

Crichton University Campus

Evolution or Revolution?

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decade, the Education Sector in Scotland has gone through major changes requiring traditional approaches to education to be re-visited and re-defined. The paper, giving details of one of the newest and most innovative, the Crichton University Campus (Dumfries), provides essential background reading for the conference presentation.

Keywords: Educational Change, Multi-Institution, Scottish Education, Dumfries.

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1. Introduction

In the early 1990's, several events of significance occurred. The implementation of the Conservative Government's Care in the Community Policy meant that the Crichton Estate became surplus to requirements. At the same time national initiatives were being developed to widen access and social inclusion. A local need for Higher Education was recognised through market research and the success of early pilot schemes.

The Crichton University Campus, which has since been established on part of the Crichton estate, is a unique multi-institutional and multi-partner FE/HE Campus which offers comprehensive and developing opportunities, at undergraduate, postgraduate, continuing professional development (CPD) and research levels, to students and organisations in the South West of Scotland, an area previously lacking in such provision and activity. Current partners on the site include the Universities of Paisley and Glasgow, Bell College and Dumfries and Galloway College. Barony College, the Open University and the Scottish Agricultural College operate within the region and also participate to some extent in campus based initiatives and developments.

The paper explores, against relevant political, social and educational developments both nationally and locally from the early 1990's to the present day, how the Crichton University Campus has developed.

2. The Need for Higher Education in Dumfries & Galloway

In the successful bid for Strategic Change Grant Funding, which kick-started the development of the Crichton University Campus and which was submitted by the Universities of Paisley and Glasgow to SHEFC in 1997, the Universities evidenced that, like other rural areas in Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway experienced various forms of social deprivation. Low wages, combined with higher cost of living, gave rise to poverty levels higher than in the country as a whole. The situation was exacerbated by poor public transport, low take-up of benefits and limited provision of childcare. Around 1 in 3 of the Dumfries & Galloway population of 147,000 experienced these forms of social exclusion.

In educational terms an overall measure of the region's deprivation was provided by Scottish Office figures showing the proportion of the population with a diploma/degree/higher degree. In Dumfries & Galloway only 12% had such a qualification, compared with over 20% in areas like East Dunbartonshire (25%), East Renfrewshire (24%) and the City of Edinburgh (23%). Even comparable rural areas like the Highlands (15%) and the Borders (13%) ranked higher than Dumfries & Galloway.

The comparatively deprived situation of Dumfries & Galloway was principally explained by limited employment opportunities, out-migration of the most able young people and low participation rates in continuing and part-time education. The implications for economic development were significant.

- in 1995/96 a total of 1717 students left the 16 secondary schools in the region: 33% entered higher education, 20% entered further education, 12% took up training and 19% entered employment. The percentages taking up employment and entering training were both below the national average.
- of the 555 entering higher education: 92 (16%) stayed in the region (Dumfries & Galloway College), 188 (32%) entered institutions in the Glasgow area, 210 (40%) entered institutions elsewhere in Scotland and 65 (12%) entered institutions in England/abroad. It was anticipated that few of those who had gone to institutions outside the region would return following graduation, as reflected in the low proportion of qualifications in the residual population.

- in 1995/96 only 734 people were enrolled in continuing education in the region, representing only 0.8% of the adult population aged 22-74. This was below estimates of the participation rate elsewhere in Scotland, and considerably below rates reported for England.

The Universities claimed that the development of higher education opportunities on the Crichton site in Dumfries would seek to reduce social and educational disadvantage through the following measures:

- (i) modest increases in participation rates of school-leavers, particularly those in schools which have participation rates below the national average (these schools will be targeted);
- (ii) substantial increases in the participation rates of mature/second chance students;
- (iii) substantial increases in the participation rates of part-time students.

3. Responding to Need : Partnership with and between Glasgow and Paisley Universities

The origin of the present attempt to establish a higher education presence in Dumfries & Galloway, culminating in the bid for Strategic Change Grant Funding made to SHEFC in 1997, can be traced back to the last century and the proposal by Elisabeth Crichton to use her late husband's fortune in "*Founding and Endowing a College at Dumfries for the Education of poor Scholars*". Despite an appeal to the Government - "*to take charge and direction of the proposed College, so as to give it from the first the station and advantages of a University*" - it did not materialise and she used the money to fund a hospital. The Crichton Royal Hospital grew to be a leading treatment centre for the mentally ill but, like similar institutions elsewhere, it faced closure in the 1990's. The Dumfries & Galloway Council bought the magnificent site in 1995 and the Crichton University of Southern Scotland Action Group (CUSSAG) was established to fulfil the Crichton legacy, albeit some 160 years later. In the 1990's, CUSSAG orchestrated a region-wide campaign and both the Universities of Glasgow and Paisley were encouraged to expand and co-ordinate their existing regional activities as a first step towards the creation of an autonomous University.

