

ABERDEEN COLLEGE

EUROPEAN STRATEGY

Revision Date: 20 January 2012

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The College's European Strategy is driven by the core European Projects Coordinating Group. The core Group's purpose is to secure relevant funding from European Lifelong Learning Programmes and other sources, such as MEPs, to enable staff and students to experience a European dimension in terms of study visits, exchanges with other European educational and training institutes, project work and staff training courses.
- 1.2 An important aspect of the work of the European Project Coordinating Group is to develop appropriate European partnerships in line with the College's Strategic Development Plan. The College's European contacts now extend to 21 of the 27 European member states.

2.0 Definitions

The four main funding programmes which are utilised are as follows:-

- 2.1 **Leonardo da Vinci** - Its main objectives are to support the acquisition and use of skills and qualifications to promote personal development, support quality and innovation in VET, and facilitate employment and mobility. As an example, Leonardo da Vinci funding has been obtained to allow business and IT students to study e-commerce opportunities in Zaragoza, Spain in March 2010.
- 2.2 **Grundtvig** - This programme provides pathways for adults to improve their knowledge and competencies and exchange ideas and experience with an emphasis on socially vulnerable groups. As an example, Grundtvig funding is being applied for to enable staff working with students with additional learning needs to meet their counterparts in other European centres.
- 2.3 **Comenius** - This programme has two main objectives:
- 1 To develop knowledge and understanding among young people and education staff of the diversity of European cultures and languages.
 - 2 To help young people to acquire basic life skills and competences for future employment and for active European citizenship.

As an example, Comenius funding enabled Comenius assistants to be recruited from the Czech Republic and Finland to assist with languages and additional learning support respectively.

- 2.4 **Town Twinning** - City based staff and students are eligible for funding for study visits to Aberdeen's twin cities: Regensburg, Stavanger, and Clermont Ferrand. Aberdeen City Council's Town Twinning Officer is involved with the European Team in planning future projects sponsored from this source. In recent years photography staff and students have visited Regensburg, and engineering staff and students participated in a study visit to Clermont Ferrand.

3.0 The Strategy

- 3.1 European partnerships projects will be developed in accordance with College Strategic Plans and Sector/Department Operational Plans in order to enhance the learning experiences of staff and students. These projects should be able to evidence real benefit to the College's staff and student community. European developments, including expansion of the European Union and the availability of new funding streams, will be closely appraised.

- 3.2 College involvement in European projects will impact upon policies and processes connected to learning and teaching, and learner engagement. This may include the development of aspects such as "add on" units in entrepreneurship, study units, taster courses and e- portfolios.

Examples of specific College Strategies which European Projects activities impact upon include:

- Core Skills and Soft Skills Strategy
- Inclusiveness Strategy
- Learner Engagement Strategy.

- 3.3 Professional development of College staff will be enhanced by the acquisition of grants for attendance at training courses, conferences and contact seminars.
- 3.4 Value for money will be ensured by securing European grants which cover all travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses leaving only opportunity costs to be met by the College.
- 3.5 All European projects will be evaluated from a summative and formative point of view to ensure alignment with College strategic aims and operational targets, and to enable the dissemination of good practice gained from European partners. Student evaluations will be monitored to ensure that benefits, such as increased attendance and achievement rates, accrue from participation in exchange visits and study tours.

4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 The *Principal* approves all projects and applications for overseas travel.
- 4.2 The *European Projects Co-ordinating Group* determines which projects are viable and should be developed for funding.
- 4.3 The *European Projects Co-ordinating Group* coordinates all phases of any agreed project to include sourcing, application, implementation, monitoring, close out and review.
- 4.4 The *European Projects Assistant*, as a member of the European Projects Co-ordinating Group, will assist the Group through record keeping, initial project development, research and budget formulation.
- 4.5 *Sector/Department Managers* are involved in determining the appropriateness of project proposals and appointing project managers from staff involved in study tours and exchange visits.