



FEBRUARY 2018

**THE  
SLCSA  
REPORT**

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## **Executive Summary**

The following report is intended to give the reader a realistic glimpse into the recent work of South Lanarkshire College Students' Association (SLCSA).

There has been an increased focus on student engagement since the last written report. Further class inductions and secondary visits have been carried out by the SA in January and February. In addition to personal introductions, the SA has been working hard to raise our profile online through the use of the Yammer app on Office 365. All SLC students have free access to this app and the SA now use it like an internal mailing system connecting all students who have signed up.

The SA itself is still developing the operational plan so that it is aligned with the themes and principles set down by the 'NUS Framework for Effective College Students' Association' document. The Strategic Plan has been transformed from a long, explanatory document into a more symbolic structure open to more interpretation from future SA leaders. The proposed partnership with UWS is still moving forward positively with all Executive Officers approving the draft plan which seeks to work in closer partnership with the SAUWS and open up access to a wide range of social opportunities.

# **SA Executive Committee**

## UWS Partnership Agreement

The Students' Association at UWS (SAUWS) has produced the first draft of a relationship agreement allowing SLC students to access their facilities and this has been circulated to Executive Officers for feedback and approval. The agreement is still to be presented to the SAUWS Executive Committee and there may be further changes. All agreed if any changes are made to the document, it will need to come back to the SLCSA Executive Committee for approval. All present approved the relationship agreement pending no further changes. Everyone noted this was a positive direction in building closer links with UWS and opening up opportunities for students to socialise.



## Operational Plan Update

The operational plan has been aligned with the principles and themes in the NUS Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Associations in Scotland. The SA is being supported by College staff to convert the document to a spreadsheet, making it easier to sort/prioritise aims and objectives.

## Strategic Plan Update

The draft strategic plan which was discussed at the Advisory Group meeting is being worked into a diagram to make it more self-explanatory at first sight. The diagram currently resembles a roofed building atop pillars that represent our key strategic themes with four ribbons of colour running behind them to represent key tools for advancing strategic aims. The roof of the structure features our mission, vision and, values.

# Student Engagement

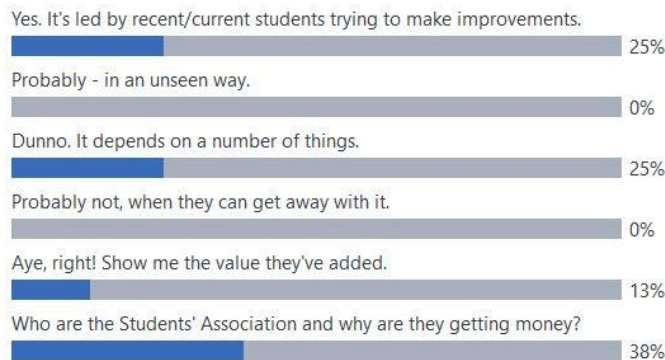
SLCSA have been attempting to increase our online visibility and encourage the student voice through polls and tips on our internal messaging service Yammer. SLC students are encouraged to be honest about their relationship with their SA in their responses and are asked to leave questions, comments or, suggestions to help us improve the service we offer. Voter turnout for these polls has been low and no questions, comments or, suggestions have been put to us by our members. It appears from the results of the polls, SLCSA still has a lot of profile building to do and the President has tried to offer insight into our work through the 'All Company' group on Yammer. For the President's written responses, see Appendices A and B.

All Company



Julie Mackenzie – November 30, 2017 at 3:24pm

Do you think the money given to the Students' Association adds value to the SLC student experience?

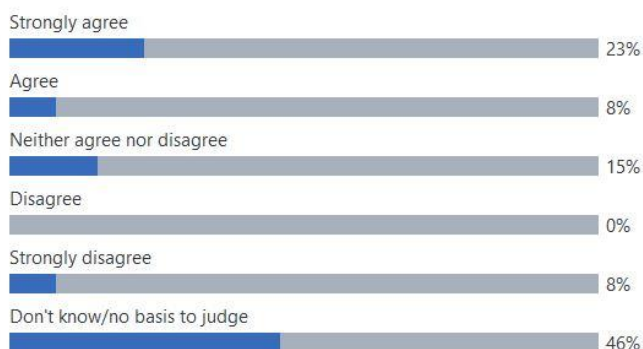


All Company



Julie Mackenzie – January 15 at 1:09pm

How do you feel about the following statement... SLC students influence and shape the work of their Students' Association throughout the year?



Yammer is also being used to advertise student-led charity events, canteen foods and posters promoting healthy eating from our catering partners Inspire, as well as offering Students' Association visits to classrooms.