The University of Paisley had enjoyed an effective working partnership with the Dumfries & Galloway College since 1994. Through the University's Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS), College students in Business and Health Studies had been able to proceed to a University of Paisley degree. Numbers had increased from 40 part-time students in 1994/95 to 61 part-time and 41 full-time students in 1997/98. This expansion took place on the College's Heathhall site but the College and the University of Paisley felt that there was considerable merit in concentrating future higher education expansion on the Crichton site.

The University of Glasgow's Department of Adult and Continuing Education had been active in Dumfries & Galloway since the late 1970's and, by 1997, had around 600 students enrolled in its 35 local classes, which included both access and pre-access classes. The development of a College of the University, which the University proposed, on the Crichton site had to be seen in the context of Glasgow's determination to revitalise the Scottish 3-year Ordinary or General degree. The Senate had approved a revised General degree in 1995 and the Principal subsequently visited the Crichton site and realised its potential for a collegiate liberal arts development.

While initially pursuing entirely separate developments in Dumfries & Galloway, the two Universities resolved to work together for the expansion of higher education on the Crichton site. The separate and distinctive developments would continue but they would now proceed on the basis of a joint strategy agreed by both Principals. This 3-point strategy called for:

- Complementary developments: Glasgow concentrating on broad-based foundation courses: Paisley concentrating on vocational courses. Use of SCOTCATS would allow Paisley students to take Glasgow courses, and *vice versa*.
- Maximum sharing of the student learning and support infrastructure.
- An enabling approach to future joint ventures.

4. To Operationalise a Strategy

The development of the 3-point strategy allows an analysis of the various aspects that, in aggregate, indicate the growth of the University Campus as it moves forward towards a unified entity. The strategy has been, and continues to be, overseen by the Joint Management Group. In the words of Patterson (2001), the campus has developed a “*federal model structure (where) the component institutions remain as separate legal entities co-ordinated under an ‘umbrella’ type organisation linkage*”. The importance of joint working has been recognised by all partners through the recent appointment (August 2002) of a Director of Operations. Responsible to the Chair of the Joint Management Group, which rotates amongst the partner institutions, the Director of Operations has extensive front line management responsibility devolved by the Joint Management Group and works closely with the Joint Management Group in an advisory capacity on a wide range of current and strategic issues which affect the campus as a whole. The Director is a full member of the Joint Management Group.

4.1 Complementary developments.

4.1.1 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS)

As described above The University of Paisley has enjoyed a successful collaboration with Dumfries and Galloway College since 1994. The University’s CAT scheme enabled holders of Higher National Diplomas to be awarded CAT points at levels one and two by the University and to undertake level 3 modules with the University as direct entry students, in order to gain a degree in Business or in Health Studies. This model was later extended to enable HNC holders, primarily part-time students, to undertake an innovative Diploma in Higher Education over one academic year, and then to join the level three direct entry group. Under this partnership, appropriately qualified staff from Dumfries and Galloway College were granted associate lecturer status by the University and taught the modules initially at the college’s Heathhall campus and latterly at the University’s Maxwell House building on the Crichton site. There are clear advantages to both institutions and students from such an arrangement.

4.1.2 Scottish Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (SCOTCAT)

The SCOTCAT framework has now superseded the University’s CAT scheme above. This framework for qualifications of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Scotland has been developed as part of the wider Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) as referred to in the Garrick Report (1997). As outlined by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2001) one of the main aims of the framework is to define qualifications and how they relate to one another. The framework provides a mechanism to describe the outcomes of qualifications in terms of the number and level of credits. Under the framework, which is essentially advisory, individual institutions remain responsible for matters of credit recognition towards their awards. The framework is designed to support lifelong learning by enabling, where appropriate, the transfer of credit between programmes and between institutions. However application of the SCOTCAT framework by the partner institutions will enable students to enhance their programmes by selecting modules across the institutions. For example, a student registered with the University of Paisley for a Business based programme has been able to include in his programme language modules, which he studied with Glasgow University. Also ‘Socrates’ students studying with the University of Glasgow added Paisley business modules to their programmes

4.1.3 Joint Programmes

A common aim of the institutions is the development of joint degree programmes which will maximise opportunities for local students by combining the academic resources of all partners. Initial development work has begun. See below.

4.2 Maximum sharing of the student learning and support infrastructure.

In the joint bid to the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) (1997), the Universities of Glasgow and Paisley were clear that “*core services and facilities are being developed jointly in order to deliver value for money as well as adding value to what is being provided through a more effective and efficient use of resources*”. This has applied to the development of a joint library, a joint IT service and a

joint student support service. However, the incongruent structures and systems of the parent institutions meant that it was neither possible nor desirable to clone the service models offered at any main campus.

