, scholarship and research.**”

This Mission can only be realised by improving educational outcomes and reducing educational inequality. Improving the quality of education is central to achieving these goals.

The high quality of education at Stranmillis University College was reaffirmed this year through the Quality Assurances Agency's (QAA) review and the confirmation of the College's Established Provider Status. One of our key quality drivers is having a strong academic team who promote and deliver teaching and learning that is informed by scholarship and research: 63% of our academic staff are now qualified to doctoral level, which is well above the UK national average for university Education departments.

In 2017-18, the College substantially achieved, or exceeded, 91% of the targets set in its annual business plan. Average UCAS entry points increased to 340 and student retention (99%) and success rates (95%) exceeded targets. Almost a third of graduating students achieved Degree Enhancement awards and the National Student Survey (NSS) ranked Stranmillis as the highest in Northern Ireland for student satisfaction.

As a small specialised institution, Stranmillis engages and works closely with employers and the education community. This helps to ensure the relevance and currency of our taught programmes and helps to ensure excellent employment opportunities for our students.

As well as demonstrating our capacity to manage our grant income effectively and efficiently, the College was successful in generating 60% of its income from sources outside of the Department for the Economy core funding. This is critical if we are to deliver a transformational learning experience which enhances education, skills and employability at both a local and international level.

Dr Anne Heaslett
Principal



SHAPING EDUCATION



For almost 100 years, Stranmillis University College has been shaping educational policy and practice and playing a leading role in transforming the lives of children, young people and communities through excellence in teaching, research and scholarship.



QUALITY ASSURED

Following extensive changes to the quality assurance framework for higher education across the UK, a Quality Review Visit was carried out by the UK Quality Assurance Agency. The review assessed our existing quality assurance processes and outcomes. After an intensive visit and scrutiny, the panel concluded that the College had achieved the highest level of outcome, namely, confidence in academic standards and the quality of the student academic experience.

In another significant development, and in light of this Quality Review Visit, the Department for the Economy has confirmed that Stranmillis University College now has established status under the new quality assurance framework.

STUDENT VOICE

Student feedback is a key part of the QRV process. The QAA report highlighted a number of very positive areas including: a strong appreciation of tutors' academic qualifications and research profiles; valued interaction and excellent personal relationships with staff; a student-centred, 'community' ethos; learning outcomes and assessment are varied and challenging; feedback is timely, developmental and of consistently high quality; and degree enhancement and alternative placement experiences are linked with the exceptionally high rate of graduate employment.



OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC TEAM

To facilitate the continuing professional development of our academic staff, support our scholarship and research strategy and enhance the quality of teaching and learning, the College encourages and supports academic staff to undertake part-time doctoral studies. Over 63% of our academic staff now have doctorates, which is almost double the average percentage for Education departments in UK HEIs.



RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

As we work towards the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission, our focus is on world leading and internationally excellent research and scholarship that informs teaching, shapes policy, changes practice and stimulates debate. This year, the College produced 38 research and scholarship outputs, at least eight of which are REF eligible. Additionally, we were successful in seven of our nine research funding applications, securing £75,475 of external funding for the College in projects totalling £281,130.

LITERACY HUBS

As part of our focus on enabling students to develop their skills in supporting pupils' reading, the College hosted a number of literacy hubs in the Stran library. Students hosted and provided interactive and engaging literacy-based activities for children up to Key Stage 3. Plans are currently underway to create a bespoke interactive and literacy-focused facility within the library for the Hubs.



ECS 21

Our Early Childhood Studies programme celebrated 21 years of leading and shaping the professional development, research and policy in the areas of Early Years, Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Some of the highlights included a Celebration Walk involving over 4000 children, a number of staff challenges around core education themes such as 'Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies' and an ECS themed 'music@stran' celebration event.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Stranmillis University College and CCEA have been working together on a joint project with experienced teachers from four local special schools to identify and agree best practice in planning and to co-design new planners for teaching children with severe learning difficulties. The planners will be extremely valuable to teachers in special schools and students completing their final year placement in special schools.



PRIMARY SCIENCE TEACHING TRUST HUB (PSST)

As the only recognised PSST centre of excellence in curriculum development and research in Northern Ireland, Stranmillis has developed a suite of projects to promote science within the primary classroom. Scholarship projects funded this year include: Playful Approaches to Science, Playful Technology, The Titanic Project, Digital Storytelling in Primary Science and The Greenpower Project.



LEARNING LEADERS

The importance of continuing professional development for teachers is central to the development of a world-class education system, and is a key theme recognised in the Department for Education's Learning Leaders strategy. To meet that need, the College has been developing its Master's level programmes and enrolments on the various postgraduate pathways have continued to increase.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Fillis, S., Dunne, L., **McConnell, B.** (2017) 'Empirical studies on early intervention services for toddlers aged 24-36 months: A systematic review'. International Journal of Educational Research.