## Students' Association Inductions

Class inductions have been carried out by this years' office bearers since the beginning of the academic year and further requests for visits to classrooms have been received in January.

Some classes visited were looking for an update on the UWS partnership agreement and free mini bus shuttle service after the SA induction they received at the start of their course, peaked their interest. This is good news and makes the task of introducing the SA during the settling in phase of college life, seem worthwhile.

## Evening Class Inductions



The Student President visited evening classes to meet with evening class students and inform them of the work of the SLCSA. Students Reps from every class visited agreed they would benefit from class rep training. All evening class reps have the opportunity to attend sparqs training during the day, however, if there was enough demand the Quality Team may organise Class Rep training in the evening. Alternative arrangements can be made for any students who require any additional support by contacting the Quality team directly or through Tell Us @SLC. The SA will be working closely with the Quality team to ensure evening class reps have the support and training they need so they can get the most out of their college experience.

## Advanced Craft Graduation Request

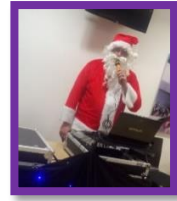


The SA was approached by a class rep from an Advanced Craft C&G course on Friday 8 December. The rep came forward at the request of his peers who have informally discussed their desire to have a graduation ceremony as a fitting reward for their efforts. When presented to senior staff in the College, the request was immediately supported. Third-year C&G students deserve equal recognition for achieving the SQA equivalent of HN-level qualifications. Organisers of the SLC Construction Awards are expected to investigate ways to incorporate a graduation ceremony for high-achieving C&G students into the event.

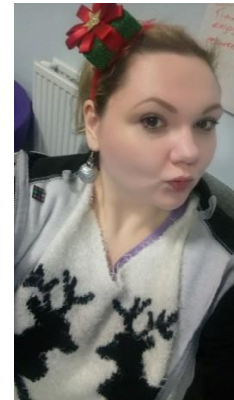




## SLC Christmas Fundraiser for Who Cares? Scotland



SLC held a Christmas Jumper Day event on Wednesday 6 December to raise money for Who Cares? Scotland. The College raised over £1,700 for the charity through bake sales, raffles and the horticulture students' Christmas tree and decorations stall. Students and staff also showed their generosity by making donations of sweats, nibbles, tableware and gift sets to Scotland's young people in care. The donations were transported to Glasgow in the SLC mini vans, where the annual Who Cares? Scotland Christmas dinner was held for some of Scotland's young people living alone at Christmas in 2017.





# Volunteering Event



SLC held its annual 3-day volunteering event starting on Tuesday 30 January. The SA have current responsibilities in recruiting auditors to evaluate how well we incorporate social responsibility and sustainability into the curriculum and culture at SLC. We're also looking to source an enthusiastic Rep to accompany us at the sparqs event in Edinburgh on Tuesday 27 February, where we'll be reviewing the current Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges. The work we do with this policy on the day, could impact SLC students for years to come.



# Social Responsibility and Sustainability



The NUS programme for ensuring students are educated on Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) issues is in its evidence gathering phase. Institutions with SRS issues high on their agenda can receive points for the steps they take to ensuring responsible are embedded throughout the learner experience. SLCSA have increased our focus on SRS issues by posting advice and advertising second-hand USB sticks and folders online. We are also in the process of planning our Sustainability Event on Tuesday 13 February. We're teaming up with Inspire catering to establish our 'The Last Straw Campaign' to help protect Scottish sea-life.



**The Last Straw**  
Working with our catering partner, Inspire Catering, we have undertaken a pledge to ban the use of plastic drinking straws. These will be replaced with a bio-degradable, paper alternative. We hope this small step will help preserve our precious marine wildlife.

**No food or liquids, please SLC**

**LOVE FOOD HATE WASTE**  
At the heart of everything we do  
**USE EVERYTHING**  
**LOVE FOOD, HATE WASTE!**  
We do everything we can to avoid food going to compost by managing our food production and minimising plate waste. We have trained Love Food Hate Waste Ambassadors at each of our sites, selected for their passion for the environment!

*Did you know...*

- ☉ We weigh and record all food waste daily
- ☉ The true cost of disposing of 1kg of food waste is £2.20

*INSPIRE catering*

## Representation

The annual NUS Scotland and UK National Conferences are almost upon us again and the President and Vice President will attend as delegates representing the interests of SLC students, one last time.

Motions, elections, reports and, long days are what's in store for attendees at both events. Content to be discussed at conferences is still being submitted and disclosed, at the time of writing this report.



Looking forward to working together again.