In the particular case of the student support service, both Universities were clear that local delivery would be essential to support the expected (and realised) high proportion of non-traditional students. This has resulted in the creation of a student support service model for the campus deriving from the needs of the student population. The needs of students were determined using focus group research undertaken with students studying with the University of Paisley degrees through Dumfries & Galloway College. These focus groups reported that the priority areas were Learning, Special Needs, Finance and Careers, the data gathered was used to inform the initial staff appointments.

Thomas et al (2002) site a number of case studies; University of Greenwich, University of Teesside and Nottingham Trent University, where the experience of integrating student support services has led to a general recognition that with an increasingly diverse student population, there is need for a multi-disciplinary approach to student support. At Crichton University Campus the integration of services is, by necessity of size, extended with each member of staff covering two or three functions which would, in larger institutions, be specialist posts. The ability to work across the different functions has created a holistic approach to student support, concentrating on the needs of the student rather than the structures of the institutions.

Examples of other student support partnerships can be found in the "Impact Project", as reported by Thomas et al (2002), an employability project for ethnic minority students run in partnership by Huddersfield, Bradford, Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan Universities. There are also some partnership projects between FE and HE institutions such as those of the University of Teesside but they concentrate more on supporting HE students in FE and the transition from FE to HE. The difference with the Crichton University Campus services is that, although set up through a three year Strategic Change Grant from SHEFC, the stated intention was that this grant would help with initial start-up costs and as pump-priming for posts which would move to mainstream funding as student numbers built up to their full complement.

Thomas et al (2002) make it clear that recognising and maximising the contribution of Student Services to retention throughout the student lifecycle, and to many aspects of the student experience, require their integration into institutional strategic planning across a wide range of areas of activity. Despite the incremental evolutionary model operating on the Crichton University Campus which has inhibited strategic planning, the nature of the student services has placed joint staff in an advantageous position having a clearer view of the overall development of the campus than those staff who are institution specific. The inclusion of student support staff in meetings for both institutions, as well as joint staff meetings, and multi-tasking outside the usual roles of student support has given them the opportunity to influence the development of the campus.

The model of management for the service has also evolved incrementally rather than being designed from the outset. The staff, within this particular service, are employed by the University of Paisley although they work jointly for both Universities. Service-specific line management and employment responsibility lies with the University of Paisley, operational management has been organised on a committee basis, although in practice the Director of Student Advisory Service at the University of Paisley has taken a lead role.

In 2002 the introduction of a Director of Operations for the Crichton University Campus, with line management responsibility for operational aspects of joint services, consolidated the committee-based structure of management. This remote and evolving management has effectively meant that, until the recent appointment of a campus based Team Leader for the service, staff operated as self-managed, accessing advice from appropriate managers as required.

A key factor in the success of providing a common student support service has been the ability of the staff to absorb the differences in the institutional systems and act as a filter resulting in an apparently seamless service for the student. Discussions have already taken place considering the possibility of offering support services to other institutions on the campus. There are questions to be asked about the extent to which staff can continue to absorb the diverse institutional cultures and maintain a seamless service. There are already other joint services on campus who operate in a common environment but are employed by different services however there would be implications in terms of staff terms and conditions of

extending this arrangement. It is possible for the partnership to be extended to provide a 'one stop shop' incorporating the full range of services for students from FE to HE, however, the success of this would depend to a great extent on the establishment of common aims and a common strategy.

4.3 An enabling approach to future joint ventures.

The Joint Management Group has spawned a number of sub-Committees and Groups which report to it. These include the Joint Academic Planning Group, the Joint Services Committee (and related service-specific Committees), the Joint Marketing Committee and the Facilities Management Working Group.

The Joint Academic Planning Group is one of these, a joint committee, originally with membership drawn from the Universities of Glasgow and Paisley and constituted as part of the formal collaboration between the two Universities in Dumfries.

The Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Glasgow and the University of Paisley Relating to the Crichton University Campus Dumfries stated that "a Joint Academic Planning Group for curriculum development will be established to make recommendations to the Joint Management Committee on joint course provision".

At its meeting of 27th August 1999 the Joint Management Committee of the Crichton University Campus, on behalf of the universities of Glasgow and Paisley, agreed that initially membership of the Joint Academic Planning Group would be drawn from Glasgow and Paisley so as to clarify HE provision overall, before involvement of other potential FE partners.

It was agreed that a preferred partner strategy should be adopted in joint course provision/delivery with any third party.

The bid to SHEFC in 1998 stated the intention of the two universities to work closely together on curricular matters, with Glasgow focusing on the liberal arts and humanities, and Paisley concentrating on business, computing and social sciences. Both institutions stated their intention to collaborate in developing further Paisley's existing expertise in health-related studies.

