

Scotland Excel

To: Executive Sub-Committee

On: 27 January 2023

**Report by:
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel**

Overview of the Scotland Excel Academy

1. Summary

This report presents an overview of the Scotland Excel Academy and identifies development opportunities for the future.

- 1.1 The Academy provides an award-winning multi-disciplinary development portfolio comprising procurement, leadership & management, project management, business analysis, decision making and innovation disciplines. Its primary objective is to engage people in transformative learning, enabling them to apply acquired learning to their work practice immediately, delivering positive impact at work across the Scottish public sector. The Academy's work-based-learning portfolio is illustrated in figure 1.

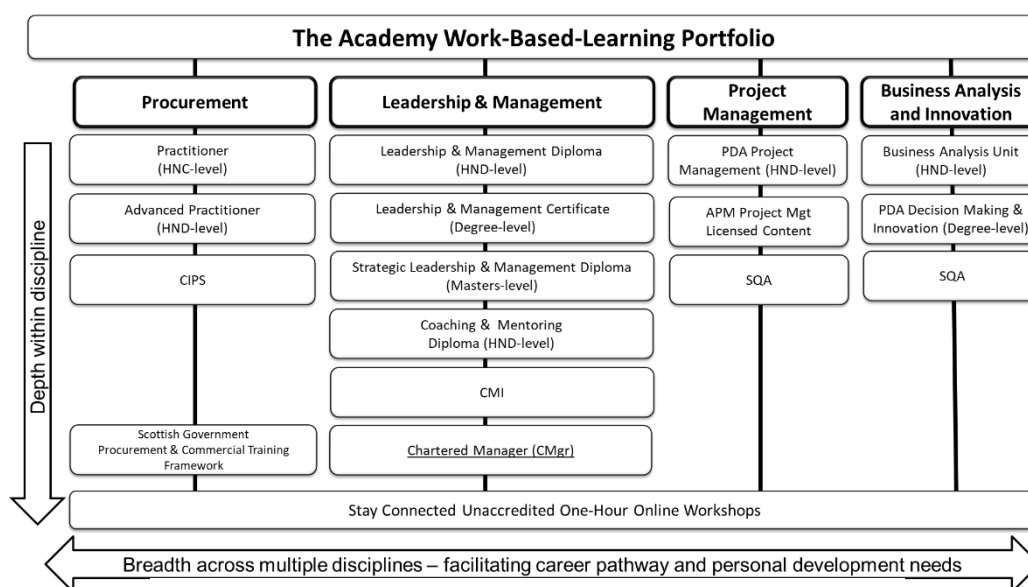


Figure 1: Academy work-based-learning portfolio

The Academy delivers learning which is typically 40-50% below market pricing. This delivery spans accredited learning (leading to a qualification) and unaccredited learning.

Procurement programmes are accredited by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS). Leadership and management programmes are accredited by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). Project management, business analysis, decision making and innovation programmes are accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

The Academy delivers unaccredited learning through one-hour online workshops and one-day procurement workshops, and unaccredited procurement learning through the Scottish Government Procurement and Commercial Training Framework. The Academy has delivered through this framework since December 2021.

The Academy contributes a positive financial contribution to Scotland Excel, with income distribution approximately one-third accredited, one-third unaccredited and one-third unaccredited via the Scottish Government Procurement and Commercial Training framework. This supports the income strategy previously agreed by the Scotland Excel Joint Committee.

To date, 1,764 learners are registered on the Academy's online Moodle platform, 319 learners have been awarded qualifications, 17 learners have been awarded Chartered Manager and 2,226 learners have participated in unaccredited workshops.

- 1.2 The Academy delivers procurement programmes at HNC and Degree-levels, accredited by CIPS. These have been delivered since 2017, at 48% below market pricing – realising a £4,300 discount per learner. In total, 55 learners have been awarded qualifications.
- 1.3 The Academy delivers leadership & management programmes at HND, Degree and Masters-levels, accredited by CMI. These have been delivered since 2016, with 84 learners awarded qualifications.

The Academy is the first Chartered Manager Assessment Centre in Scotland and has been assessing people for the award of Chartered Manager since 2018. Chartered Manager is the highest award in the leadership & management profession. And to date, 17 learners have been awarded Chartered Manager.

- 1.4 The Academy delivers an HND-level project management programme accredited by the SQA. This has been delivered since 2018 with 167 learners awarded qualifications. It also delivers a Degree-level business analysis, decision making and innovation programme accredited by the SQA. This has been delivered since 2019, with 13 qualifications awarded to date.

2. National Provision

- 2.1 The Academy works with Scotland's local authorities, developing people and organisations. Since the pandemic, default delivery is online using the Moodle platform and MS Teams. This delivery style is very close to face to face and has some additional advantages. The online approach has increased engagement of people outwith Scotland's central belt and contributes to a net zero strategy through eliminating the environmental impact of travel.
- 2.2 The Academy is a leading partner in the implementation of the Scottish public-sector's national procurement development framework through co-chairing the Scottish Government Professional Practice and Development forum.

Learners can access a software app and complete a skills self-assessment against their job description. Development opportunities are then signposted within the app - to the Academy and other providers.

The national procurement development framework strives recognises prior learning through accredited programmes and experiential learning through unaccredited programmes. This facilitates development within time and budget constraints.

3. Future Strategy for the Academy

Local authorities have requested lower cost and shorter duration development programmes to help develop people. In response, the Academy has been exploring a range of development programme options that will (i) be achieved in a much quicker time frame (ii) remain of high academic standard and (iii) be more cost effective for our members.

In addressing the needs of our community, the new strategy will support lifelong development to ensure we can hire and retain the right people, addressing the current challenges in the labour market. The strategy also considers capability and aims to offer learners a choice in the way that they become lifelong learners in the field of procurement.

The new Academy Strategy will be based on responses to a questionnaire which was issued to Councils in December 2022. The new Scotland Excel Academy Strategy (incorporating input from this questionnaire), will be submitted for consideration at a future Executive Sub Committee meeting.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are invited to note Scotland Excel's work-based-learning Academy as a core people and organisational development solution across the Scottish public-sector, providing high quality, cost-effective useful learning.
- 4.2 Members are requested to be ambassadors for the Academy, promoting the depth and breadth of its portfolio and innovative cost-effective approach to work-based-learning.