Borders College Scotland Secures STEM Assured Recognition

Submitted by: Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE)
Wednesday, 22 March 2023

Borders College based in the southeast region of Scotland has successfully achieved the prestigious “STEM Assured” standard in STEM education, conferred by the UK STEM Foundation.

Energizing economic activity by strengthening the provision of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education has been identified as a key capability requirement that drives up job creation, innovation, and industrial diversification, at regional and national levels.

Borders College with regional campuses in Galashiels, Hawick, and Newtown St Boswells has some 1,300 full-time students and 4,000 part-time students. It offers a wide range of educational programmes for students including vocational and academic courses in subjects such as business, computing, construction, engineering, health and social care, hospitality, and sports and exercise. The college also offers extensive apprenticeships and work-based learning programmes.

The STEM Assured Standard and Framework benchmarked the college’s STEM provision in six category areas including: Strategy and Planning in relation to STEM economic priorities; Collaboration and Consultation with stakeholders and ecosystem partners; Innovation and Creative thinking; Design of STEM curriculum including thematic cross-curricular provision; Delivery including resources and learning materials used to support STEM education; and Impact of STEM provision and continuous improvement processes.

Peter Smith Borders College Principal & CEO said: “STEM Assured Accreditation is a fantastic achievement for Borders College, and a testament to the dedicated and innovative lecturing team leading this delivery. The development of STEM skills is absolutely crucial to the economic development of the Scottish Borders, and Borders College is committed to continuing as a leader in the STEM fields, offering the best experience to all our learners.”

Prof Sam Medhat, Chief Executive of the STEM Foundation and IKE Institute said: “Borders College has demonstrated a STEM leadership manifested through its ambitious Strategic Plan. The College's Department of Enterprise and Business Innovation has a well-developed programme of engagements with local and national employers to anticipate and influence future skills needs for the region and beyond. Achieving the STEM Assured status clearly provides the college with a mark of distinction and differentiation reflecting its commitment to STEM education.”

“The Assessment and Validation Panel, which included seven senior industrialists and academics were impressed with the way in which Borders College has established an effective outreach programme, not only with local employers but also with high schools and primary schools.”

The College is planning a range of evidence-supported new innovative courses in such areas as Data Analytics and Intelligent Buildings, Data Science, Big Data, Technology Enabled Care, and Cyber Security, as well as the introduction of bespoke Electric Vehicle Training Centre and a Tourism Academy just to name few of the forthcoming new STEM related activities.

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About IKE Institute

The Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE Institute) is the UK's professional body for innovators. It accredits, certifies and benchmarks innovation in such sectors as construction, defence, education, energy, electronics, nuclear, security, technology and transportation. IKE Institute's work is guided by the Innovation Council of over 50 c-suite executives that represent different economic sectors. The Institute runs think tanks, conducts research studies, delivers certified training, develops new business models and provides tools to support organisations in their strategic innovation developments. The Institute's Innovation Manifesto highlights its commitment to support the development of innovative people and organisations. The IKE Institute is represented on the UK Scientific and Parliamentary Committee and the BSI/ISO Technical Innovation Committees amongst other innovation related boards, to influence the inter-relationship between education, business, and government through collaborative networks and knowledge exchange.

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About Borders College
Borders College is the regional college for the Scottish Borders and offers a wide range of courses, from an introductory level through to advanced courses at Higher National level, including the full range of apprenticeships courses.

Borders College, as a beacon for excellence, is much in demand as a leader and proactive innovator, collaborating widely through engagement with a variety of stakeholders. As a progressive organisation, the college is part of a number of innovation and economic development projects, working alongside key partners, universities and an extensive network of employers.

Successes with significant sustainable impact include our new Sustainable STEM Hub in Hawick, developed in partnership with Scottish Power, a collaboration with Eyemouth Boatyard to provide Boatbuilding Apprenticeships and our Care Career Academy, developed in partnership with Scottish Borders Council.

The College has a strong track record of delivering high quality training opportunities that reflect local and national socio-economic priorities. Over the last few years, we have made a significant investment in technology to enable flexible and mobile learning and provide industry standard learning environments.

Borders College website (https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk)
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About STEM Foundation

The STEM Foundation is an innovation driven charity that supports improvements in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education, delivers STEM assured accreditation, offers CPD in innovation and new and emerging technology areas, encourages multidisciplinary collaboration and conducts action research to enable knowledge and technology exchange. Thus, underpinning economic development and strengthening students' progression and employability. Since 2004, we have benchmarked and enabled the transformation of over 130 institutions at all educational levels across many regions. Our efforts so far have positively impacted over 700,000 STEM learners.

STEM Foundation website (https://www.stemfoundation.org.uk)

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