Therefore, the decision to plan jointly future curricular developments was driven by several imperatives:

- to maximise benefit of joint funding
- to make best possible use of jointly provided services, including state of the art video-conferencing
- to capitalise on the joint marketing of Crichton University Campus
- to utilise the facilities of two large universities for joint benefit
- to offer greater choice of subjects to its students
- to enable curricular planning in a structured and open fashion
- to plug any obvious gaps in provision, based on market needs
- to avoid unnecessary and costly duplication
- to foster an ethos of sharing and collaboration

The University of Glasgow stated its intention to deliver full- and part-time BA degree courses from 1999 onwards based on a broad curriculum along 5 pathways: Liberal Arts, Creative and Performing Arts, Environmental Studies, Scottish History, and Health and Social Studies. Its first enrolment onto these programmes in 1999 attracted approximately 80 students.

The University of Paisley was then delivering full- and part-time degree programmes in the following:

BA Childhood Studies (from 1999)
BA Business Information Technology and Management (from 1999)
BSc Health Studies
BA majoring in Information Management

BA majoring in Business Administration with Human Resource Management
BA majoring in Business Administration with Marketing
BA majoring in Business Administration with European Studies
BSc majoring in Computing

A total of 160 students enrolled onto these programmes for the session 1999-2000.

Rutherford/McCowan (Glasgow) and Maxwell (Paisley) buildings were leased from the Crichton Development Company for this purpose. Each building had facilities and services shared by Glasgow and Paisley and resourced by the joint element in the SHEFC funding. These included the Library, IT resources (including 2 video-conferencing suites and an Internet Café), the Student Support Service and a Marketing office.

The challenge

Again, the joint bid put it succinctly. *“Glasgow and Paisley will support and encourage a culture of lifelong learning through the development of a portfolio of learning opportunities and services promoting and delivering higher education throughout the Dumfries and Galloway Region. As a ‘hub’ it will be able to respond to the concerns of the Region with its emphasis on areas such as rural society, agriculture, conservation and tourism. It will cater for differing student markets (part-time mature returners; first time mature students; short course CPD for SMEs and the Health Board/Trusts; distance learning part-time mature students; and so on) as well as offering flexibility to meet new needs and demands as they arise.”*

“The Memorandum of Agreement sets out the arrangements between the University of Glasgow and the University of Paisley in respect of their partnership for the joint development of the Crichton University Campus Dumfries. The Memorandum of Agreement coheres with and furthers arrangements set out in the Joint Bid from the Universities of Glasgow and Paisley submitted to the SHEFC for Strategic Change Grant”.

Relationships with External Bodies

The Universities agreed to keep one another informed of partnerships with other potential education providers on the Campus and not to enter into any agreement with a third party which might be perceived as injurious to the partnership and to the good name and reputation of the Universities.

Academic

The Universities agreed to develop higher education provision in the Dumfries and Galloway Region at the Crichton University Campus at Dumfries. The Universities indicated commitment to the development of a coherent academic provision to meet the needs of the region and to that end would establish a Joint Academic Planning Group for curriculum development to make recommendations to the Management Committee on joint course provision.

Each University will develop complementary and not competing subject areas; the University of Glasgow will focus on the liberal arts and humanities; the University of Paisley will focus on business and computing. Both institutions will collaborate in developing further joint courses in other areas including courses based upon Paisley’s existing Health Studies expertise.

Other Partner Providers

The Universities may by mutual agreement widen the partnership to include other partner providers of HE on the campus.

4.4 Operationalise a Strategy: Conclusion.

The Campus currently operates as follows:

The Committee Structure

The **Joint Management Group**, membership originally confined to the Universities of Glasgow and Paisley, is the key Committee for the campus. It defines joint campus policy and strategy and secures and oversees expenditure from the funding to enable that strategy to be implemented. (A **Strategic Change Grant Group**, membership restricted to Glasgow and Paisley, has overseen the expenditure from the Strategic Change Grant.) Membership was widened to include Bell and Dumfries and Galloway Colleges in 2001. With the ending of the Strategic Change Grant in July 2002, a **Shared Resources Management Group** has been established, which is designing the Resource Sharing Model, the financial package to which all partner institutions will contribute to underpin the resourcing of the existing joint services and infrastructure and to allow for the joint strategy to be implemented in a cost-effective way. The Shared Resources Management Group will report directly to the Joint Management Group.

