



# Observatory PASCAL

*Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions*

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*PURE Regional Visit Report (RVR1)*

*GLASGOW, UNITED KINGDOM*

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*Observer: Fumi Katagawa*

*Lead: Nicola Blush (Skills Development Scotland)*

## **1. Introduction**

**This report summarises the initial findings from the first visit of the Consultative Development Group (CDG) to the greater Glasgow metropolitan area in October 2009.**

**The purposes of the first visit were as follows:**

- **To familiarise the key stakeholders from the region with the PURE process and purpose.**
- **To enable the CDG to properly understand the nature of the Glasgow city area, the main priorities and aspirations of the region together with the context in which the agencies and institutions are developing their response.**
- **To form preliminary views on issues relating to the engagement of higher educational institutions (HEIs and FE) in the region to address these priorities and particularly to have regard to the regional focus on workforce development.**
- **To prepare a short Regional Visit Report (RVR1) which will help to guide the benchmarking and lead to the preparation of the Action Plan.**

**The review took place over a period of three days from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009. The review started with meetings and presentations from key stakeholders from the region including those from government agencies, universities, colleges of further education, the private sector and voluntary associations. The review team also visited the Glasgow city region and various stakeholder locations to view some of the main characteristics of the area.**

## **2. Key Regional Characteristics**

**Glasgow City covers an area of 68 square miles and is located at the western end of the “Central Belt” which runs from Glasgow on the west coast through to Edinburgh on the east coast. The city is cut by the river Clyde which runs into the Atlantic Ocean and allowed the early industrialisation of the region. To the immediate east of Glasgow City are the new towns of Cumbernauld and East Kilbride which have been built to take the overspill of population and allowing parts of the inner city areas to be redeveloped to a lower density. The City is well served by inter-city rail, motorways and two international airports.**

**In 1811 Glasgow had become the second city in the British Empire and is now the second city in the United Kingdom after London. By 1900 Glasgow was at the peak of industrial production with heavy engineering, coal mining and ship building making a major contribution to the Scottish economy.**



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Since then there has been a continuing industrial decline which has recently been replaced by a strong uplift in tourism (Glasgow, Scotland with Style campaign), retail, leisure and the service industries with the International Financial Services District (IFSD) where some of the world's leading financial service companies are located...

The General Register Office for Scotland estimates that the population for Scotland in 2008 was 5,168,500 of which 584,240 live within the city of Glasgow and where there is a population of working age of 392,028. This also needs to be seen against the background of the wider metropolitan area of Glasgow with a population of circa 2 million which effectively encompasses the travel to work area for the City and the wider area of impact and influence for the universities and colleges in the west of Scotland.

Migrant workers from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia are present in significant numbers in the City following the expansion of the EU. There is anecdotal evidence that some migrant workers are leaving Scotland due to the recession and the weakness of the Pound Sterling, however the Scottish Government policy is to encourage migrants to contribute to the Scottish economy and have a policy to support population growth to drive up GDP.

The following are the key employment indicators for Glasgow:

- Unemployment in Glasgow is 8.5%, which is significantly higher than the average for Scotland as a whole
- 47% of wards have unemployment at twice the average for Scotland
- Employment rate for the City is 66% compared with 76% for Scotland
- Working population in Glasgow is 67% which is higher than the Scottish average overall
- Long term unemployment in Glasgow is higher than for Scotland as a whole (14% against 8.8% unemployed over 1 year)
- At the higher end the workforce in Glasgow is better qualified than for Scotland as a whole (22.1% against 19.7% at degree level).
- Compared with Scotland as a whole there are more jobs in finance and business and less in manufacturing.

### 3. Regional Priorities, Ambitions and Aspirations

The Scottish Government through its departments and agencies has put a high priority on the development of the Scottish workforce which it expects will lead to a reduction in unemployment, address issues of social cohesion, the gap between the highest and lowest paid people in the workforce and improve overall GDP. The funds for supporting workforce development have been sustained despite the restrictions in public expenditure and the agencies supporting training have been streamlined and rationalised for more effective delivery through a demand approach to workforce development.

