



**STRATEGIC
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

2009/10 – 2011/12

Mission :

***To be recognised as a centre of excellence for landbased
education, training and enterprise.***



Contents

Executive Summary	3
The Context.....	4
<u><i>Oatridge College Background</i></u>	4
Environmental Analysis	4
<u><i>Analysis of the Landbased Sector in Scotland and the UK</i></u>	6
Key Change Drivers in the Land-based Sector.....	9
<u><i>Key Government Agendas</i></u>	4
Environmental Implications for Oatridge College.....	11
Strategic Aims of Oatridge College	12
Strategic Aims and Objectives	12
Review of performance against previous strategic objectives 07-08 and development Issues for 08-09	15
Key Performance Indicator targets for 2008-2011	20
Revised Planning processes and Monitoring Arrangements	15
Partnerships	21
Strategic Project: Suntrap	22
Supporting Strategies.....	23
Financial Projections	24
Critical Risks	25

Executive Summary

Oatridge College was established 36 years ago as a specialist agricultural college when agriculture was a thriving and expanding industry. Today, whilst the College remains very much a specialist landbased college with a major strategic role in serving the landbased industries nationally, we have specifically established ourselves as the premier training provider for the expanding equestrian industry in Scotland and this role is complemented by the establishment of the Scottish National Equestrian Centre on the College's estate. Besides maintaining its national remit, Oatridge continues to develop its provision in order to serve the local community through strong partnership working.

The College will continue to work with its key partners and stakeholders in supporting key Government targets. However, it has to be reiterated that the current limited growth in funding for the college sector may place constraints on this institution being able to fulfil the demand for the supply of education and training for the landbased industries.

Our colleagues and Board of Management recognise that the strengths of Oatridge College can sometimes be considered as threats from alternative perspectives: where the small size and specialist niche market occupied by the organisation means that internal communication and quality of delivery are well focussed, it also means that we struggle financially to address some of the Scottish Government targets, particularly when we actively strive to promote inclusion at both a local and national level.

The curriculum at Oatridge continues to occupy its niche role for the landbased sector and curriculum development is focussed on four main drivers:

1. Identifying ways of **widening participation** by providing routes into our courses as well as establishing firm progression routes through the College. These initiatives rely heavily on the identification of income streams from sources outwith the SFC income.
2. Improving the flexibility of programmes to be more **inclusive**: the College continually reviews its current provision to meet the needs of industry as well as making adjustments to programmes to make them more inclusive wherever possible.
3. Developing the **essential skills** of learners including core skills, employability, enterprise and citizenship skills.
4. Embedding **sustainability** in all the practices and processes of curriculum delivery.

Core funded planned activity for the year 2009-2010 has been increased by 2.10% and the College is, once again, likely to exceed the funded target. We are disappointed by the methodology utilised to redistribute additional SFC grant funding and estimate that it has resulted in us turning away 300 FTE students for the year 09-10.

The College continues to seek and implement income generating activity in order to support its current level of activity but is finding it increasingly more challenging in the current economic climate.

The College has made significant progress on its 2008/09 strategic objectives and continues to deliver above its SFC target activity which remains a frustration because the potential for widening participation is thwarted by funding issues.

The Context

Oatridge College Background

Oatridge College was established in 1973 at its present site as a purpose built residential college specialising in the landbased education sector. Whilst the College was originally built to serve the training and educational needs of the agricultural industries, it has now diversified and developed to provide knowledge and skills in a broad range of rural industries from agriculture and horticulture, through environment and conservation, to landbased engineering, greenkeeping, landscaping, animal care, equine studies and farriery.

The College buildings sit within an attractive 283 hectare estate located in Central Scotland and has good access links to the main centres of population. An additional resource for the College is Suntrap, a three acre mature garden at Gogarbank near Edinburgh, where the vast plant collection and realistic but safe working environment is invaluable for teaching purposes in terms of meeting the needs of the very diverse learners that we serve.

Oatridge plays a national strategic role in serving the needs of the landbased industries across Scotland and is the premier training provider to Scotland's equestrian industry: the College's central location which is home to the Scottish National Equestrian Centre making it highly suited to this niche market. However, the College recognises its role in the local community as well as its national role and has successfully balanced provision to meet the needs of very diverse learners from all walks of life.

The College has a dynamic and forward thinking Board of Management whose members provide a broad range of skills and experience both within the landbased sector and the educational context. Through well-informed meetings, sub-committees and active participation in College activities and relevant CPD, the Board provides strong leadership and strategic direction for the organisation.

Environmental Analysis

External: Key Government Agendas

In September 2007, the new Scottish Government published its strategy for lifelong learning *Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy* which incorporates the following important strategic drivers for Oatridge College:

We need to work in **strong partnerships** and in a flexible manner with other organisations to form firm foundations for skills development in young people below the school leaving age to :

- Develop their vocational skills
- Develop their employability skills
- Develop their core skills

This is in accordance with the Government's *Curriculum for Excellence* policy document, preparing young people for the world of work.

We need to equip individuals with the skills that Scotland, and in particular, the land-based sector needs by providing:

- vocational education and training related to employment in response to national, regional and local needs;

- positive and clear routes for learners into employment or into higher education institutions; and
- support for learners to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can feel confident in their work and in their lives.

