

Falkirk College & Clackmannan College

College Merger Feasibility



What our client wanted

The Scottish Funding Council made it clear to Scottish colleges of further education that they wanted to see less duplication, unnecessary competition and waste, and an increase in partnership working and collaboration to improve outcomes.

The two colleges wanted to consider how they could best work together to meet their different aspirations. Collaboration and even merger were considered, but they needed a clear and robust case to gain the backing of their boards of management and ultimately to win the support of the Scottish Funding Council.

What Frontline did

Frontline liaised closely with board members and senior staff from both colleges to establish the drivers and potential 'deal breakers' for each college. We then worked through an options analysis which showed that merger was achievable, beneficial for education in the area, best value for the public purse and a desirable aim for each college.

We managed and supported internal groups formed to consider governance and management, estates, IT, human resources, finance and the curriculum. During this period some difficult decisions were tackled head-on and the case for merger was presented by us to individual boards and then to a joint meeting of the boards of management for their full endorsement.

What difference we made

We successfully made a case for merger that the boards of management of Falkirk College and Clackmannan College bought into, and one that the Scottish Funding Council was pleased to promote as an example of best practice. The 'new' Forth Valley College was launched in August 2005.

What our client said

"We expected and got a deep insight into the sector and a professional consultancy service from Frontline. However the real added value came from their ability to understand this college and work with us to achieve our ambitions. We do not undervalue the very significant contribution Frontline has made to our recent developments."

Linda McKay, Principal and Chief Executive Forth Valley College

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