McCullagh, J. F. and **Doherty, A.** (2018), 'Digital Makeover: What do pre-service teachers learn from microteaching primary science and how does an online video analysis tool enhance learning?' TEAN Journal, Vol. 10, Iss. 2, pp. 15-28.

McMurray, S., O'Callaghan, P., **McVeigh, C.** (2017) 'Quality assurance issues in the teacher-based assessment of students with literacy difficulties for examination access arrangements.' Dyslexia, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 3-16.

Moffett, P. and **Eaton, P.** (2017). 'The impact of the Promoting Early Number Talk project on classroom mathematics talk.' Early Child Development and Care. Published online.

Moffett, P. and **Eaton, P.** (2018). 'The impact of the Promoting Early Number Talk project on the development of abstract representation in mathematics.' European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, Vol. 26, Iss. 4, pp. 547-561.

Rooney, L. and **McKee, D.** (2018) 'Contribution of PE and Recess towards the overall PA of 8-11 year old children.' Journal of Sport and Health Research, Vol. 10, Iss. 2, pp. 303-316.

Walsh, G. McGuinness, C. & Sproule, L. (2017): 'It's teaching ... but not as we know it': using participatory learning theories to resolve the

dilemma of teaching in play-based practice,' Early Child Development and Care.

BOOK(S)

Gray, C. and Murray, J. (eds) (2018) Perspectives from Young Children on the Margins. EECERJ: Taylor & Francis

Simons, I. (2017) Go Berserk web-coding with JavaScript

BOOK CHAPTERS

Purdy, N., Dunn, J. and **McClelland, D.** (2018 in press) 'Building Positive Relationships with Children and Parents' [Chapter 24] in Primary Teaching: An exploration of learning and teaching in primary schools today (Ed. Catherine Carden). London: Sage/Learning Matters.

Purdy, N. and Boddison, A. (2018) 'Special educational needs and inclusion' [Unit 6.2] in Teresa Cremin and Cathy Burnett (Eds.) Learning to Teach in the Primary School (4th edition). London: Routledge.

PROFESSIONAL PERIODICALS (PRINT & DIGITAL MEDIA)

Dunn, J. (2018), 'Writing and Ipads in the Early Years,' The BERA Blog, Tuesday 19 June 2018. Available online at <https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/writing-and-ipads-in-the-early-years-classroom>

Greenwood, R. (2017) A Woodland 'What If...?' Primary Geography Iss. 94, pp. 22-24

McCullagh, J.F. and **Doherty, A.** (2018) 'Lights, Camera, Science! How digital storytelling can support enquiry.' Primary Science, 151, Jan/ Feb, p. 21-24

Moffett, P., Gray, C., Dunn, J., and Mitchell, D. (2017). 'Benefits of mobile digital devices in early learning.' Early Years Educator, Vol. 19, Iss. 5, pp. 26-28.

Purdy, N. (2018) 'Funding HEI research post-Brexit.' AgendaNI, Iss. 86, p. 120.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Dunn, J. and Sweeney, T. (2017) Writing and iPads in the Early Years. A Report for the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South. Belfast: Stranmillis University College.

Leitch, R, Hughes, J., Burns, S., Cownie, E., McManus, C., **Ievers, M.,** Shuttleworth, I. (2017). Investigating Links in Achievement and Deprivation (ILIAD Report). Belfast: Queen's University Belfast / The Executive Office

Lynam, A., **McConnell, B.,** and McGuckin, C. (2018) BeSad - Bereavement, Separation and Divorce: the response of Pre-service teachers to pupil wellbeing. Report for SCoTENS. Dublin: Hibernia College.

Jones, S., McMullen, J. , J., McDade, B., Campbell, R., McLaughlin, J (2018) Multilingual Minds: the mental health and wellbeing of newcomer children and young people in Northern Ireland. Belfast: Stranmillis University College.

Walsh, G. and Fallon, J., (2018) The PLAII Report: a Student Teacher Intervention in Early Years Education. A report for SCoTENS. Belfast: Stranmillis University College.

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Bell, I., (2017) Computational thinking – Foundations for the future. Education Training Inspectorate ICT Conference. Invited Keynote speaker.

Dunn, J. and Sweeney, T. (2017) 'Writing and iPads in the Early Years - Perspectives from Children and Teachers.' Paper presented at the European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) Annual Conference, Bologna, August.

Jones, S. (2017) 'Languages in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland'. Presentation as part of the NI Assembly's Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS), organised by the Assembly's Research and Information Service (RaISe). 29 November 2017.