There is a considerable support for close cooperation between the Government agencies and the educational institutions against a background where the Scottish Government has identified seven key sectors for the economy, tourism, energy, creative industries, financial and business services, food and drink, life sciences and somewhat surprisingly, universities. The first six industries are



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supported by Sector Skills Councils which have been set up to provide an interface between industries, colleges and Government agencies and who play a role in identifying skill needs and qualifications. In addition to the key sectors identified by the Government as priorities, other Sector Skill Councils exist to represent the interests of the remaining economically active parts of the economy.

One of the key issues identified by the Government is the relatively well qualified workforce in Scotland which is not translating into higher economic performance. Improved performance and the raising of GDP is therefore a main driver behind the Government policy to support improved mobilisation and to focus more clearly on the acquisition of appropriate skills aligned to meet current and future occupational demands. A particular challenge is to clarify the career pathways and the nature of the assistance to be offered to unemployed individuals.

The universities and colleges have a strong history of engagement with all sectors of civil society and aspire to provide a world class education to address the needs of the City and its region. However whilst the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) agency has a significant budget (£200m pa) to support the development of skills, the direct funding for universities and colleges, although substantially larger (£5~7bn pa), is constrained by tight budgets, exacerbated by the Government policy in Scotland to provide free post secondary tuition. This differs from elsewhere in the United Kingdom where top up fees are charged by universities and colleges. Strategic funding for universities and colleges in Scotland comes from the Scottish Funding Council (SCF) and is delivered within a broad remit to support universities and colleges in Scotland ranging from research through supporting business with raising workforce skills to the support of the universities third mission.

It is evident that the Government has a strategic economic policy which impacts directly on the roles of universities and colleges and other training providers. What is less evident is how well the training providers respond to this strategic approach to the economy or how it is reflected in the way they develop their business plans for the future.

## 4. The Stakeholder Groups

### 4.1 Government Departments and Public Agencies

**Skills Development Scotland (SDS);** the agency has been formed by a combination of departments drawn from four other Government agencies to take overall responsibility for the development of skills in Scotland and to act as a catalyst for positive change in Scotland's skills performance. The Agency replaces the more fragmented approach which existed previously. SDS provide strategic leadership for workforce development, providing advice, access to training programmes, modern apprenticeships, careers guidance and the development of long term policies. The organisation has now been in existence for one year and is still developing its strategies for the roll out of future programmes.

**Scottish Enterprise (SE):** is the organisation responsible for supporting the development of the Scottish economy excluding the Highlands and Islands which have their own dedicated agency. SE works with industries and business in the region and is particularly responsible for working with six of the targeted "Key Sectors" mentioned above, excluding the universities. Concentration is on those with strong growth potential to improve leadership, with support for organisational development and tailored programmes for industry and business within overall the remit of solidarity, cohesion and sustainability. SE benchmarks the performance of Scotland against other countries of a similar size and aims to raise this performance to match the UK GDP average.

**Scottish Funding Council (SFC):** the Council provides support for universities and colleges including teaching, research, knowledge exchange, infrastructure, equipment and buildings. The Council is



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responsible for delivering Government policy through the educational institutions and supports their role in underpinning the development of the Scottish economy with improved educational, civic, social and cultural outcomes. The Council uses outcome measures to monitor performance and value for money and strongly supports the articulation from Further Education (FE) to Higher education (HE) as a way to deliver the Governments key objectives.

**Future Skills Scotland:** a department of the Scottish Government which provides business intelligence to universities, colleges and other agencies on the direction of the Scottish economy to enable them to tailor their programmes to better effect. The organisation provides impartial information on skill gaps, productivity, workforce and business surveys, the value of qualifications and the likely future skills demand. The organisation is also sensitive to the needs of business to understand trends in wages and employment conditions and the need to maintain the confidentiality of some data sets.

## 4.2 Universities and Colleges

**NB** In the UK all young people are required to attend school up to the age of 16 and may continue in schools up until the age of 18. Colleges of Further Education (FE) normally take students from the age of 16 upwards and provide programmes with a bias towards vocational training. Universities normally take students from the age of 18 and provide an education in a multitude of disciplines for undergraduates and post graduates.