We also need to work closely with employers to ensure that programmes of learning are fit for purpose and addressing the skills gap by:

- Listening to employers
- Providing appropriate training for employees and employers in the sector

We need to ensure that we:

- work with awarding bodies and use SCQF to enable all learning to be recognised
- as a learndirect scotland learning centre, offer a less formal entry-route
- build on the effective partnerships that already exist
- ensure that it is easy for individuals to progress from one form of learning to another
- understand and support individuals before and after their learning and into employment
- develop strong partnerships and communication links to ensure that information about an individual's support needs, learning styles and achievements are shared
- Provide high quality, relevant, learning opportunities that have value in the workplace:
 - provide learning at times and places accessible by workers;
 - offer easy access to robust information about learning opportunities and funding to individuals and employers;
 - emphasise and prioritise employability as a key outcome from learning;
 - ensure that learning is geared towards helping individuals to utilise their skills at all levels, from foundation-level to PhD – not just their subject-based knowledge and understanding, but also the practical application skills, generic cognitive skills, communication skills and autonomy, accountability and the ability to work with others – providing individuals with the ability to utilise skills and foster innovation in a changing and demanding labour market
 - engage with employers so that people can use the skills gained through learning to access work and progress in the workplace.
- Work with and through our representative bodies – (Scotland's Colleges) to:
 - ensure that in teaching individuals we provide them with essential skills;
 - ensure positive destinations for individuals where the learning that those individuals have undertaken will be effectively used;
 - work closely with business to develop courses that will lead to individuals having the knowledge and skills that meet both business need and individual aspirations; and
 - work with business in developing relationships that will make best use of the knowledge created in institutions for the benefit of Scotland's economy.
- Make effective use of labour market information and information, advice and guidance in:
 - developing learning, qualifications and work experience opportunities;
 - responding to demand from individuals and employers and different segments of these markets.
- Work with learndirect scotland to register all publicly-funded learning courses on the National Learning Opportunities Database, so that the Database can become an effective national resource for all to use.

The Government Strategy *More Choices, More Chances* (June 2006) to address problems of re-engaging young people not in education, employment or training also re-iterates our obligation to increase the opportunities for young people.

To fulfil our obligations we need to:

- Adopt a client-focused approach – capable of addressing the complexity of issues some young people bring.
- Address barriers in a holistic way – through offering a comprehensive, co-ordinated service or good signposting to other support agencies.
- Provide high quality and ongoing assessment and action planning – client focussed, ideally using approaches which are shared by other relevant agencies.
- Offer flexibility in programme duration – recognising that the intensity and length of support necessary will vary hugely within this highly diverse group.
- Focus on progression – participants should be supported to move to the next progression point as quickly as possible.
- Engage employers – and embed a focus on employment at the start of the process.
- Demonstrate clear evidence of impact – as well as the established ‘harder’ outcomes. This should include reliable means of gauging distance travelled by clients.
- Involvement of young people in service design – too many assumptions are made about what young people need – the most effective approaches are informed by client views.

External-Analysis of the Local Community Requirements

In terms of the Government strategy to improve the positive outcomes for young people (*More Choices, More Chances*), it is important to emphasise the demographics of young people locally. Whilst the national population in Scotland is forecast to decline, West Lothian is an area that is forecast to buck this trend and undergo a population increase in the next few years: the population is currently around 160,000 with a 15% increase forecast by the Register General by 2018.

The Scottish Government has emphasised the role of Scotland’s Colleges in providing appropriate training opportunities for young people who are at risk of falling into the “not in employment, education or training” categories locally. The important factors for this category in West Lothian are:

- Using the Scottish Government’s own national estimate which includes other groups (including those not in receipt of benefit) the total MCMC group for West Lothian could be as high as 1,400
- The rate (as a % of young people 16-19) is an estimated 11% to 16% falling into this category
- West Lothian’s position relative to Scotland has deteriorated since 2005
- West Lothian currently has the 4th highest MCMC level among Scottish Local Authorities.

External-The Landbased Sector in Scotland and the UK¹

The environmental and land-based sector is both complex and diverse including 17 recognised industry categories across the UK and representing 3.4% of the UK’s total employment. The sector is dominated by small businesses across the UK, employing less than 5 people (this profile representing at least 92% of the approximately 210,000 businesses) and at least 66% of these operate as sole trader businesses. The sector also has a large volunteer profile, representing the interests of at least 40,000 volunteers in Scotland on a regular basis with another 40,000 on a more casual basis. In the UK there are thought to be approximately 340,000 foreign nationals employed within the sector, many as transient workers.

¹ Lantra Sector Qualification Strategy, October 2007; Lantra Scotland, SSA, 2006
Oatridge College Strategic Development Plan 2009-2012

In Scotland, the land-based workforce is approximately 109,000, 4.9% of the total workforce. There are regional differences in the importance of different industries and some segments of sector are of particular importance for the more remote rural areas as would be expected. Key national policies and priorities are placed upon specific industries because they are critical to the sustainability of rural economies: the priority areas currently supported by the Scottish Government are:

- Tree and timber industries
- Environmental conservation
- Aquaculture
- Fisheries management
- Agriculture (crops and livestock)
- Game and wildlife management

In remote and accessible rural areas which Oatridge serves, employment in primary industries (agriculture, forestry and fishing) is 18% and 12% of the population respectively as compared to 0.4% for the rest of Scotland²

Agriculture and tree/timber industries represents around 2% of Scotland's GDP.