The Joint Management Group has a number of sub-Committees, membership of all of which now includes Bell and Dumfries and Galloway Colleges:

- **Joint Academic Planning Group** – which is overseeing the future development of jointly offered degrees and modules on campus. It has a number of subgroups looking at the development of joint degrees in Heritage and Tourism, Communication and Media, Agriculture and Health. It also has a subgroup investigating distance learning and outreach opportunities for the campus. The Open University and the Scottish Agricultural College, which has a research facility based in Dumfries, also have membership of the Group and membership has recently been offered to Barony College, the local Agricultural College, based 7 miles from Dumfries;
- **Joint Services Committee** – which oversees the day-to-day running of the campus joint services - Library, Student Advisory and IT. It has recently established individual service-specific working groups to look at the implications, both financial and human, of service expansion to all partner institutions, and to advise the Shared Resources Management Group accordingly;
- **Joint Marketing Committee**

There are also a number of Committees with which the Campus is involved. These include the **Crichton University Campus Advisory Board**, which includes members drawn from key agencies throughout Dumfries and Galloway, the **Crichton University for the South of Scotland Action Group**, and the **Crichton Foundation**. The campus also has representation on many other regional and national Committees, including, for example, the LifeLong Learning Partnership, Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway, and the Community Planning Strategic Change Group.

While there are, at present, no joint Committees established to oversee the management of estates and buildings issues on a joint basis or to investigate and, possibly, implement joint Registry activities, it is probable that both developments will occur in the next phase of campus development. The campus is moving towards a joint timetabling system and to greater sharing of accommodation on a campus-wide, rather than institution-specific, basis.

Campus Services and Facilities

The Library

The Campus Library is situated in the Rutherford/McCowan Building and houses some 7000 volumes. It presently operates as a branch Library of Glasgow University and is staffed by a Campus Librarian with

two Library Assistants employed by the University of Glasgow. Also on site, but in an NHS building, is the Bell College Library, which is approximately the same size, and plans are at an advanced stage to join the two Libraries under one roof. The joined campus Library will, it is hoped, be in Maxwell House which will be reconfigured as a Library/Learning Resource Centre for the purpose.

The Student Advisory Service

The Student Advisory Service is situated in Maxwell House. It is staffed by a full-time Student Adviser also Team Leader, a part-time (0.6 FTE) Effective Learning Adviser, a part-time (0.6 FTE) Welfare Officer and full-time secretary, all employed through the University of Paisley.

IT Facilities and Management

The Campus has employed, through the University of Glasgow, a full-time IT Support Officer and IT Technician. Their task is to operate and manage the IT clusters in Rutherford/McCowan and Maxwell and the video-conferencing units. Bell College has an IT Technician, who manages the IT facilities in Dudgeon. There have also been increased demands placed upon IT staff and resources with the opening of Browne House (campus CPD Centre).

Marketing Unit

Both Universities have collaborated in establishing a joint unit for the marketing of the CUC's activities throughout the Region and beyond. There is a Marketing Officer (employed by the University of Paisley), a Recruitment Officer (employed by the University of Glasgow) and a full-time secretary (employed by the University of Paisley). Apart from basic marketing and recruitment functions, the Marketing Unit is responsible for the Summer School and also oversees the innovative CUSA (Crichton: University Scholarship Agreement) Scheme, a scheme, loosely based on the GOALS (Greater Opportunities of Access to Learning with Schools) Scheme, designed to encourage senior school pupils throughout Dumfries and Galloway, who would not normally do so, to aspire to Higher Education on the Crichton University Campus. A teacher has been seconded full-time by the LEA to the campus in August 2002 for one year to operate CUSA and to establish junior-CUSA, aimed at pupils in S3 and below. The Marketing Unit is situated in Rutherford/McCowan. The Marketing Unit is at present undergoing a review with a view to refocusing its efforts beyond Dumfries and Galloway, defining clear links with the new CPD Centre, which will also be heavily involved in marketing its activities, and establishing a greater national and international presence. Glasgow has just seconded for two years a senior employee to campus part of whose remit is student recruitment.

5. To Strategise an Operation.

Outlined in the SHEFC bid for further Strategic Change Grant Funding (2002), developments on the Crichton Royal Hospital site over the past five years have brought access to locally delivered mainstream degree-level higher education to the South West of Scotland for the first time. These developments have:

- widened educational opportunity for full and part-time HE courses;
- built stronger bonds between Further Education and Higher Education and have created a richer infrastructure for students on the Campus;
- provided local industry and commerce with opportunities for continuing professional development through short courses;
- added to the economic activity and attractiveness of the area; and
- contributed to a sense of local and civic pride among people in Dumfries and in Galloway as a whole.

The above achievements have been realised through a partnership among higher and further education institutions which has grown into the Crichton University Campus. The co-operative nature of the partnership with the provision of single support services, with collaboration on the academic programmes being offered and with the seamless marketing of a campus whole rather than its constituent parts has resulted in Dumfries gaining a higher education institution with considerable speed and at remarkably little cost, especially by comparison with HE developments in other predominantly rural parts of Scotland.