**University of Glasgow:** founded in 1451 in Glasgow Cathedral and relocated to the High Street in 1461 before finally moving to its current location in the West End in 1870. The University has provided 558 years of un-interrupted education and is the fourth oldest university in the English speaking world. It has a strong reputation for research and teaching and has produced many notable graduates. It has played a central role in the development of the Glasgow economy from the industrial revolution to the current day. The University has 15,000 undergraduates, 5000 post graduates and a research income of £116m and is in the top 150 universities in the world. It has a £5m dialogue programme with SMEs, developed a KT impact assessment programme, introduced business support packages on line and supports innovation and entrepreneurship. There are five museums and galleries open to the public and the university offers outreach programmes with music and cultural events.

**Strathclyde University:** founded originally in 1796 as the Anderson's Institution it received its royal charter in 1964 when it became the new University of Strathclyde. There are currently 21,700 students drawn largely from the west of Scotland and has an annual turnover of £219m with earnings of £100m. There are two campuses, one in the City centre and the other in the West End. The University is supporting partnerships with the City Council, Scottish Enterprise and other economic development agencies. There is also strong support for communities with pathway agreements (articulation) with FE and preparation classes for students from more deprived backgrounds. There is also a summer academy for 14 year olds at risk which helps them to become more integrated in society.

**Glasgow Caledonian University:** received its charter in 1992 and was created from a collection of former technical colleges with its main campus in the City centre. It is predominantly a teaching institution with some specialist areas of research. It currently has 16,000 students with seven faculties together with bespoke programmes. The University provides a significant number of part time courses usually working with industry and is open to non graduates for masters programmes where candidates can demonstrate maturity and experience. There is a strong move to engage more with business through the "Applied Knowledge Exchange" programme and has developed a very flexible delivery structure for all areas of activity.



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**University of the West of Scotland:** was created in 2007 from a merger of two former universities created in 1992 in Paisley and Hamilton. The university works closely with the National Health Service, local authorities and business with strong programmes of community engagement. The university is primarily a teaching institution and has 18,000 students 50% of whom are part time. In addition to degree level teaching the university also offers credit based learning, continuing professional development, management development and bespoke courses. There is good engagement with the articulation from FE and the university works with local authorities and the business community on joint projects.

**Colleges of Further Education:** the nine FE colleges in the Glasgow region have a wide reach both within the City and more widely in the metropolitan area. The colleges vary considerably in their functions, student communities and connections. Since 1993 colleges have been incorporated and are now funded as an integral part of the SCF funding for HE/FE. In addition the colleges also receive income from industry for specific work related training and the colleges work closely with the Sector Skills Council, SDS, employers groups and others to deliver demand led accredited courses, Modern Apprenticeships, generic courses and bespoke training. The colleges are regarded as more flexible than the universities with closer connections with employers and the local communities where they are located. The colleges have good connections with the universities in Glasgow on specific issues.

## 4.3 Industry and Business

**Alliance of Sector Skills Councils:** was set up in 2008 to bring together all the 25 Sector Skills Councils and ensure that there are effective relationships across the skills and employment system. The Alliance maintains the links between the Scottish Government, business and the training institutions and ensures that there is a focus on delivering the skills that are needed by Scottish employers. The Alliance works with the training institutions to determine the level, quality and type of qualifications needed in particular industries and are particularly involved in the new apprenticeship schemes. The organisation also works with other agencies to provide labour market information although there is an acknowledgement that not all employers are well connected with the Sector Skills Councils.

**IBM Greenock:** a major employer located some 60km south west of Glasgow with over 2000 employees most of whom commute daily from the greater Glasgow metropolitan area. The company provides multi service and technical support services through a large dedicated call centre for a range of international and UK clients. It requires a high level of technical knowledge and foreign language skills and employs a large number of graduates. (up to 60% of the workforce) It supports the development of its workforce through dedicated training schemes and through the Modern Apprenticeship model. It is closely connected to the HEIs, schools and the Glasgow FE colleges and some of its managers sit on HEI and FE boards.

## 4.4 Associations

**Scottish Training Federation:** represents 106 training providers in Scotland including colleges, local authorities, private providers and the third sector (not for profit). The Federation supports a wide range of training initiatives and uses its connections with the Scottish Government and other stakeholders to influence the development of policy. The Federation has particular interest in training of young school leavers, those not economically active, apprentices and job seekers whilst connecting with employers and coordinating the work of its members. The Federation is also concerned with the skills issues in the older workforce and the role of the trades unions in supporting their activities and assisting in identifying skill gaps and needs.