In Scotland, approximately 28% of primary businesses employ 1 to 9 whilst 70% employ no staff at all. Of the total workforce, over 80% are proprietors of businesses, whilst 19% are employed staff.

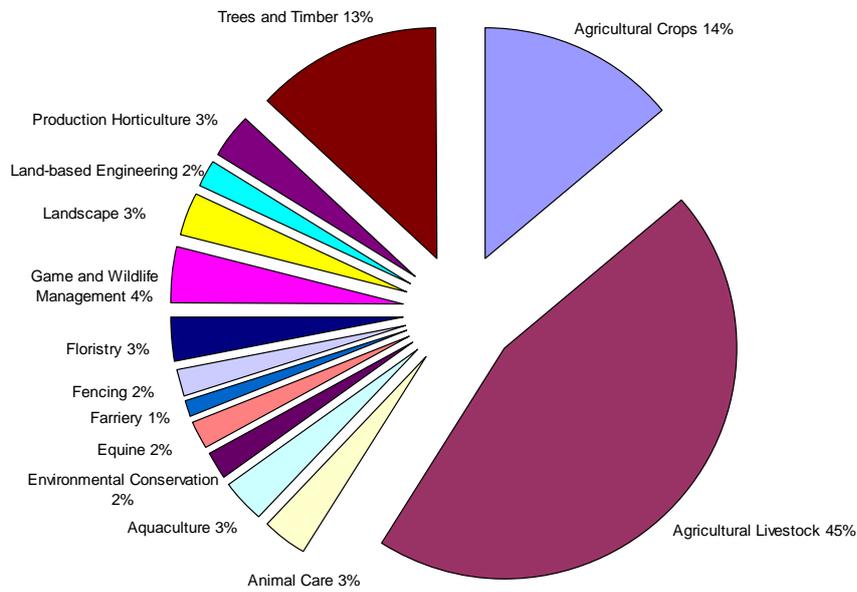
The sector continues to undergo a process of radical change driven by the globalisation of production and markets, rapidly changing consumer tastes and an increasing focus on high value products. All of the 17 industries reported difficulties to Lantra, Scotland in recruitment and retention. Current skills gaps include management and planning, ICT and technical, communications, literacy and numeracy skills.

Much of the land-based workforce is highly skilled in technical areas, with years of vocational experience, although these skills are unaccredited and currently not recognised. There is a need to recognise both skills and experience alongside formal qualifications and professional development.

The land-based sector has historically suffered from an image of poor pay and long hours and has been pushed as a non-academic route for students. Consequently, there is a lack of understanding of the sector and the career opportunities it offers (Lantra, SSA, 2005)

² *Rural Scotland Key Facts, The Scottish Government, 2009*
Oatridge College Strategic Development Plan 2009-2012

Distribution of workforce across landbased and environmental industries.



(Lantra Sector Skills Agreement Scotland National Consultation Document December 2005.)

Futureskills Scotland identified in its labour market projections (May 2007) that the sector would require 22,000 new workers over the period 2007 to 2017 due to the high number of retiring workers.

The Lantra Scottish Sector Profile 2007 highlighted that 56% of employers considered technical and practical skills shortages to be a key factor where skills shortages were identified compared to 46% of sector employers in the rest of Scotland.

Key Actions for the Land-based Sector

Following the publication of their Qualification Strategy in 2007, Lantra, the Sector skills council for land-based industries published a refreshed action plan which is likely to influence the strategic direction of Oatridge College for the next 12 months (*Sector Qualification Strategy action plan 2009-2011, Lantra, July 2009*). There are key actions set out in this agenda which are pertinent to the strategy of Oatridge College including:

- The development of flexible, unitised programmes of learning
- The development of qualifications and training that provide suitable entry routes into the sector
- Ensuring qualifications and training articulate clear progression routes through the sector

External-implications of the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy

The Scottish Government's Economic Strategy (November 2007) sets out the priority areas for growth as they see them, this includes the following sectors:

- creative industries
- energy
- financial and business services,
- food & drink
- life sciences
- tourism and universities

It does not include primary industries into which they argue that all of the land-based industries fall.

Internal- Analysis of student enrolment trends:

Following the recent economic downturn Oatridge College has experienced a 74% increase in applications year on year for 09/10 compared to 08/09. This trend is something that is expected to continue as the most recent unemployment data indicates a jobless ratio of 4 jobless people for every 1 vacancy available. The rate for the whole of Scotland being 3.8 (figures from West Lothian Council, Feb 2009).

In the year 2008-2009, 46% of learners at Oatridge originated from the Edinburgh and Lothian areas (as compared with 40% in 07-08), 44% from other parts of Scotland and 16% from England and other EU countries (SFC, 2008). This is comparable to previous years.

Recruitment profiles can be further examined in terms of the mode of attendance of students:

Full-time students

In the year 2007-2009, 41% of full-time students were recruited from the Edinburgh and Lothian area (compared to 36% the previous year) with 57% from other areas of Scotland (compared to 61%) and 2% from England and the EU.