SA representatives of the Lanarkshire Federation have a positive working relationship and shared experiences from previous NUS events bring back happy memories.



The 2-day NUS Scotland Conference will begin on Thursday 15 March at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Dunblane (above) and the UK National Conference will take place at the SEC Armadillo, Glasgow on Tuesday 27 March 2018.



## **SLCSA Diary**

A table of upcoming Students' Association activities and events.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
13/02/18	SLCSA Sustainability Event
20/02/18	Responsible Futures Meeting with NUS
23/02/18	Purple Friday Event / LGBT History Month
27/02/18	sparqs Review Workshop Re: Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges
28/02/18	sparqs Strategic Planning Workshop Event
29/02/18	sparqs College Advisory Group Meeting
29/02/18	NUS Oversight and Direction Group Meeting
15/03/18	NUS Scotland's 2-day Annual Conference
27/03/18	SLC's 3-day Equality and Choices Event
27/03/18	NUS UK 3-day Annual Conference

# **Appendix A**

## **Written response to 'Poll 1' respondents**

Julie Mackenzie – December 6, 2017 at 9:24am

The Students' Association is supposed to represent the collective voice of students to the College, the external communities around us, Scottish government, National Union of Students (NUS) and more. Judging by the responses to this poll, we're not very good at this right now.

The role of President is a paid full-time job for a maximum of two years for any one person. The role of vice-President is a paid part-time job, again for two years max. On top of money for salaries, we're funded to provide you with hoodies for £5 when they cost around £20 for us to buy and travel expenses are paid for us to get buses and trains to training, meetings and, events.

It would appear from the fact that you (the student collective) aren't sure who we are/what we do/how we approach our use of funding, that you're not getting much value for the money we're given. Is there anything you would like me (the President) to do for you? Class visit, appointment in the SA office alongside the lifts, more online posting?

I know it's not motivating when something doesn't seem immediately important and you're asked to help inform and improve it based on ideas that might never come to anything but, that's what we're supposed to do - make necessary changes to how the SA operates in order to make the SLC experience better for future students and their leaders.

Please continue to let me know what you think and what you think we should do.

Thanks very much for your responses.

From Julie.

## **Appendix B**

### **Written response to 'Poll 2' respondents**

Julie Mackenzie – January 17 at 1:29pm

Hi, everyone.

So, it would appear that engagement between SLCSA and its members is still very low as, all respondents to the poll (at the time of writing this) have answered; "don't know/no basis to judge".

This year, we've tried to address the issue of having little to no clubs and societies available on campus by reaching out to SAUWS, the Students' Association at the University of the West of Scotland. We're in the process of agreeing automatic affiliation for our students to use their facilities. We hoped to have this up and running by now but, both SLCSA and SAUWS have requirements on us to make sure that everything is agreed on every level within our SA and with our institutional partners (college/university). It's quite a large, slow-moving project but, with the student population of SLC having doubled over the last ten years and no new premises being built for social events, it's difficult to find the space or the expertise to establish something new for everyone on site. We still think this is a project worth investing our time in on your behalf as the lack of clubs and societies here is still sought after, based on student feedback.

In October, we achieved the LGBT Charter Mark. This accreditation was worked towards for years by SA leaders, past and present, to ensure that no barriers exist for this community within our institution. As a strong supporter of equality and fairness we proudly display our rainbow banners around the college building and on our publications to create an expectation of the level of professional conduct and respect we all deserve to be on the receiving end of. Our efforts in achieving this accreditation were for the benefit of every student, staff member and, visitor who walks through our College doors.

As well as picking up on the things our students want, we're equally responsible for ensuring we don't support anything that you wouldn't. We attend national gatherings and conferences of NUS (the National Union of Students) to gain insight into some of the key issues affecting students around the country, in Scotland and across the UK. Sometimes what's best for most students, might not be what's best for most SLC students and we have to support you above all others, regardless of how much NUS would value our support.

There's also the obvious and simple day-to-day stuff we do for you like changing our working hours to fit in inductions for evening classes, presenting your requests to senior management, offering you all a chance to communicate what you think we do for you, all in the public eye, here on Yammer - all for the benefit of trying to learn what you want and how we can achieve that for you.

It's quite a lot of work to get your head around for the President and Vice President who are pretty much always new employees here, who are either just finished or are still on a course at SLC, and these roles can only be held for a maximum of two years by any one person.

Thanks to everyone who votes in this poll. If there's anything we can do to improve your college experience, please leave a comment or pop into the office on the ground floor. Encouraging students to influence and shape our work is not only essential but, the best way for us to say that we do a good job.

Have a nice day and let us know how your SLC experience is going, whenever you get a chance :-)