## 5. Findings and Key Issues

### *Training and Skills Development*

- 5.1 The team were advised that by national and international standards the level of skill (as measured by qualification) of the Scottish workforce is above average at all levels. However the mobilisation of these skills and the productivity of Scottish businesses does not compare well with other regions, nor does it deliver the expected gains in participation and social cohesion. There also remains significant issues at lower levels of skills.
- 5.2 Despite the consolidation of four public agencies into SDS, the infrastructure for delivering skills remains complex with many other agencies and associations still involved. However it is evident that the stakeholders are committed to working together to deliver an effective service. There is still scope to reduce duplication particularly in the outreach to industry and business and to be clear about what the system offer is to business.
- 5.3 The training providers have an enlightened approach to workforce development and the need for co-operation to deliver the Governments aspirations to raise GDP. However whilst universities track their graduates for a short period on leaving the universities there is no systematic or longer term evaluation of the outcomes for either the students or employers. In the colleges of further education there is similarly little or no follow up at the end of the training period and their response led approach allows for limited planning or feedback. .
- 5.4 Two areas of concern were identified in the current skills development programme by some of the FE colleges. Firstly much of the skills training is too functionally focused and there is a need to rebalance and increase the core skills content (for example literacy, numeracy, life skills, coping with stress). Secondly is the internationalisation of workforce skills and the need to consider Scotland's global economic competitiveness. (SDS operate a Get Ready for Work programme together with the NASA Space School to address the issues of international competitiveness)
- 5.5 Modern Apprenticeships are well regarded by all organisations involved in their delivery and amongst employers and where the completion rate is significantly higher than the equivalent in England and Wales. However they are vulnerable during times of recession with the risk of the apprenticeship being terminated by the employer even though the education element is provided through the colleges with the support of SDS in many cases. It is not clear whether there are sufficient apprenticeship opportunities and it is known that recent tendering of Modern Apprenticeship opportunities was oversubscribed. The key issue is one of age.
- 5.6 More than 50% of training is provided by private sector and third sector trainers. There is little evidence of a robust quality assurance framework and a worrying trend with smaller and economically vulnerable providers ceasing to trade. This may point to unsustainable contracts with very small margins leading to small trusted providers working in niche markets and often with the more deprived communities disappearing. It was suggested that a three year funding arrangement with small training providers might assist in reducing the risk imposed by their current hand to mouth existence.
- 5.7 Universities and colleges have internal systems to measure the impact and quality of their programmes which they share with the relevant agencies. However there is no evidence of follow up with the students at the end of the training period to record the educational experience or to review how well the training met the expectations of the employer. SDS has been tasked by the Scottish Government to co-ordinate a 16+ data-base to track all young

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people across the system known as Data-hub. Work is currently under way to develop and implement

- 5.8 A robust system of career awareness, exploitation and development is not in evidence. Providing early exposure to young people and their families about available career pathways particularly in the “key sectors” and a programme of related workplace learning would strengthen the workforce pipeline. It would also motivate and prepare young people to navigate the FE and HE systems and equip themselves with the skills needed for longer term career viability.

## *Partnerships and Contacts*

- 5.9 There is a well developed co-operation between the universities and the further education colleges although the relationships tends to be issue based rather than a deeper partnership which would further strengthen articulation between FE and HE and support the third mission of the universities. However the HE and FE providers occupy buildings in different parts of the City and there is scope for some co-location as demonstrated in the Thames Gateway in Essex.
- 5.10 All contacts with employers suggest that they have short term horizons and the imperative to satisfy shareholders and develop a profitable business overrides serving on working parties and committees, although this would inform training providers and help them develop programmes that were more closely aligned to the demand. Contacts with business need to be focussed, informed and specific. It is said that employers don't know what is on offer. There is some doubt that the training organisations really know what ALL employers want.
- 5.11 All agencies and institutions have difficulty in accessing a broad sector of Scottish business in common with some other countries and the routes currently open are weak. The Chamber of Commerce in Glasgow has a small proportion of local employers amongst its membership whilst organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry work only with larger employers and the Institute of Directors is an organisation for individuals. It is particularly difficult to connect with SMEs. Universities have contacts with 11% of businesses in Glasgow whilst colleges of further education have contact with 29% of businesses. This suggests that universities could make better use of the college/business network with a pooling of their contacts and resources.