Part-time students (excluding evening and weekend but including work-based)

In the year 2007-2008, 40% of part-time students were recruited from the Edinburgh and Lothian's area with 25% from England, N Ireland and the EU, the rest from other areas of Scotland. This was comparable to the previous year. The large number of part-time and full-time students attracted from outwith the College's immediate catchment area emphasises the continuing national role that Oatridge plays.

Enrolment numbers and Level of Study

In the year 2008-2009, there was a total of 3951 compared to 3918 enrolments in 08-08, demonstrating a continuing trend of increased numbers of enrolments of approximately 8% year on year. HE full-time enrolments represented approximately 45% of the total number of *full-time enrolments*. *This is a small increase from the previous years.*

Environmental Implications for Oatridge College

Oatridge is situated very centrally in West Lothian. Its recognised catchment area includes Edinburgh and the Lothians (East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian and Edinburgh City). However, when enrolments are examined for the College, Oatridge is in a unique position compared to all the other 42 of Scotland's Colleges in that our catchment is not concentrated to one local education authority and is quite evenly distributed across all of the regions of Scotland. This, as well as the nature of our specialist provision has major implications for the College when considering the methodology for calculation of the grant-in aid funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) including the following:

- The College is located within the central belt of Scotland, yet is funded by the SFC for rural remoteness funding because of its catchment area.
- The distributed nature of the enrolments often means that the College falls through the net when additional allocations of funding are made. This has been the case in relation to the recent allocation of additional funding by SFC in July/September 2009 (SFC/24/2009, SFC/27/2009). There is a high risk that Oatridge may not meet enrolment targets in key areas depending on, and if, any rural additional funds are allocated

This highlights a need for the College to step up and meet the demands of creating training opportunities for young people locally. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult to do because of the capped SFC grant-in-aid funding.

Despite the fact that the overall population is set to decline in Scotland, the local increase predicted in Edinburgh and Lothians means that the number of learners that Oatridge can attract locally from all age groups is unlikely to fall. Indeed West Lothian has one of the highest levels of growth in Scotland.

The large numbers of potential learners that currently fall into the *More Choices, More Chances* group, the Scottish Government agenda to increase vocational learning activity for school aged learners means that Oatridge must work closely in partnership with a number of organisations in order to deliver a curriculum portfolio that meets the likely growing local demand. However, even through strong collaborative work with partner organisations, such demands are resource intensive and Oatridge will struggle to meet the potential demand for learning with its current level of Scottish Funding Council funding.

Current agricultural policy means that the Scottish agricultural industry must examine ways of improving efficiency, moving to specialist markets (e.g. organics) and/or diversifying into other areas of land use. Such a policy driver presents opportunity for Oatridge to support SMEs through the provision of specialist short courses in a number of areas.

As a specialist provider the College takes nearly 20% share within agriculture, horticulture and animal care subjects across Scotland. The College, particularly with its excellent new Scottish National Equestrian Centre, has the opportunity to increase its national market share if sufficient funding is accessible. It is critical that the education and training opportunities available for the sector served by the College are not reduced.

The need for all industries to update and adapt in response to changing technologies and new legislation in relation to animal welfare and transportation, environmental conservation, health and safety and waste management presents opportunities for Oatridge and its rural partner colleges, Barony and Elmwood, to raise employers' awareness of this need.

Strategic Aims of Oatridge College

Strategic Aims and Objectives

The Board of Management at their strategic planning day in April 2009 reviewed the strategic aims and objectives of the College and decided that, although there is a change in emphasis towards the importance of income generating activity from a financial perspective, the strategic aims of the College continue to serve the needs of the landbased sector and the local communities appropriate to the environmental analysis. These aims and underlying objectives are identified below.

Strategic Aims

1. To continually enhance the quality of all aspects of work at the College.
2. To provide a learning experience that encourages all individuals to achieve their full potential.
3. To promote a staff development programme that will enhance the skills of all staff and ensure the standards of the College are maintained and improved.
4. To work collaboratively and in partnership with students, employers, corporate organisations and other agencies for mutual benefit.
5. To utilise and develop College resources in the most efficient and effective way.
6. To maximise commercial and other income generating opportunities in order to achieve a healthy financial position.

Strategic Objectives

For each of the strategic aims the College has identified a number of objectives that it will pursue to enable the aim to be realised. The Board of Management will monitor the strategic aims and objectives through its well-defined committee structure.

- 1. To continually enhance the quality of all aspects of work at the College.**
 - To monitor performance through benchmarking, performance measurement, external assessment, and internal and external review.
 - To utilise feedback effectively.
 - To continually improve knowledge management by developing reporting systems through enhanced use of ICT.
 - To continually develop the physical environment and resources for all stakeholders.
 - To promote a quality culture.
 - To regularly review and develop the curriculum and services of the College in response to the needs of learners and employers.