McCullagh, J. and **Doherty, A.** (2017) 'Digital Enquiry: Using iPads in Primary Science.' Presentation at the Primary Science Teaching Trust Annual Conference, Bristol October 2017.

McMullen, J. (2018) 'Evaluation of a Teacher-led, Life Skills Intervention for Secondary School Students in Uganda'. Paper presented at British Psychological Society Annual Conference, Nottingham, 4 May 2018.

McMurray, S., Bennett, M., and McVeigh, C. (2017) 'A Whole School Approach to Addressing Literacy Difficulties': Evaluation of a Large Scale Continuing Professional Development Initiative.' Paper presented at ECER Copenhagen 21-25th August 2017.

McVeigh, C. and **McMurray, S.** (2017) 'Referral Rates and Educational Experiences of Children in Years 1-3 of Primary Schooling.' Paper presented at ECER Copenhagen 21-25th August 2017.

Purdy, N. (2018) 'A Critical Review of Anti-Bullying Developments in Northern Ireland'. Invited presentation to the All-Parliamentary Group on Bullying, Houses of Parliament, Westminster, London, 5 February 2018.

Purdy, N. and **Galvin, C.** (2018) 'The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS), Ireland: a social history' Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, 14th April 2018.

Purdy, N. (2018) Presentation at Stormont to All Party Group on Learning Disability on the EA consultation on Early Years SEN provision. 9 May 2018.

Purdy, N. (2018) 'Bullying among children with disabilities.' Invited presentation at Conference on Pathways to Prevention and Intervention against Violence in Schools and for the Promotion of Well-being. University of Bologna, 19-20 June 2018.

Walsh, G. (2017) 'Examining home-based, play experiences in practice: a Northern Ireland story,' Presentation at the EECERA in Bologna, 7th September.

Walsh, G. (2017) 'THE PLAII Study: Playful Learning Across Ireland.' Workshop at the annual SCoTENS conference in Dundalk, 13th-14th October 2017.

Walsh, G. (2017) Playful Teaching and Learning: Unravelling the Conundrum. Presentation to Aistear Tutors for NCCA, Portlaoise, 20th October 2017.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES – PRINT & DIGITAL MEDIA

Purdy, N. (2017) Supporting Schools when Dealing with Incidents of Disablist Bullying – Supplement to Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour. Belfast: Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum.

Simons, I. Go Berserk App for Windows, Android and Apple (based on the multi-award winning book 1).

Simons, I. BBC videos based on the Go Berserk book 1, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02gvk8k/clips>.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

Primary Languages

Jones, S. (14 Nov 2017). 'Should learning languages be prioritised alongside STEM subjects?' Contributor to news items on BBC Radio Ulster's Good Morning Ulster.

Blurred Lives Project

Archibald, C. (23 Nov 2017). Archibald welcomes funding for Stranmillis Cyberbullying study. Press Release, Sinn Fein.ie. <http://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/47324>

Purdy, N. (23 Nov 2017) Radio Ulster Live Interview on "Good Morning Ulster" (re launch of Blurred Lives Project).

Meredith, R. (23 Nov 2017). Stranmillis to lead research into school cyberbullying. BBC News Online.

McConville, M. L. (25 Nov 2017) Mother of Co Tyrone cyber-bullying victim welcomes funding for research. Irish News.

Purdy, N. (29 April 2018) Radio Ulster discussion on "Sunday Sequence" (re social media impact on mental health of young people)

STEM

Bell, I. (2017) The STEM Commandments. Irene Bell. Educational Technology. (interview)

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL



Ensuring that children and young people have the best possible start in life and are motivated, inspired and supported to maximise their potential is central to the development and delivery of a world-class education system. Unlocking the potential of every child, our own students and our staff is at the heart of who we are and what we do as a college.



HIGH LEVELS OF STUDENT SATISFACTION

The National Student Survey gives students the opportunity to voice their experiences and help shape the future for fellow students. The survey provides a litmus test of student satisfaction with the university and its courses. The overall satisfaction rating of 87% again places Stranmillis University College as one of the leading UK higher education institutions, and number one in Northern Ireland.

87%
OVERALL
SATISFACTION
RATING

STUDENT FOCUSED

As a small specialist institution, student retention and student success are critical to the financial and academic wellbeing of the College. The College's student retention rate of 99% and student success rate of 95% reflect our continued focus on nurturing, developing and maximising the potential of every student.



SHOW ME AN ALTERNATIVE

Educational experiences are not limited to the traditional classroom. The process of learning takes place in a huge range of formal and informal settings – workplace, tourism, youth settings, sport, training, voluntary sector, etc. As part of their course, 100% of our Initial Teacher Education students undertook a 2-week alternative placement with one of the College's 250+ education-related alternative education partners.



CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Educational underachievement is one of the most significant, complex and multi-faceted challenges facing society. Our new Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement was launched in June 2018 at an event attended by over 60 key stakeholders and local political representatives. The Centre will provide innovative, interdisciplinary research and offer evidence-based responses to help raise attainment, improve children's lives and shape future policy and practice.

CREATING REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS

A new development on the Health, Physical Activity and Sport (HPAS) degree course, designed to move students from passive recipients of practical experiences to reflective practitioners, was introduced this year. At the end of each session, Year 1 students are given a reflective task to work on in small groups, reconvening later the same day to work through the reflective task.



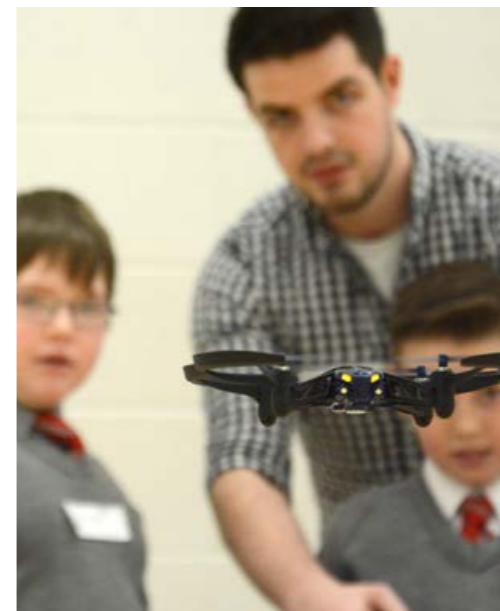
TACKLING UNDERACHIEVEMENT

This year, the College continued to work closely with Barnardo's and local schools on initiatives aimed at tackling underachievement, with Stranmillis graduate interns developing and implementing innovative, results-driven programmes. The interns brought creativity and research-led best practice to develop innovative ways of tackling literacy and numeracy underachievement and the use of technology to enhance learning. The programme has had a hugely positive impact in the communities they have been working with.



DIGITAL SCHOOL HOUSE

The Digital School House programme combines fun, creativity and innovation to deliver computing and computational thinking in the classroom. It supports schools throughout the UK with staff development, resources and mentoring. Fully trained Lead Teachers are released by their school to undertake play-based learning in computing with primary teachers and their pupils. Dr Irene Bell, Head of STEM at Stranmillis, was appointed the Regional Academic Lead for Digital School House in Northern Ireland.



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

The College continues to establish and maintain strong partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders and potential employers. These local, national and international partnerships are central to our Student Support strategy, providing work placement, alternative placement, volunteering, networking and career guidance opportunities for our students to gain invaluable work-based learning experiences and skills.



ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY

Our Degree Enhancement programme provides students with a broad range of opportunities for college leadership, community engagement and personal/professional development. A third of students achieve a Degree Enhancement award, enhancing and strengthening their skills and employability.

BUILDING FUTURES



We believe that education can have a transformative impact on the lives of individuals, communities and society as a whole. To help build a better, brighter and more prosperous future for all, our teaching is best and 'next' practice focused, research and scholarship led, and designed to support the development of outstanding workplace and community competence in every area of education.

HESA

AN ATTRACTIVE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME

The ability to attract and retain high calibre students, committed to a professional career in an education-related field, is essential to high quality education where children and young people have the best start in life. The average UCAS tariff points for entry to our undergraduate programmes rose from 325 to 340, a reflection of the attractiveness of our undergraduate programme with high performing students.



HIGH EMPLOYABILITY

The latest Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Institutions report published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) shows that employment levels for education graduates are the second highest of any subject category behind medicine-related courses. Unemployment levels for Stranmillis graduates remain very low, with just 0.6% of graduates unemployed six months after graduation, significantly lower than the average for Northern Ireland institutions.



ECO STATUS

The EcoCampus award scheme recognises universities for their efforts in taking positive action to reduce the environmental impact of their business activities and enhance environmental sustainability. The College is delighted to have been awarded EcoCampus recognition, the first in Northern Ireland. The College is now working towards the prestigious Green Flag status.





STAFF WELLBEING

Health and safety and staff wellbeing continue to be key priorities. Activities included the delivery of a range of staff wellbeing events such as employee health checks and initiatives aimed at encouraging healthy eating, exercise and mental health awareness.