When the Universities of Glasgow and Paisley formulated the initial Strategy in 1998, a number of projected outcomes were expected. All of these outcomes have been realised, as may be seen below:

Projected outcomes	Actual outcomes
FTE student numbers of 460 in 2000/01, 620 in 2001/02 and 770 in 2002/03	FTE student numbers of 756 in 2000/01, 838 in 2001/02 and 930 in 2002/03
Establishment of a partnership to provide common services to underpin the distinct academic activities of the partners	Partnership established (supervised by Joint Management Group) with all services successfully shared, initially by Glasgow and Paisley
Development of a joint access/outreach strategy for the region	Access strategy developed both with schools and Dumfries and Galloway College of FE and outreach being developed (pilots in Langholm, Newton Stewart and Stranraer);
Development of a relevant knowledge strategy to underpin economic development and regeneration	CPD strategy and programme being developed in conjunction with SE (D&G) and Crichton University Campus Advisory Board (CUCAB)
Complementary academic developments	Courses designed to facilitate easy transfer
Promotion of transferability of academic credits across all providers in the region	As above
Working together on future joint ventures (including possible expansion of the Partnership)	Additional partners added – Bell College; Dumfries and Galloway College

The last of these points has been achieved through the decision of Bell College not to move the training of nurses and other health service support courses to Hamilton (as originally planned) but to remain on the Crichton site in a refurbished building. In addition, the Open University has moved its regional office to the site. Bell College remaining on the site has added further opportunities for synergies and collaboration.

While the addition of Bell College and Dumfries and Galloway College have added further breadth to the development of the Crichton University Campus, there is now a pressing need to optimise the sharing of services further by reconfiguring learning support services through their concentration in a single location. Such a development will reflect both a recognition of what has been achieved so far and an opportunity to widen the student and user base for such services through the addition of CPD and on-line support to dispersed learning centres.

The buildings currently in use are as follows:

<i>Rutherford/ McCowan Maxwell</i>	University of Glasgow 2002 plus shared Library/IT facilities (Glasgow/Paisley/Dumfries and Galloway College)
<i>Dudgeon</i>	University of Paisley/Dumfries and Galloway College plus shared student support services (Glasgow/Paisley)
<i>Crichton Hall</i>	Bell College (except Health Studies Library)
<i>Browne House</i>	Bell College Library (to be vacated no later than Spring 2003)
	Shared CPD (Glasgow/Paisley/Bell/D&G College)

Projected student growth: 2002 to 2007

The current projections for student numbers for the period from 2002/03 until 2006/07 are as follows:

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
	FTE (ft & pt)				
<i>GLASGOW</i>	248	278	293	308	318
<i>PAISLEY</i>	288	323	362	405	454
<i>BELL</i>	274	274	274	274	274
<i>D&G</i>	120	150	180	200	200
<i>COLLEGE</i>					
TOTAL	930	1025	1109	1187	1246

The academic portfolio represented by these numbers covers a variety of areas at present (*Humanities; Business Administration; IT; Health Studies; Childhood Studies; Management; Human Resource Management*), with courses being designed to offer the maximum flexibility in relation to modes of delivery. That flexibility allows the partners better to respond to the needs of local full-time and part-time students and potential students from throughout the region, the rest of Scotland and further afield. Part-time study and the ability to mix that with periods of full-time study are key factors in Crichton's success in attracting mature entrants to higher education. As a corollary, an important element in relation to the other major target audience of school leavers is raising awareness and providing support through the access summer school, through GOALS (successfully piloted in Dumfries and Galloway with one secondary and three associated primary schools: to be extended to two further secondary schools, resource permitting) and through the FE/HE Compact (the Crichton University Scholarship Agreement – CUSA), where the transition from school through further to higher education occurs within a framework which provides support measures which have been shown to be effective in successfully promoting wider access to higher education.

Joint academic developments

Courses offered on the Campus are loosely centred on liberal arts/humanities (Glasgow), business and computing (Paisley), health studies (Bell) and business/communications (Dumfries and Galloway College). The current range and mix of courses thus lends itself well to meeting a number of key strategic objectives for SHEFC and for the HE sector:

- widening participation through equality of opportunity for all students;
- increasing skills and knowledge;
- demonstrating high quality and standards;
- developing increasingly seamless progression from FE to HE.