2. To provide a learning experience that encourages all individuals to achieve their full potential.

- To provide learning opportunities that are learner-centred and encourage independent learning
- To provide learning opportunities that develop the transferable skills of the individual including their employability, citizenship and core skills
- To provide a differentiated learning experience that is inclusive and equitable for all
- To run learning programmes in conjunction with government and other agencies to cater for the needs of traditional and non-traditional learners
- To run programmes of learning that provide progression opportunities from school to further and higher education
- To provide a range of services for learners to support the learning experience



3. To promote a staff development programme that will enhance the skills of all staff and ensure the standards of the College are maintained and improved.

- To ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their role.
- To ensure that new developments are led by suitably qualified and experienced staff.
- To develop leaders and managers for the future.
- To ensure that appropriate staff are well informed in relation to all new initiatives, in particular the effective use of ICT.
- To internally promote a whole range of College policies including those of equality of opportunity and social inclusion, quality improvement and health & safety.

4. To work collaboratively and in partnership with students, employers, corporate organisations and other agencies for mutual benefit.

- To identify key national and international stakeholders.
- To identify mutually beneficial projects with those stakeholders.
- To work co-operatively with established partners
- To identify opportunities that may lead to improved economies of scale.
- To identify provision which focuses on demand.
- To strive to customise provision to meet employer and individual needs.



5. To utilise and develop College resources in the most efficient and effective way.

- To identify and utilise those resources that are critical for the delivery of the College mission with regard to efficiency, economy and effectiveness.
- To identify and consider disposal of those resources surplus to the delivery of the College mission.
- To implement and regularly review the College estate strategy with focus upon effective deployment of resources in line with the College mission.
- To manage resources in a way that will safeguard and improve the environment and encourage sustainability.



6. To maximise commercial and other income generating opportunities in order to achieve a healthy financial position.

- To collaborate with other Colleges in benchmarking financial indicators and other efficiency factors.
- To identify suitable business opportunities and maximise the revenue generated.
- To further develop and maintain robust internal budgeting processes and control systems.
- To identify financial risks and implement strategies for management of risk.
- To work with other partners to attract funds and share costs for particular projects.
- To maximise the use of the estate for commercial activities ensuring it provides an appropriate resource for effective and efficient curriculum support.

Review of performance against previous strategic objectives 08-09 and development Issues for 09-10

Strategic Aim (and underpinning objectives)	Key Achievements	Strategic development issues for 09-10
Quality Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Successfully reviewed and implemented new section self evaluation and action planning processes ✓ Incorporated external evaluation of teaching and learning processes and incorporate into the quality enhancement cycle ✓ Underwent organisational re-structure to ensure that commercial curriculum developments are maximised ✓ Reviewed all policies and procedures in relation to new structure to ensure updated and equality impact assessed ✓ Gained 2 HMIE SLIPs through annual review process ✓ Collaborated and led on the development of 4 new qualifications at SQA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop ICT based system for measuring learner progress ➤ Develop and pilot the use of e-portfolio for some areas of the curriculum ➤ Create more tailored learning programmes which are demand-led from key stakeholders ➤ Engage in action research to contribute to the dissemination of the Curriculum for excellence principles with partner schools ➤ Examine potential of re-instating farriery modern apprenticeship
To monitor performance through benchmarking, performance measurement, external assessment, internal and external review		
To utilise feedback effectively		
To continually improve knowledge management by developing reporting systems through enhanced use of ICT		
To continually develop the physical environment and resources for all stakeholders		
To promote a quality culture		
To regularly review and develop the curriculum and services of the College in response to the needs of learners and employers		
Learning Experience for the Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Learners' feedback identified similar satisfaction rates to 08-09 year ✓ Non-traditional programmes running 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Confirm more progression opportunities from our courses to HEIs
Provide learning opportunities that are learner-centred and encourage		

independent learning	<p>as routine part of programming for all teams except animal care and engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joined ELRAH (Edinburgh and Lothian Articulation Hub) to improve student articulation opportunities ✓ Successful embedding of transferable skills into all programmes ✓ Very high uptake of students into SPARQs student engagement scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure all curricular areas are embedding and integrating transferable skills into their provision ➤ Continue to promote and support the role of the Student association to maximise learner engagement ➤ Ensure all learners are exposed to the concept of, and positive actions they can contribute, in relation to sustainable development.
Develop the transferable skills of the learner		
Differentiate the learning experience to be inclusive and equitable		
Run learning programmes in partnership to cater for both traditional and non-traditional learners		
To provide progression opportunities from school to further and higher education		
To provide a range of services for learners to support the learning experience		
Promote staff development to improve standards of the College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Operational targets for “mandatory staff” development and TQFE met ✓ Successful implementation of equality and diversity training “online” ✓ High uptake and mostly positive on CPD from the collaborative staff development project (ESSDCG) ✓ Successful and efficient in-house CPD sessions completed in relation to policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and implement a more effective and efficient model of staff induction ➤ Develop more effective strategy to promote succession opportunity ➤ Role out more advanced equality and diversity training ➤ Implement new teacher training scheme for new staff
Ensure all staff qualified and experienced for their role		
New developments led by experienced staff		
Develop leaders and managers for the future		
Ensure staff are well informed in relation to new initiatives, in particular, ICT		