SEE HEAR ACT

In February, the College hosted a 2-day Annual Conference of Women's Aid Federation (NI). As part of the conference, a group of our students taking the Drama specialism were asked to create and produce a powerful, interpretative piece of theatre around the main conference theme of abuse. Delegates identified the presentation as the most thought provoking element at the conference. The Education Authority (EA) and a voluntary organisation have subsequently asked to use the recording of the drama for training purposes.



NAMASTE, AS-SALAMU ALAYKUM, SHALOM

To gain a deeper understanding of religious and cultural diversity in Northern Ireland, Year 3 BEd Primary students specialising in RE visited the Hindu temple at the Indian Community Centre, the mosque at the Belfast Islamic Centre and the synagogue at the Belfast Jewish Community. During their visits, the students spoke with faith leaders about their religious beliefs, practices, symbols, artefacts and places of worship. As part of our Widening Participation programme, the visit culminated in a 'Celebration of RE' day.



WIDENING PARTICIPATION

Through our Widening Participation programme, the College is committed to encouraging, motivating and supporting young people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds and other under-represented groups to apply for and gain a place at university. Student bursaries are available to support the Widening Participation programme. In addition to working closely with schools, our intern and community engagement programmes this year have directly targeted influencers, families, community groups and careers professionals. Other widening participation events included Bubbles Maths, Coding, Outdoor Learning and external school events.



EXCEPTIONAL CAMPUS

The College is committed to investing in the estate and campus facilities to ensure that we offer our students and staff access to outstanding facilities and resources. During this past year, the College invested £1.366m in building works and equipment.



MAJOR WORKS

The most significant works undertaken were the replacement of the boiler which serviced the Central Building, Stranmillis House and Main Building with individual boilers in each building (£973k) and the completion of Fire Safety and Lighting Upgrade Works in the library (£228k).

IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Improvements to the IT and communications infrastructure included the installation of a new telephone system across campus (£25k) and the commencement of a new IT Infrastructure Upgrade Project which will deliver improvements to Wi-Fi, IT Security and IT Hardware. The College also invested in a new electronic timetabling system which is being rolled out during the 2018-19 academic year.



BUILDINGS PROGRAMME

During the year, ongoing investment in our campus residential accommodation continued. As a result of the investment and major works programmes, over 80% of buildings on campus are rated as Grade B or better.



CONNECTING GLOBALLY



Our international engagement and partnerships enrich the learning community and widen the horizons of staff and students. During the past year, our focus on developing and sustaining strong partnerships, locally, nationally and internationally, which promote the concept of learning communities and sharing resources, has continued apace.



COMING FROM AMERICA

During the year, the College continued to make progress on its International Strategy. In terms of incoming fee-paying students, the College exceeded its target of recruiting 12 international study abroad students from the US, attracting 12 students through our current partnership with IfSA Butler and 10 students from Taylor University for a new summer programme. These international students make a valuable contribution both to the Stranmillis learning community and the College's income generation.

STUDENTS GO GLOBAL

The opportunity to live and study abroad for a semester is a hugely valuable experience that can add significantly to a student's experience. Last year, 43% of our BEd undergraduate students took up the opportunity to study at one of our 30 partner universities worldwide through the Erasmus+ and International exchange programmes. Additionally a number of our Early Childhood Studies, Health, Physical Activity and Sport and PGCE students also had the opportunity to study abroad.



30 PARTNER
UNIVERSITIES
WORLDWIDE



AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Living, learning and sharing experiences and practice with students and faculty from universities and colleges around the globe adds a richness, depth and flavour to college life. Some of the activities that have enhanced our international outlook include a very successful International Week with faculty from 8 partner institutions visiting; 8 Stranmillis staff taking part in our staff mobility programme; and 65 incoming Erasmus students spending a semester at Stranmillis.



BLURRED LIVES PROJECT

Blurred Lives is a cross-national research project on cyberbullying. The project has been awarded €291k by the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships Fund. Stranmillis is leading the two-year research project, working closely with experts from Goldsmiths University of London, Università di Bologna, Open Universiteit (Amsterdam) and Freie Universität (Berlin). The project will provide accessible resources for teachers, pupils and parents/carers, and make important recommendations to social networking providers.



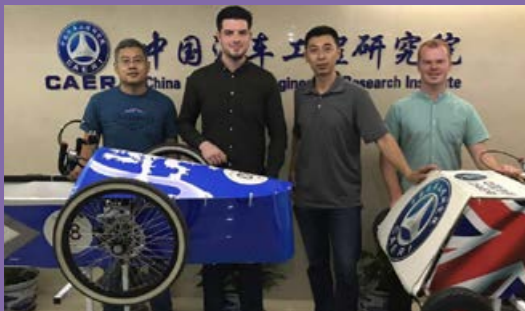
FIELDS OF LIFE

The Students' Union charity is Fields of Life, an organisation that seeks to bring about sustainable change through the provision of clean water and education in East Africa. The energy, enthusiasm and creativity shown by the SU Executive and students in organising new fundraising activities, as well as established favourites such as 'Stran Does Strictly' and 'Take Me Out', raised a fantastic £5534.92, which will be used for developing teacher education in Uganda.