The courses and modules offered by Glasgow (of which a number have been specifically designed for the Crichton Campus), have proved to be particularly popular and effective with non-traditional mature students. The flexibility which exists between Glasgow and Paisley courses then allows such mature entrants to add other transferable skills and competences to that base of achievement. It is that flexibility which underlies further courses for the Campus where the intention is that courses will be offered jointly by Glasgow and Paisley with Bell increasingly becoming involved. Full articulation with courses in Dumfries and Galloway College will be built into course curricula. The subjects for the courses are being determined with the needs and demands of the South West in mind and are being developed with appropriate local partners, viz.:

- Rural Development (*with the Scottish Agricultural College and Barony College of FE*)
- Heritage and Tourism (*with Scottish Enterprise: Dumfries and Galloway and Dumfries and Galloway Tourist Board*)
- Communication (*with Dumfries and Galloway College*)
- Integrated Health and Social Care (*with Dumfries and Galloway Health Board the two NHS Trusts and Social Services Department of the local Council*)
- Teacher Education (*with Dumfries and Galloway Council Education Department*)

The other key element of provision on the Crichton Campus is both meeting and stimulating demand for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses. The award of a further £500,000 of Scottish Executive funding through an addition to the existing Strategic Change Grant in early 2001 acted as a catalyst for the development of Browne House as the CPD Centre for the Campus, with significant additional support being provided from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as well as from the University of Glasgow in order to develop fully the facility in a single stage. The development of CPD capacity will allow existing CPD activity on the part of Bell College and Dumfries and Galloway College to be transferred where appropriate to the new facility. It will also allow Glasgow and Paisley to develop complementary provision in response to demand from local organisations such as Dumfries and Galloway Council and the local health trusts, as well as offer courses developed in Ayr, Glasgow and Paisley in Dumfries.

A more challenging target will be to persuade local businesses that the updating of existing skills and the acquisition of new skills is fundamental to their continuing success. As most businesses in the Region fall

within the category of small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), the particular pressures and problems stemming from small size such as release of staff, cost and being convinced that new skills or new technologies are as relevant to small as to larger businesses are a key element in developing a CPD programme. Working in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise and, less formally, through the Crichton University Campus Advisory Board (CUCAB) is also critical in developing a CPD capacity and capability which meets local need but, importantly, which can also raise local horizons and business aspirations. The aftermath of the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic in 2001 and the need both to rebuild and rethink/reposition economic activity in the South West adds a further impetus to the development of the Campus to provide CPD courses but also degree courses which encourage access to HE. Building both generic and specific skills into a strong economic base for the future of the Region is central to the purpose of the Crichton Campus.

Objectives for the next five years

In summary form, the key objectives for the partners in the Crichton University Campus over the next five years can be stated as follows:

<i>INTEGRATION:</i>	between Further and Higher Education to provide seamless lifelong learning from NC to PhD level and across all the partners to avoid duplication either of courses or services
<i>ENHANCEMENT:</i>	consolidation of what has been achieved so far and building on that to help achieve further widened access to high quality higher education
<i>EXPANSION:</i>	continuing to meet local demand and stimulating that demand by demonstrating the accessibility and value of post-School education as well as developing integrated courses which are fit-for-purpose (generic skills as well as core competences) and which reflect local needs without compromising academic standards
<i>EMBEDDEDNESS:</i>	regional acknowledgement of the Crichton University Campus as a core element in taking forward the development of the regional economy, not simply as a provider of graduates, CPD training or research expertise but as a centre of economic activity in its own right
<i>RECOGNITION:</i>	the Crichton development being seen as the right high quality but low cost model for Dumfries and Galloway as well as an exemplar for the development of high-quality HE provision in other largely rural areas
<i>INCLUSION:</i>	the development of provision throughout the Dumfries and Galloway Region to overcome the barriers to access and inclusion in a rural environment

In order to address these objectives, some reconfiguration and development is going to be necessary both in terms of academic activities and the physical facilities needed to support it. Resources for these activities are being sought from a variety of sources, starting with the partner institutions themselves and including Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise, Dumfries and Galloway Council, the European Partnership, the Crichton Foundation and SHEFC.

The key support which the partner institutions will continue to seek from SHEFC must be the provision of additional funded student places (in HE) and additional properly funded SUMs (in FE). While Glasgow and Paisley have so far been grateful for the resources brought through the specific designation of 150 funded undergraduate places to which part-time incentive grant and wider access support has been added, there is no doubt that the additional investment needed to “make Crichton happen” may partly have been made at the expense of other activities in “home” campuses.

While the overall outcomes from SHEFC’s point of view remain largely the same in that the totality of institutional student places is being created and filled irrespective of where those places might physically be, general resource pressures within institutions have at times rather tried the patience of hard-pressed

staff who have not always understood the importance and significance of what is being developed in Dumfries.