<p>Internally promote College policies including those of equality of opportunity, social inclusion, quality improvement and health and safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reviewed initial teacher training and new model in place for 09-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review current policy on staff ICT utilisation for teaching purposes ➤ Encourage staff to participate in international educational visits, exchanges and projects ➤ Ensure teaching and support staff are confident in their ability to include actions for sustainable development in their delivery areas.
<p>Work collaboratively and in partnership with employers, students, corporate organisations and other agencies for mutual benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Successfully engaged 3 FT international students ✓ Successfully developed new partnerships with schools, HE Institutions, charitable organisations and local councils in most Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote learning opportunities for international students through a wider range of promotional activities
<p>Identify key national and international stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Worked successfully with Scotland's Countryside Colleges, Edinburgh and Lothian Colleges and West Lothian Community Planning Partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop international partnerships
<p>Identify mutually beneficial projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Signed formal agreement to develop the federal model of the SCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase College-SME interaction levels in relation to KT activities
<p>Work co-operatively with established partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increased customised provision for employers and other key stakeholders 4-fold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on developing and implementing effective partnerships for knowledge transfer activity
<p>Identify opportunities to lead to improved economies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Established 2 new international networks including the successful achievement of 1 Grundtvig Small Co-operation project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement the formal agreement strategies made by SCC
<p>Identify provision which focuses on demand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Successfully joined 2KT+ knowledge transfer project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to work with Lantra and other key stakeholders to meet the needs of industry
<p>Customise provision to meet employer and individual needs</p>		
<p>Utilise and develop</p>		

College resources in the most efficient and effective way	➤ Successfully restructured both academic and business support with the aim of improving the efficiency of the organisation.	➤ Continue to implement specific activities across the organisation to embed the principles and actions for sustainable development
Identify and utilise resources that are critical for the delivery of the College mission with regard to efficiency, economy and effectiveness	✓ Successfully sold resources that are surplus to requirement	➤ Explore opportunities to utilise the farm steading for alternative uses
Identify and consider disposal of those resources surplus to the delivery of the College mission	✓ Inefficient heating systems have been replaced	➤ Utilise the College grounds to include incorporation of community based initiatives
Manage resources in a way that will safeguard and improve the environment and encourage sustainability	✓ Successfully utilised staff and College resources to deliver bespoke training and corporate development events for external clients ✓ Through staff development programmes raised awareness of sustainable development issues ✓ Successfully implemented a recording system for energy and water usage and for separated wastes recycling levels	➤ Develop carbon management plan to include key areas : Examine IT energy use. Carbon reduction vision. Examine all policies ➤ Communication strategy to compliment carbon reduction vision.
Maximise commercial and other income generating opportunities to achieve a healthy financial position	✓ Working with the SFC in reviewing the commercial activities ✓ Held developmental meetings re the strategic development of future SCC models (Discussion on strategic developments and a possible Federal model between landbased colleges)	➤ Collaborate with SCC partners to implement strategic reviews of curricula and business areas to develop a model for future cooperation.
Collaborate with other Colleges in benchmarking financial indicators and other efficiency factors	✓ Commercial review taking place with external consultants	➤ Develop annual business development targets for each academic team.
Identify suitable business opportunities and maximise revenue generated	✓ All team leaders and SMT encouraged to utilise costing spreadsheet which includes	➤ Encourage all academic staff to participate in new income generating activities (eg KT,

Develop and maintain robust internal budgeting processes and control systems	recommendations from A guide to costing and pricing in the College sector” (Implement the recommendations suggested in “A guide to costing and pricing in the College sector”)	bespoke training, corporate events) ➤ Increase the number of local, Scottish and international partnerships to create income generating activities
Identify financial risks and implement strategies for management of risk		
Work with partners to attract funds and share costs for projects	✓ Delivered WLC CPP ESF project and developing new bids with a range of partners. (Developing joint bids with WLC College and Council)	➤ Increase the profile of the College and its capacity through higher levels of marketing activity
Maximise the use of the estate for commercial activities ensuring it provides an appropriate resource for effective and efficient curriculum support	✓ Reviewed farm and estate and produced recommendations for future. Bid successfully for SRDP grant to build new farm building and to remodel the yard and stables ✓ Appointment of new staff with specific business remit to increase and develop business income	➤ Increase short course provision and investigate on-line booking systems ➤ Develop appropriate cattle shed and horse stables.

Key Performance Indicator targets for 2008-2011

Key Performance Indicator	Year 08-09(Actual)	Year 09-10(Target)	Year 10-11 (Target)	Year 11-12 (Target)
Effectiveness				
Early Retention	92%	93%	94%	93%
Retention	86%	87%	88%	89%
Student Outcome	87%	88%	89%	90%
Student Unit achievement (SARU)	80%	81%	82%	83%
Efficiency				
Operating Surplus/deficit	£26000	£59000	£133000	£141000
wSUMs/FTE	396	414	414	414
Staff cost: income ratio (%)	48.72%	49.98%	49.49%	49.53%
Target Teaching Hours per annum(teaching staff only)	756	756	756	756
Enrolment	3951	4000	4000	4000
wSUMs Total	14,686	15,000	15,000	15,000

Revised Planning processes and Monitoring Arrangements

The Board of Management will monitor achievement of the objectives in the Strategic Plan. Within the College, the Strategic Plan will be developed into Annual team Quality Improvement Plans with key target dates, identifying persons with responsibility for achieving the objectives. The Senior Management Team will review progress on both the team Quality Improvement Plans and the Strategic Plan then report to the various Committees of the Board of Management.