## *Future Proofing*

- 5.12 Universities are keen to ensure that their research and teaching programmes are relevant to the needs of the future and spend considerable effort internally to achieve this. However this seems to be an almost entirely internal process with little connection with other institutions or support from Government departments. Scottish universities meet collectively at national level but is there an opportunity for the Glasgow based universities to adopt a more coordinated approach to future planning? For example the Medway campus in Thames Gateway with its three universities co-locating or the Office for Knowledge Capital in Melbourne with its eight universities working together.
- 5.13 The colleges of further education are more demand led than universities and whilst they regard themselves as more flexible than the universities in their ability to adapt, there was little evidence that their programme planning takes account of the trends in the local economy.
- 5.14 The future direction of the Scottish economy has not been clearly articulated to the research and teaching institutions or to business. Whilst there is detailed information on business

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trends in the current economy, much of the analysis available for example on the future shape of the UK and European economy is not widely disseminated or understood

- 5.15 Whilst the Government have identified seven “key sectors” there is no guidance evident on priorities, a problem that may be linked to o) above.
- 5.16 Universities have a good reputation for supporting research projects and of support for innovation and entrepreneurship within the universities. However there was little evidence of this research capability extending into the wider business community and particularly with the SME sector. This may be addressed in part by universities developing their applied research capability with better marketing of their support for business.
- 5.17 There was little evidence of support from other public agencies (4a above) for innovation and entrepreneurship within the business community and support for business development appeared to depend on an expansion of current business models. There are examples of the UK policy on energy being poorly communicated to the potential producers of plant and equipment with the result that much of the new infrastructure in the UK is provided from overseas.

## 6. Examples of Good Practice

- Single well resourced agency for funding skills development as well as labour market and provider information. Skills Development Scotland is a good example of a new approach to skills. The Agency has both a strategic responsibility and a responsibility to ensure delivery with a sound research and evidence base.
- Willingness by agencies involved in skills development to cooperate in order to strengthen the system. There is strong evidence of working together at all levels with the emphasis on providing the best support for individuals and businesses.
- A large, well regarded Modern Apprenticeship scheme with a high degree of take up by both young people and employers which has moved beyond the traditional industries to encompass the whole economy.
- Universities which provide a complementary range of research and teaching and where they play to their strengths and recognise the contribution made by other institutions in the metropolitan area.
- A well developed articulation between colleges of further education and universities which enables students with a poorer academic record at school to enter university through the FE route, gaining the necessary skills and confidence to sustain them. This is particularly valuable for more mature students.
- Good community outreach programmes from universities and colleges into the wider community. The outreach programmes vary from one institution to another and include arts, culture, music, life-long learning, community support, and work with deprived communities and with new immigrants.

## 7. Overall Summary

There is a strong sense of sense of willingness to make things work, however the size of Glasgow and it’s greater metropolitan area means that the structures at all levels are complex with a multitude of partners and interests. It is also clear that whilst organisations are keen to work together there is





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conflict on occasions and competition between some of the players. While the FE colleges in Scotland have formed an association to coordinate and lobby on behalf of the FE sector and which is replicated with a similar organisation at City level, there is little evidence that the universities are similarly organised other than at national level through Universities Scotland. .

There are clearly issues around the delivery of the skills agenda and an evident need to tighten up the quality assurance, feedback and the measurement of out comes.

A most significant issue for all agencies and institutions concerns outreach to, connections with, feedback from and active engagement with employers. The current networks, contacts and outreach activities by the public agencies are clearly inadequate relying on voluntary membership organisations for business and personal contacts of staff the institutions and agencies. A comprehensive approach needs to be developed which will be available to all partners as a single data base with information of the company profile training received, future needs and feedback.

However necessary and useful a common data-base would be, it is not sufficient on its own. Contacts with business and industries communities are based on trust and any improvement in the relationship between the agencies and these communities will depend eventually on building trusted personal relationships. Therefore outreach to employers and particularly SMEs require a coordinated approach by the various agencies and institutions as well as amongst the staff within each organisation. The CDG is aware that this represents one of the greatest challenges facing the partners and cannot be achieved purely by Government ordinance. However public agencies can set the framework and cultivate a climate of cooperation and support between the various agencies and their staff.