POWERING TO QUEEN'S AWARD

Final Year, BEd Maths and Science student, Anthony McGill, reached the finals of the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) Queen's Award for his work with Greenpower Education Trust. During the summer, Anthony was in Beijing as part of the 'Study China' programme, where he had the opportunity to discuss how the Greenpower project could inspire young people to develop a STEM-literate society within schools in both the UK and China.



A JOURNEY WITH A PURPOSE

A team of staff and students from Stranmillis and St Mary's University College visited two schools in India with the charity, Saphara, whose aim is to open the eyes of young people to their unique potential to change the world through working together. Privileged, amazing, inspiring, eye-opening, overwhelming - just some of the words the team used to describe the life-changing experience they encountered.



INTERNATIONAL STEM LAB

The College was delighted to welcome and work with staff and students from the International Association of STEM Leaders and Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society, Marymount University College, US. STEM leaders from Marymount spent three days working with Stranmillis and Fane Street Primary School, creating an innovative STEM 'Maker Space Lab'.



KING'S TO KYAMBOGO

Our International team has been building and strengthening partnerships with universities around the world. Working with Invest NI, the team visited Study Abroad staff in 20 US universities, and hosted guests from a number of potential partners including Marymount, Campbellsville, Taylor and Roger Williams. An exciting development was the creation of a Peace Building and Reconciliation Summer School which was attended by students from King's College, New York. In Uganda, work continued on strengthening our relationship with Kyambogo University, with staff teams visiting the university. Dr Ayikoru, Dean of Education at Kyambogo University was also welcomed at Stranmillis.



FAIR TRADE COLLEGE

Over the past couple of years, Hospitality and Catering has been working with Fair Trade to source, purchase and use Fair Trade products where possible, e.g. coffee, tea, sugar, bananas and confectionery. Promotional campaigns with staff, students and visitors have been carried out to raise awareness of the importance and impact of buying Fair Trade products. As a result, the College has been awarded official Fair Trade College status.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

At the end of the 2017-18 year, the College's external auditors concluded that:

The College is in a financially strong position, with significant net current assets and cash balances available, including £3,200,000 on deposit at 31 July 2018.

As a result of pension adjustments the University College recorded an operating deficit of £281k in the 2017-18 year compared with a deficit of £29k in the prior year, largely as a result of the impact of the annual adjustment relating to the NILGOSC Pension actuarial valuation, which resulted in a charge of £477k in the year (2016-17 - £505k). However, adjusting for the impact of the FRS102 NILGOSC pension scheme actuarial valuation, an operating surplus of £196k was achieved (2016-17 - £476k).

Total income for the year was £12M representing a decrease of £27k (0.2%) on the prior year (excluding exceptional item).

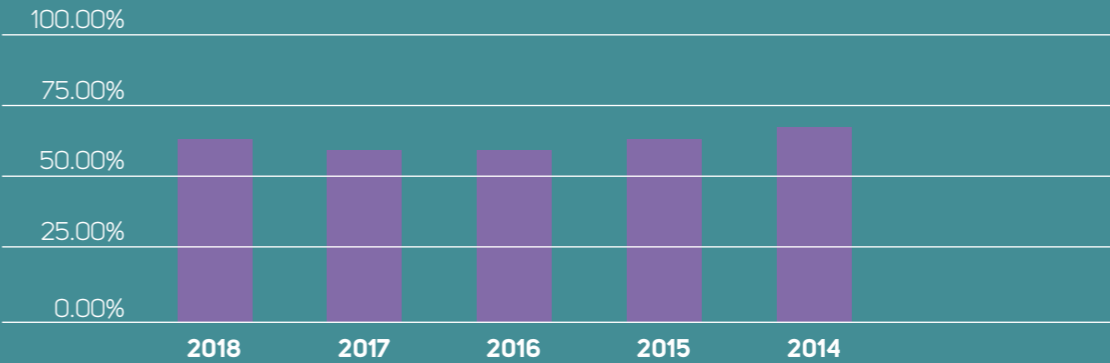
	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total Income - ex Core Grant	6,682	6,605	6,514	7,063	7,959
Income adjusted for impact of DCG release	11,036	11,193	11,088	11,545	12,657
Adjusted Funding %	61%	59%	59%	61%	63%

The following is of particular note:

- Recurrent Grant funding received from the Sponsor Department fell by £93k or 2.2% compared with the previous year as a result of general funding cuts to the sector;
- Income included £110k of Public Sector Transformation Funding (2016-17 - £255k) to progress a Voluntary Exit Scheme during the year;
- Tuition Fee income increased by £52k in the year (2016-17 – decrease of £5k) with income relating to full-time tuition fee income falling by 1.7% and part-time tuition fee income increasing by 18.7%;
- Accommodation, Catering, Conferencing, Rental and Room Hire income contributed £2,424k or 20.2% of Total Income in the year (2016-17 - £2,325k or 19.3%), an increase of £99k. This steady performance represents a continuance of the very positive results that have been achieved in recent years despite the challenging economic climate.

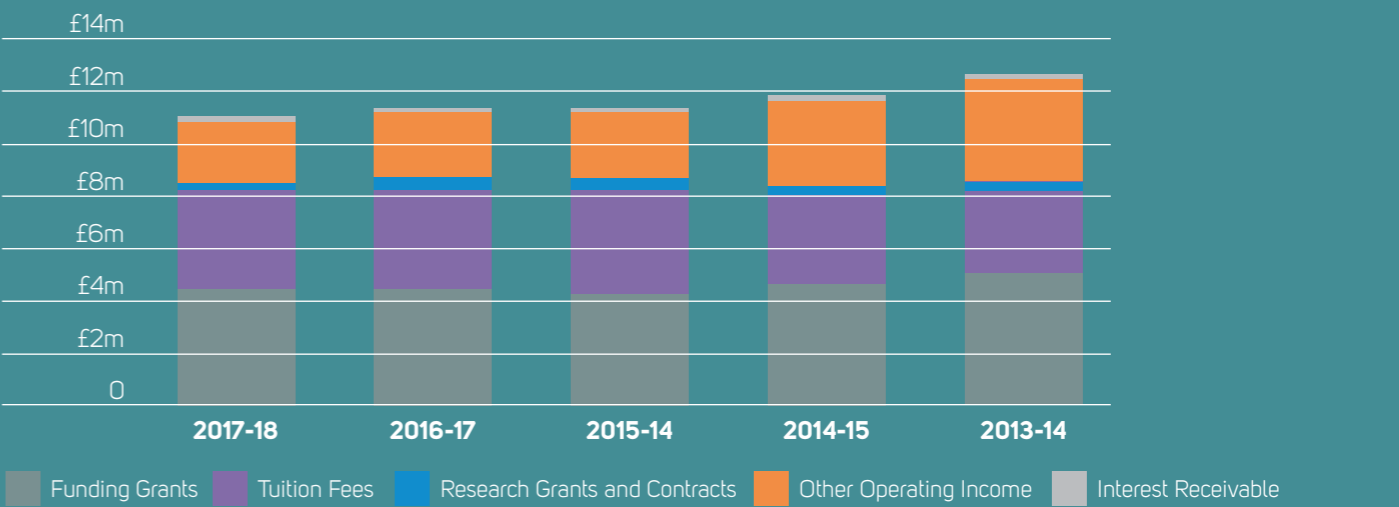
The figures and the graph below show the proportion of income, adjusted to remove the distorting impact of deferred capital grants and exceptional items, derived from sources other than from the Sponsor Department core grant.

ADJUSTED NON DEL FUNDING %



In addition, the graph below shows the proportion of income derived by income type over the 5 years to 2018 (excluding deferred capital grants and exceptional items).

TOTAL INCOME 2013/14 TO 2017/18



Some 23.7% (2016-17 – 23.4%) of Total Income in the year was derived from sources other than Sponsoring Department Funding Grants and Tuition Fees. These tables demonstrate the success of the University College's strategy in recent years to diversify its income sources and reduce its reliance on core government funding.