A revised timetable and approach is being implemented to the College's whole planning process in order to simplify it for staff and to take heed of the HMIE's criticism of the need to be more evaluative and SMARTER in target setting.

The schedule set out below identifies the timescales for various events of the College's planning and monitoring system for the year 09-10 which should then lead to future year planning cycles.:

Event	Timeframe/deadline	Commentary
Staff Planning Day	Feb/March 2009	
Board Planning Day	April 2009	
Review of Section KPIs	September 2009	Part of Academic Board Meeting
Collation of Section KPIs and review by SMT	October 2009	
Self evaluation and quality improvement plans for academic teams	October 2009	AP, C&Q
Support Teams	March 2009	
Collation of section action plans and support service quality improvement plans to create quality improvement plan 09-10	November 2009	AP, F&R
Approval of updated strategic plan	December 2009	Board of Management
Review of progress on quality improvement plans	February 2010	SMT
Review of progress on quality improvement plans	June 2010	SMT

Partnerships

Edinburgh and the Lothian Colleges Group (ELCG)

For a number of years the six Edinburgh and Lothian Colleges, Edinburgh's Telford, Jewel & Esk Valley, Newbattle Abbey, Oatridge, Stevenson Edinburgh and West Lothian have been collaborating on a variety of issues to the benefit of students, stakeholders and staff.

As a partnership of like-minded colleges, the ELCG plays a leading role in the Principal's Forum and Scotland's Colleges International (SCI) and contributes to the work of Scotland's Colleges.

A strategic framework is in place and frequent meetings between the Principals and senior staff of the colleges have been extended to include a wider range of staff with common responsibilities within the partners. Board of Management members come together for training events and strategic discussions.

The colleges have a long-standing collaboration in staff development including professional development awards, teaching qualifications and industrial placements. In addition the colleges work together in quality, benchmarking, construction expertise and economic development.

Major projects have been completed to investigate the potential of shared services between colleges and detailed curriculum mapping of the colleges' provision. Such projects have provided baseline information and recommendations for further action and have formed part of our shared strategy of collaboration.

Such information has been vital in ensuring that each college offers a curriculum portfolio which is up to date and fit for purpose. We have also used this information to carry out some long term joint visioning, looking forward to 2020. As such, we are committed to long term collaboration within the framework of strong independent self determining institutions.

The ELCG is committed to ensuring best value for the public purse through streamlining of activities, including involvement in joint projects under the banner of the “Efficient Government” initiative.

Within the lifespan of this plan these collaborative activities will be extended and expanded and a joint action plan, including research, to identify opportunities in the global markets has been prepared. The action plan identifies a range of projects by all or some of the participating colleges.

The College Principals view our developing collaboration as an essential tool to their leadership and management of the colleges which serve the people of Edinburgh and Lothians and beyond.

The strategic partnerships which is the ELCG exists to promote innovation and add value to the experience of our collective students; whilst raising performance standards and without compromising the integrity of each individual college.

Rural Colleges Group

Oatridge College continues to be an active member of the Rural Colleges Group with the Principal being the Convenor of the group between 2008 and 2010.

Scotland’s Countryside Colleges

The three colleges – Oatridge College, Barony College and Elmwood College – now have a significant track record of working together.

Projects undertaken to date are:

- Strategic collective approach to marketing
- Strategic collaborative approach to provision/”lead” college concept
- Collective approach to landbased articulation
- Collective approach to facilities development

The relationship has been so successful that the colleges have now formalised the collaborative arrangements. Each of the college Boards in early 2009 have signed a formal partnership agreement. A number of working groups have been established. Additionally we are keen to further strengthen the partnership by enhancing the involvement of the Scottish Agricultural College within the group (SAC now funded by SFC from 1st August 2008). As part of the development the three colleges along with SAC have been provided with funds by the Funding Council to undertake a cultural assessment within the four institutions. This is anticipated to be the first stage looking at how we could best collaborate and what form of organisation we should have to deliver that collaboration.

Strategic Project: Suntrap

Suntrap is a three-acre mature garden at Gogarbank near Edinburgh, where the vast plant collection is invaluable for the delivery of specialised programmes of learning mainly in the field of therapeutic horticulture for people in the Edinburgh and Lothian communities. Suntrap does not deliver mainstream horticulture education programmes but rather, using horticulture as a therapeutic tool, helps to make life changing benefits to vulnerable and disadvantaged people from the Edinburgh and Lothian region communities. The Suntrap team provide a range of activities for learners of all ages, abilities and needs working closely with a number of partner organisations ranging from horticultural organisations to those

working with socially disadvantaged people. Our organisation has links with the horticultural therapy charity THRIVE, Trellis, the Gardeners Royal Benevolent Society (Perennial), Queen Margaret University, The National Trust for Scotland, Edinburgh City Council, East, West and Midlothian Councils, North Lanarkshire Council, NHS Edinburgh and Lothian, The “Friends of Suntrap” and our parent organisation, Oatridge College.