Although such tensions are a matter for internal management, they would be alleviated or possibly even avoided through the enhanced recognition by SHEFC of “the Crichton University Campus” as a quasi-autonomous HEI in its own right and through the award of further funded places in order truly to embed the Campus in the Scottish higher education mainstream. The partners do, though, recognise that SHEFC is acting under particular funding and policy constraints: their hope is that the Council can be persuaded to make a special case to the Scottish Executive for an earmarked but modest increase in grant.

Fundamental to the further development of the Campus is the integration of HE with FE provision. The physical location of College students on the Campus is a major factor in achieving seamless progression and increasing participation. This physical involvement ensures co-ordinated development and the avoidance of duplication and competition: as such, it represents an approach which is increasingly quoted to both sectors as a model of good practice. Like other partners, funding for this development has been met from existing resources of Dumfries and Galloway College.

Although the Campus partners understand the constraints within which both SFEFC and SHEFC are operating, it is important that resources can be made available to enable further integration between the two sectors. Dumfries and Galloway College is currently at its HE ‘cap’. If the Campus is to achieve the objectives which its many stakeholders are expecting of it, additional funded HE places for the College will be essential.

Currently, existing HE places provided by the College are funded at a lower rate than the same provision in HEIs. This differentiation makes it difficult for the College to maintain provision on the Campus and provide the same level of support and facilities as partners from HE.

5.1 Halted Growth

The Strategic Change Grant awarded to the two Universities in 1999 was for three years and has been supplemented by recurrent funding, again for the two Universities (150 FTE’s). However with student numbers for the two universities now at 550FTE’s (2002/03) and growing, and in the absence of further capital funding (an unsuccessful bid for further strategic change funding was submitted in 2002), the opportunity for further development and growth of the Crichton project is, at best, limited, at worst, non-existent. And these pressures are compounded by the inevitable conclusion within the parent campuses that they are being asked, against a background of limited funding for HE, to ‘support’ unfairly and inequitably this innovative campus. Yet the campus has been successful in delivering on many of the key aims of both SHEFC and the Scottish Executive, not least on widening access and delivering on the social inclusion agenda. This was clearly recognised in the Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee’s *Final Report on Lifelong Learning* (2002), item 371. Watt & Patterson (2000) indicated that “*the problem of physical access (to HE) in most rural areas still persists. Lack of HE institutions in rural areas means HE opportunities there are limited and Summer School access courses likewise are not available to a large proportion of the Scottish population because of geographical location*”. The establishment of the Crichton University Campus has addressed this for the South West of Scotland. Watt & Patterson also concluded that “*the future for wider access...lies in...consistent financial and strategic collaboration amongst providers and policy makers*”.

The campus has also developed an unrivalled example of partnership working and co-operation amongst diverse institutions. Booth (1998) indicates that the essential requirements of a successful partnership are:

- Mission compatibility between the partners
- Clear and agreed objectives articulated through signed agreements
- Support from the top and from those who will deliver
- Equitable funding arrangements
- Flexibility to meet emerging problems and changing circumstances
- Commitment to meet one’s obligations in full
- Willingness to share benefits

requirements which the partners have met and continue to meet.

On the economic front and as noted previously, Dumfries and Galloway, like other rural areas in Scotland, experiences various forms of social deprivation. The National Report on the *Demand and Supply for Further Education in Scotland* (DTZ Piedad Consulting, 2002) evidences, from national figures, a predicted decline of 3% in total employment in Dumfries and Galloway and shows agriculture, one of the principal industries for the region, as a 'decline sector'. Growth sectors are predicted to be at the lower end of the wage scale, again leading to further economic challenges. Against that, an *Assessment of the Impact of the University Campus on the Carlisle Economy*, undertaken for the University of Northumbria, Carlisle campus, an innovative outreach campus for one parent institution, in April 1998 and based on the model developed by Lincoln *et al* (1995), indicated that the existing expenditure of staff and students generated £3.76m per annum in the local economy from a student body of 600. "*For local communities, it (i.e. the local HE institution) can be a gateway to development and self-fulfilment through the use of University facilities and to new horizons through the under network of the contacts of the University*" (Booth, 1998).

On both social and economic grounds, the case for consolidation and further expansion is absolute.

5.2 Pushing a Strategy

Perhaps one of the most visible aspects of recent partnership work on campus has been the development of a range of original 'joint' degree programmes. Drawing upon the educational & research strengths of parent institutions and closely linked to local practice, the assumption underpinning this work is that quality interdisciplinary 'hybrid' programmes can be developed that better meet the needs of local potential students.

Working across institutional structures and cultures on a programme-by-programme basis is difficult in the absence of wider founding 'synergy' agreements on for example, finance and quality. This is particularly the case in circumstances of multiple partners.

5.3 To Strategise an Operation: Conclusion

At present the Campus is attempting modest growth while seeking all means of securing the necessary funding to make continued operations sustainable. But the position is parlous.

WHAT ARE WE?

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