Another significant issue is the way in which universities, colleges and businesses plan for the future. It seems that future planning at present takes place in a vacuum within organisations and the Government and its agencies should be far more proactive in supporting their future planning. Equally the institutions should be clear in their marketing about what they can offer in terms of research, teaching and support. Also during a period of economic restraint the institutions need to re-examine their strengths and weaknesses to ensure that they maximise their effectiveness.

## **8. Benchmarking and the Action Plan**

PASCAL has developed two benchmarking tools, one for the universities and colleges and another for the “region”. In a large review such as Glasgow it is recommended that SDS take the responsibility to lead and coordinate the completion of the benchmarking process.

The Action Plan to be developed by the Glasgow partners in the PURE study should be based on the contents and issues raised in this report together in due course with the output from the benchmarking exercise. The timing for this Action Plan is especially opportune and timely as the Scottish Strategic Forum (a top level policy body including the Scottish Government, SDS, SFC and SE) coordinate their policies and review their respective responsibilities and actions with a particular focus on skills development policies and their need to be more clearly strategic and continue to simplify the delivery of the skills development programme.

Some action points for consideration:

- Set up a local network for the universities in Glasgow.
- Review the cooperative links between HE and FE and help to embed their outreach.
- Explore feedback systems from students and employers.



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- **Develop a new and comprehensive approach to access employers.**
- **Assemble intelligence on the needs of all employers.**
- **Train business liaison personnel in all available resources.**
- **Coordinate the business outreach of the various agencies.**
- **Use better intelligence for future proofing HE and FE programmes.**
- **Increase linkages with business on future support in research, development and skills.**
- **Support the small, private training providers.**



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## APPENDIX 1

### List of Consultees

- Stephanie Young, Director: Skills Development Scotland
- Jacqui Hepburn, Director; Alliance of Sector Skills Councils
- Linda McTavish, Chair: Association of Scottish Colleges
- David Loft, Senior Policy Officer: Scottish Funding Council
- Kevin Kane, Director: Scottish Enterprise
- Stuart Leitch, Chair: Scottish Training Federation
- Patrick Watt, Head of Future Skills: Future Skills Scotland
- Fraser Rowan, Business Development Manager; University of Glasgow
- Kevin Cullen, Director of Research and Enterprise; University of Glasgow
- Ursula Kelly, Assistant Director; Strathclyde University
- Kenny Lynd, IBM-Greenock
- Fiona Stewart-Knight, Strategic Business Dev: Caledonian University
- Ian Bishop, Director; University of the West of Scotland

## APPENDIX 2

### Attendees at the John Wheatley College Dinner 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009

- Chris Shepherd, CDG Lead Reviewer
- Sharon Morrow, Skills Development Scotland
- Linda McTavish, Association of Scotland's colleges
- Iain Fergusson, CBI Scotland
- Alan Sherry, John Wheatley College
- Helen Hayes, CDG Reviewer
- Mili Shukla, Skills Development Scotland
- Stuart Patrick, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce
- Stephanie Young, Skills Development Scotland
- Kevin Kane, Scottish Enterprise
- Ann Millar, Scottish Funding Council
- Stuart G Leitch, Scottish Training Federation
- Hans Schuetze, CDG Reviewer
- Andrew Woolley, Skills Development Scotland
- Gill Stewart, Scottish Qualifications Authority
- Peter McGregor, University of Strathclyde
- Margaret Cameron, Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework Partnership
- Steven Inch, Glasgow City Council
- Declan Jones, Glasgow Caledonian University
- Diana Robinson, CDG Reviewer
- Nicola Blush, Skills Development Scotland
- Ursula Kelly, University of Strathclyde
- Andrew Robertson, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership
- Stuart Ritchie, Learning and Teaching Scotland
- Fumi Kitagawa, CDG Observer
- Katie Hutton, Skills Development Scotland
- Karen McAvenue, Scottish Government
- David Collie, Job Centre Plus
- Jacqui Hepburn, Alliance of Sector Skills Councils