Suntrap has traditionally been considered a safe working environment for people with more severe physical, mental and learning disabilities and a large proportion of the learning involves disabled learners with an underlying objective of promoting their personal health and well-being: the programmes take a holistic approach to various life skills for learners with global learning disabilities. In addition, Suntrap offers programmes to young and disadvantaged learners with a range of needs using horticulture as a vehicle to develop their understanding of where food comes from and contributing to healthy eating initiatives as well as developing their employability and enterprise skills.

A group of influential and appropriate supporters have been examining the future of Suntrap in its present form. Depending on the “Think Tank” decisions and future funding for the year 2010/11, Oatridge College wishes to continue to further enhance the work of Suntrap however this can only be achieved if relevant funding agencies are prepared to fund the valuable work undertaken at this Centre. If funding is available then our aspirations are to :

- Development of Suntrap to become a National Centre of Excellence in horticultural therapy
- Enhance collaboration with others involved in working with learners with additional support needs
- Strengthen school-college partnership activity nationwide



Figure 1: Some young learners enjoying the sunshine at Suntrap

Supporting Strategies

This Strategic Development Plan is supported by the following College strategies which can be found as appendices to this document:

Estate Strategy (appendix 1)

Human Resources Strategy (appendix 2)

ICT Strategy (appendix 3)

International Strategy (appendix 4)

Knowledge Transfer and Employer Engagement Strategy (Appendix 5)

Learning and Teaching Strategy (appendix 6)
 Marketing Strategy (appendix 7)
 Quality Enhancement Strategy (appendix 8)

Financial Projections

The Board of Management has highlighted the challenges in continuing to meet the demand for education and training within the reduced proportion of sector grant-in-aid funding it receives from SFC.

SFC funding constitutes approximately 48% of the College's turnover with the rest being generated from other sources. Unfortunately income from other commercial activity can be influenced by numerous external factors and the economic health of the industries we serve.

The Board of Management is committed to the principle of attempting to achieve a surplus in their Income and Expenditure Account in 2009/10 however this is becoming exceedingly difficult due to uncertainty in certain key areas of funding relied on in past years. The two main areas of concern are the Skills Development Scotland contribution for training contracts and the certain reduction in European Funding streams.

In its Strategic Objectives the Board of Management has identified as a key priority that it will:

- Maximise income generating opportunities and control costs in order to achieve a healthy financial position.

The projections provide a challenging target which the Board has risen to and implemented some structural changes within the organisation in order to make financial savings

Account must be taken of the need to adequately remunerate staff to ensure that skills and experience are retained and to meet the increasing cost of employer national insurance and pension contributions. Although savings have been made there is a need for investment in equipment and resources to meet industry standards. Reduced opportunities for potential European funding will have an increasing impact.

TABLE 2 - FUTURE FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS including end of year actual (as submitted to the Funding Council 2009)

	2008/09 Actual £000	2009/10 Planned £000	2010/11 Planned £000	2011/12 Planned £000
Income				
Funding Council Grants (exc Bursaries & Access Funds)	3375	3405	3468	3534
Education contracts/Tuition Fees	836	822	838	855
Other Income	2053	1913	2030	2069
Investment Income	35	28	18	18

Total Income	6373	6168	6354	6476
Expenditure				
Staff Costs	2999	3083	3145	3208
Restructuring	(143)	0	0	0
Other Operating Expenses	2649	2495	2545	2596
Depreciation	519	504	504	504
Interest Payable	37	27	27	27
Total Expenditure	6204	6309	6221	6335
Surplus/deficit	26	59	133	141

Critical Risks

- A downturn in full time student activity which may impact on the College achieving its funding target
- The College over delivering above its funded target. Whilst there may be further demand for training by the industry to meet changes in the labour market it is likely that the College will be unable to meet these training needs unless this provision can be run on a self-financing basis
- The College continues to be seriously disadvantaged because of the delay in making changes to the funding methodology
- The methodology of paying on SUMs pro rata depending on size seriously disadvantages a small College
- Failure to maximise the use of residential accommodation during term time and also vacation periods which would have a serious impact on the College's income
- The ongoing increase in pension contributions (Scottish Public Pensions Agency – Teachers Scheme and Lothian Pension Fund – Business Support Staff)
- A decrease in Skillseekers activity or a reduction in contracted levels of funding
- The ongoing review of the West Lothian Local Plan – the outcome of which could have significant implications for some of the assets owned by the College
- Capital developments not achieved within budget
- Significant reductions in ESF/ERDF Funding
- The significant dependency on commercial activities to provide core funding as these sources of income are vulnerable to market forces

Strategies for Addressing these Critical Risks

- Review and improve the profitability of commercial enterprises
- Ensure a business focus to all areas of the College portfolio
- Effective collaboration and partnership working to reduce costs to the College
- Developing new income streams to reduce reliance on SFC funding
- Ensure regular dialogue takes place between Skills Development Scotland and the College in relation to contract values and identify alternative sources of funding through other Skills Development Scotland initiatives
- Ensure courses meet the client's requirements (mode of delivery/flexibility e.g. work based learning etc.)
- Ensure the College resources and products are appropriate to guarantee viability and quality.
- Continue to work with West Lothian Council in reiterating the importance the College plays within the local community and the impact it has upon the local economy

- With the support of SFC and other funding partners implement the College's estate strategy