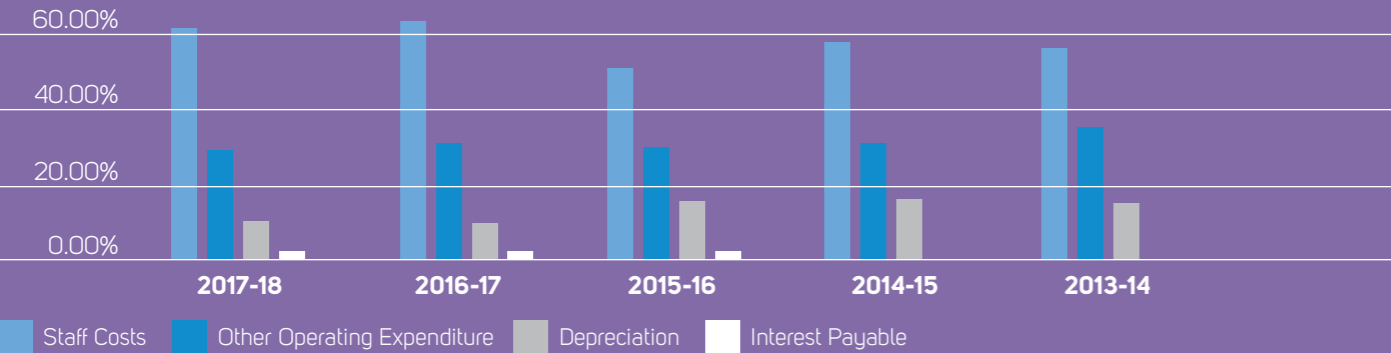
EXPENDITURE

Total Expenditure for the year was £12.3M representing an increase of £225k (1.9%) on the prior year. The following is of particular note:

- Total staff costs, excluding the impact of FRS 102 pension adjustment, increased by £63k or 0.9% (2016-17 - £193k).
- Other Operating Expenditure decreased by £2k or 0.1% on the previous year (2016-7 increased by £108k and 3.1%).

The chart below shows the breakdown of total expenditure for the last 5 years:

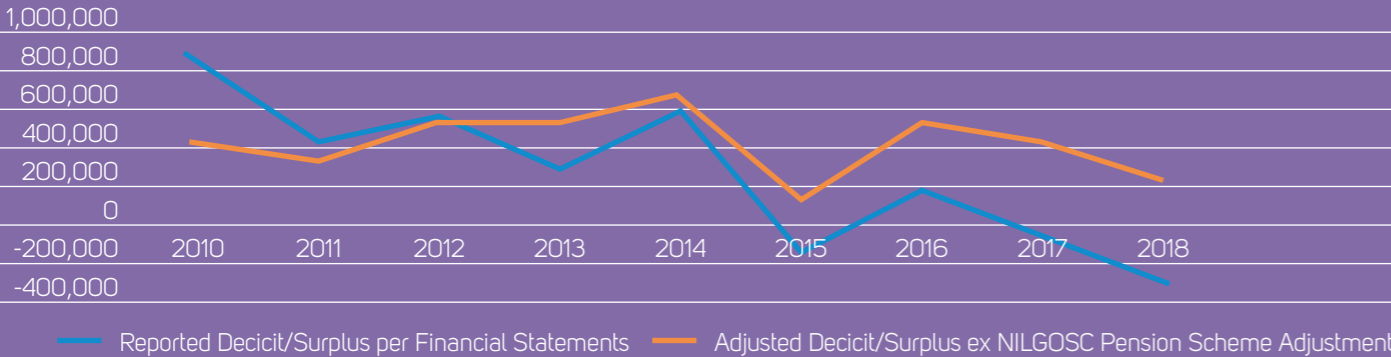
% OF EXPENDITURE TO TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2013/14 TO 2017/18



OPERATING RESULTS

The graph below shows the operating surpluses (before pension adjustments) compared with the reported financial deficit/surplus including the pension adjustments.

% OF EXPENDITURE TO TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2013/14 TO 2017/18



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As noted above, adjusting for the impact of the FRS102 NILGOSC pension scheme actuarial valuation, an operating surplus of £196k was achieved (2016-17 - £476k) which is reflected in the increase in Reserves excluding Pension Reserve in the year to £7,171k (2016-17 - £6,975k).

With regards to the Pension Reserve, the impact of the FRS102 NILGOSC pension scheme actuarial valuation has reduced the Pension Scheme Liability recorded in the Statement of Financial Position to £4,543k (2016-17: £6,048k).

As a result the overall the Statement of Financial Position shows a stronger Net Asset position of £2,628k (2016-17 - £927k).

SUMMARY

The College's financial strategy supports both investment in the campus and on-going sustainability of operations, whilst the necessity to make efficiency savings has been embraced.

The financial performance reflects the Governing Body's commitment to the generation of operating surpluses and to securing the financial solvency of the University College within the context of its long-term strategy and objectives.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

With the support of the Sponsoring Department grant funding, the College will continue to invest in the upgrade of the campus and facilities to progress priorities identified in the College Estates Strategy. Projects expected to proceed in 2018-19 include a project to upgrade the University College's sports pitch and related facilities and a project to progress a number of Health and Safety improvements. The College is also developing a new electronic placement software system and is working to upgrade the College website. This project will include procurement of a new Learning Management System and Teaching and Learning equipment for use by staff and students.





STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Stranmillis Road
Belfast
BT9 5DY
Northern Ireland
United Kingdom

T: **+44 (0)28 90381271**
www.stran.ac.uk