



Perth College UHI

**Economic Impact
Assessment report:
Released Oct 2020**



Background

An independent report was commissioned to assess the economic impact of Perth College UHI.

It was carried out by Biggar Economics to evaluate the national and regional contribution made by the University of the Highlands and Islands and academic partners as it approaches its tenth anniversary. Perth College UHI became part of the University in 2010.

The analysis covers academic year 2018/19, with graduate data relating to students who graduated in 2019.

Executive summary

According to the economic impact assessment report, Perth College UHI contributes £113 million and supports 1,250 jobs throughout Perth and Kinross.

The university partnership contributes £653 million to the Scottish economy each year and supports 7,200 jobs. The economic impact assessment shows that for every £1 spent on the university, the university partnership puts £5 back into the Scottish economy. The findings also reveal that the partnership's impact across Scotland has grown by between 20% and 25% since it was last measured in 2010, mainly due to an increase in staff and graduates.

In 2019, Perth College UHI had 530 members of staff, 8,400 student enrolments across its further and higher education courses (of which 3,757 are full-time) and an annual income of £28 million.

The curriculum offering for students is at the heart of the College and it aims to meet the needs and expectations of a diverse and geographically dispersed student body. It has a central role in skilling and reskilling people in the local labour market throughout their careers. Its offer ranges from employability skills, core skills, transferable skills to high level technical skills. From its campus in Perth, the College facilitates greater access to a range of courses that offer pathways through tertiary education, delivering qualifications at all 12 SCQF levels from access courses up to and including PhD level.

Courses are delivered in several overseas markets including China.

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Economic Benefits

The 'core impact' of an organisation is the economic contribution it makes through its main activities.

The core impacts associated with Perth College UHI include: direct impact, supply spending impact, staff spending impact and capital spending impact. Summing up the economic impact generated by core activities, it is estimated that Perth College UHI supported £25 million GVA and 600 jobs in Perth and Kinross. Across Scotland, the College created an economic impact of £30 million GVA and 700 jobs.

Students gaining qualifications

In 2018/19, Perth College UHI had 2,280 qualifiers from its full-time and part-time courses.

For a degree-level graduate (compared with others whose highest formal qualification is an A-level or equivalent), the average lifetime earnings premium is estimated to be £108,100 over their working lives. The productivity impact associated with students receiving awards from Perth College UHI in 2019 is estimated to be £64 million in Perth and Kinross and £88 million across Scotland.

Based on the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey, it is estimated that around 84% of graduates from Scottish institutions remain in Scotland on completion of their course.

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Students in the community

It is estimated that the full-time student community at Perth College UHI contributes £23 million to the economy and supported 630 jobs in Perth and Kinross in 2018/19. Notably, they:

- Spend £39 million in the local economy each year
- 33% of full-time students work during term time for around 14 hours each week
- Contribute to local employment by carrying out work placements
- 31% of students take part in volunteering activities and each volunteer spends around 44 hours volunteering per year

Academy of Sport and Wellbeing

Sport is a key strength, with the Academy of Sport and Wellbeing (ASW) integrating the curriculum across a range of health and wellbeing areas and provides an important sports facility in the community. There are 40 commercial partners, 1,300 gym members and around 3,500 registered climbers. ASW positively impacts on the health and wellbeing of students, staff and the community of Perth with 10,000 visits per month using ASW commercial facilities. The commercial strand of ASW has seen strong growth, particularly the gym at 83% growth with 59% overall income growth in financial year 2018/19.

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Research and Knowledge Exchange

Research and Knowledge Exchange at Perth College UHI is conducted on several topics. The College hosts the Centre for Mountain Studies (CMS), established in 2000. The CMS undertakes research at all scales from the globe to Scotland and has organised many conferences. The Centre hosts the UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Mountain Development and delivers research, consultancy and knowledge exchange, with impacts in Scotland, Europe and around the world.

The combined impact of the quantifiable research and knowledge exchange activity at Perth College UHI is estimated to generate £700,000 GVA and support 20 jobs in the Perth and Kinross council area in 2019.

Tourism from Conferences and Events

The economic impact associated with tourism-related activities at Perth College UHI was £0.3 million and 10 jobs in Perth and Kinross. Recognising the College is a significant part of the community's fabric, it is estimated that it generated an economic contribution that was worth £113 million and 1,250 jobs throughout Perth and Kinross.

Aviation Academy for Scotland

The 'Aviation Academy for Scotland' project, a Perth College UHI-led project saw the announcement of funding as part of the Tay Cities Deal fund. This will provide a potential £6.03m capital funding for of a new facility to deliver Aircraft Engineering skills and qualifications through the College and from its subsidiary company, Air Service Training (Engineering) Limited (AST).

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Wider Benefits

Niche areas

Niche areas, which match the needs of the local economy as well as attracting students from further afield include new degree courses to support specific industry needs and the development of the Aviation Academy for Scotland. Introductions of new degree courses include the BA Hons Food, Nutrition and Textiles Education to address the demand for Home Economics teachers and the BSc Hons Sports Therapy and Rehabilitation to support sport and leisure industry skills needs.

Industrial links

Perth College UHI has strong industrial links contributing in a range of sectors, with placements allowing businesses and potential recruits to develop relationships. The quality of the college's industry links makes a difference to quality of placement and provides rare experience that helps to distinguish Perth College UHI's students.

Local partnerships

Local partnerships include the relationship between Aviva and Perth College UHI, with several joint projects running. Aviva reports that Perth College UHI helps talented young people to stay in the area. The College is prepared to listen to what the business requirements are, and this is a key strength.

Larger employer

As one of Perth's larger employers, with significant reach into the community and industry, the College is an anchor institution in Perth. It plays an important role in the hospitality and tourism sector, which is at particular risk in the post-Covid economy.

Civic role

The College plays an important civic role, with active membership of key bodies including the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership and the Perth City Development Board, for which it leads on education issues, as well as close relationships with several community organisations and Perth and Kinross Council.

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University of the
Highlands and Islands
Perth College

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