

Edinburgh College designated as a regional college



Edinburgh College has been officially designated as a regional college and has confirmed that its current regional lead will continue to lead the board of management as Regional Chair.

As part of the Scottish Government's national college regionalisation programme, Edinburgh College is one of the country's merged further education institutions that has now been granted regional college status. The move coincided with the official appointment of regional chairs, and the government has announced that Ian McKay will continue in the role he was appointed to at Edinburgh College in August 2012. Ian has played a key role in steering the college through its first 18 months since merger.

The regionalisation designation and the appointment of chairs marks the implementation of the Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act, with 13 colleges now having regional responsibilities.

The government appointed regional chairs with the aim of providing each of the 13 regions with a strong voice that will allow more effective communication with employers, higher education and other colleges. Regionalisation also aims to ensure colleges have stronger governance arrangements, including a more prominent voice for students on college boards.

Ian McKay has been the Scottish chair of the Institute of Directors since January 2012, so is well placed to advise the college on building stronger links with industry and advising on how the college can meet the needs and expectations of

businesses. Among a number of high-profile roles in industry and education, Ian was a longstanding member of the Scottish Council of the Confederation of British Industry and a member of the executive committee of the Scottish Council for Development and Industry. He also served for fifteen years as Assistant General Secretary of the EIS with responsibility among other areas for further and higher education.

One of Ian's principal aims for the college is to develop governance to ensure it continues to meet the highest professional standards.

Ian said: "I'm delighted to have been appointed Regional Chair and now have the opportunity to continue the significant work we've started as a merged college. This is a new era for the further education sector and I'm proud to be playing my part. We have come a long way since Edinburgh College was formed and the work we've done so far makes me certain that we are developing in the right direction. I'm passionate about good governance as with that in place it's simpler to provide students and staff with the opportunities they deserve and that will equip them to develop. I'm looking forward to working with my fellow chairs across the country to make the further education sector stronger than ever and make sure our voice is heard by politicians and industry leaders."

Ian pointed to the forthcoming Wood Commission report as a sign of the importance of colleges to Scotland's business, raising issues that he is eager to lead on in his role as chair.

"Sir Ian Wood in his interim report stressed the importance of vocational opportunities for young people, such as apprenticeships. Making sure there are the right kinds of vocational schemes that meet the needs of young people and employers is essential and I intend for Edinburgh College to be forward thinking on this."

Edinburgh College principal Mandy Exley said: "I speak on behalf of the whole board in congratulating Ian on his appointment. He has been instrumental in shaping the college's aims and direction and, as well as his considerable expertise and experience, the continuity provided by his appointment is crucial. I have found his counsel valuable and I know he has the best intentions for all our staff and students. With Ian continuing in the role of chair I am sure we can continue to support our students to thrive and achieve positive destinations, as well as ensuring the college meets the needs of our industry partners and the national economy."