Item 08c
For Endorsement

Glasgow Kelvin College

Board of Management Meeting of 30 August 2021

Student Association Update on 2021-22 Priorities

Report by Students' Association Presidents

1. Introduction

This report seeks to update members on the progress of the Student Association to date and on their future plans.

2. Update

In May 2021, the election was held for a full time Student Association President (with a remit focussed on student welfare & sustainability) and part time President (with a remit focussed on learning & teaching). Following the nomination process, candidates for both roles were uncontested, Lauren McLaren resumed her full time President role and James McGunnigle became the part time President.

Over the summer months much of the focus has been on planning and preparation for students returning, with both Presidents assessing their priorities. Both officers have attending online training and networking events with NUS Scotland and SPARQS (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland).

Both officers have participated in relevant meetings which have taken place over the summer and engaged with various staff members.

Every year the Presidents and Vice Presidents from the Glasgow Colleges elect who will be representing students at the GCRB (Glasgow Colleges Region Board). An election organised and presided over by an NUS representative, has taken place and Lauren McLaren will be a student representative and board member on the GCRB this academic year.

Following money received from the Scottish Funding Council, to allow Student Associations in colleges and universities to build capacity within their own organisation, recruitment is now underway for a part time, temporary, Digital & Social Media Assistant. This new role will allow more effective and efficient communication with students using a variety of various social and digital media channels and raise awareness of the Student Association.

The Student Association are currently finalising their operational plan and mental health agreement for the coming academic year. Once finalised, the Student Association will work collaboratively with the College to implement their priorities for this year.

3. Partnership Agreement

The attached partnership agreement (appendix 1) has been developed by the Students' Association and Learner Engagement Officer. The document sets out four priorities that

Glasgow Kelvin College and the Student Association will work on together in academic year 2021/22.

The agreement is in two parts, with part A discussing the means on which students can meaningfully express their views and opinions within their course and the wider working life of the College, through a range of various mechanisms.

Part B sets out the specific working areas in which the Association and the College intend to collaborate. For 2021/22, they are as follows:

- **Inclusion**; where the focus will be on promoting events and campaigns, including, Black History Month, 16 Days of Action and LGBT History Month.
- **Gender-Based Violence**; they will continue to strengthen partnerships with external organisations such as White Ribbon Scotland and Rape Crisis Scotland.
- **Health & Wellbeing**; promote positive mental health and wellbeing using tools from NHS Scotland and college resources.
- **Digital Inclusion & Communication**; increase the Associations online presence and communication and create more online activities/social events, taking into consideration the wants and needs of students.

The Student Association will report routinely to various College committees throughout the year and monitor outcomes and successes.

4. Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report

5. Equalities

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

6. Risk and Assurance

This report provides assurance that the College is supporting the Students' association to engage with learners and participate in life and work of the College.

7. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report

8. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

i) note the contents of the report and appendix;
ii) endorse the Partnership Agreement for academic year 2021/22;
iii) note that part B of the Partnership Agreement is subject to change for each academic year, depending on the Student Association priorities.

9. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from James McGunnigle, President of Learning and Teaching or Lauren McLaren, President of Welfare, Community and Sustainability.

Appendix

Partnership Agreement 2021/22

Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association and Glasgow Kelvin College

This document sets out the partnership between Glasgow Kelvin College and Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association

Introduction

This document sets out the partnership between Glasgow Kelvin College and Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association. The engagement, involvement and representation of students (both individually and collectively) is critical to the success of Glasgow Kelvin College and the Student Association, and the advancement of the aims of the Board both at a college and regional level.

What is a partnership?

The terms 'partner' and 'partnership' are used in a broad sense to indicate joint working between the students and staff. Partnership working is based on the values of:

- openness;
- trust and Honesty;
- agreed and shared goals and values; and
- Regular communication between the partners.

It is not based on the legal conception of equal responsibility and liability; rather, partnership working recognises that all members in the partnership have legitimate but different perceptions and experiences. By working together to a common and agreed purpose steps can be taken that lead to enhancements for all concerned. The terms reflect a mature relationship based on mutual respect between students and staff.

Part A of this agreement outlines the general approaches to student engagement and partnership working between Glasgow Kelvin College and Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association 2021/22.

Part B outlines specific project aims to be jointly undertaken during academic year 2021/22.

The College and the Student Association will work to together to ensure students have a positive college experience and are able to feed into the College quality processes, to enable change within not only their course but the wider working life of the College. Working through these ensures goals can be achieved in a timely and effective manner.

The purpose of this agreement is to highlight activities undertaken to improve the student experience through the partnership between Glasgow Kelvin College (The College) and Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association (GKCSA). It does not replace other strategic documents, and the activities are not limited by the document – both parties actively encourage student involvement in improving and shaping their education. This agreement is complimentary to all other local, regional, and national partnerships. Part B should be reviewed and agreed annually, before the beginning of the academic year to incorporate manifesto pledges of incoming officers.

Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Student Association shall be to:

- advance the entirety of the student experience of its members;
- provide the facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupations, which will improve their conditions of life by enabling or assisting them to participate in the intellect, social and other activities of or connected with Glasgow Kelvin College, of which they have need by reason of their being learners;
- act as a channel of communication between its members and the College Board and Management teams within;
- pursue any appropriate matter of interest to its members;
- represent the views and interests of learners in the college and the wider community; and
- represent the students in disciplinary procedures.

Glasgow Kelvin College Ethos

Glasgow Kelvin College's ethos derives from its commitment to Excellence, Progression and Enterprise. It seeks to provide learning opportunities of the highest quality, which engage students from the widest range of backgrounds, and support their progression to employment or to further study. It seeks to develop enterprise in individuals – as a core skill for learning, life and work; and to support enterprise in both organisations and communities – by developing the capacity of both employers and employees and of community representation.

The ethos is an inclusive one, and is developed through a series of commitments:

- commitment to the priority of the needs of individual learners;
- commitment to quality and innovation;
- commitment to ethical curriculum design;
- commitment to improving access and equality of opportunity;
- commitment to learner engagement and customer care;
- commitment to staff involvement;
- commitment to collaborative working;
- commitment to de-centralisation and outreach;
- commitment to sustainable development; and
- commitment to high standards or governance.

A strong and mutual respectful partnership with the Student Association will enable the College to reach their commitments through effective engagement of students.

Our Community

Glasgow Kelvin College and GKCSA are proud of the contribution the College makes to the local community. Our mission is to develop skills and personal attributes in our students for the benefit of the whole community in the North East of Glasgow and the surrounds. Our student body is central to that mission. Both Glasgow Kelvin College and GKCSA value the diversity of the student population, and work to make sure everyone feels welcome and supported. All staff and students should interact in a way which helps create an inclusive, pleasant and welcoming environment for all. Students at Glasgow Kelvin College are represented collectively by GKCSA. GKCSA represents the views and interests of all students to the college and other decision makers and works in partnership with the college to secure the best possible student experience.

PART A

Student Representation

Effective student representation will ensure that students are enabled to express their views and opinions through a variety of different mechanisms to shape the life of the college:

- student responses to feedback surveys and focus groups;
- course team meetings;
- class representative meetings;
- student representation on college Committees and the Board of Management and its standing committees;
- strategic planning days;
- facilitated discussions;
- Education Scotland reviews; and
- external verification events.

Each class shall have at least one class representative who will act upon the classes behalf deliver feedback to GKCSA and other relevant bodies to ensure any issues are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner. GKCSA will then engage in the College's policies and procedures to facilitate change where required and recommended.
Fair student representation on College committee's both internal and at Board level shall be encouraged by both parties and wherever possible all barriers including timetabling and transport to venue will be removed by the college when organising meetings/committees to ensure student participation.

Students shaping the Life of the College

Learner engagement is one of the three key principles on which college quality arrangements are based. College staff are increasingly involving students in shaping and agreeing how they will learn. Students provide feedback on how well learning and teaching approaches, programmes and college services meet their needs. The College uses feedback from students to make improvements to programmes and services. Staff involve students to work together to enhance and enrich the learning experience and the wider working life of the College. Managers are involving students in the planning and decision-making processes at College level, through meaningful involvement of students in cross-college collaboration, standing committees of the Board and other college committees.

The College and the Student Association have agreed to work in partnership to raise awareness and participation in the Student Association during session 2020/21, together they will:

- work intensively with class representatives to provide training and opportunities that will engage their class and implement an effective transport of communication;
- actively promote Student Association activities to engage students in their campus and greater college community; and
- support students as we adapt into a new era of blended learning and agile working.

Glasgow Kelvin College and GKCSA have agreed to work together on the following areas over the coming year. We will undertake equality impact assessments on any policies which arise from this work.

As a result of Covid-19 and the Colleges Digital Transformation Strategy, the GKCSA will be more dynamic in its engagement with the student body. This will mean increasing their online presence using Microsoft Teams, MyKelvin and various social media channels.

PART B

Health and Wellbeing

The time our students spend at college emphasises the importance of promoting health and wellbeing in the wider areas of the College and beyond. Investing in a health and wellbeing campaign can have positive outcomes both for students and staff of the college. Studies have shown there is a relationship between the psychological wellbeing of our students and positive organisational outcomes, such as reduced levels of sickness, stress, and absences as well as enhanced productivity and performance within their courses.

The College and the Student Association will:

- work closely with the Advice, Guidance and Learner Support Team and in particular the Wellbeing Officer and refer students to the appropriate service they require such as the counselling service,
- create a new Mental Health Agreement in conjunction with the NUS Think Positive Campaign,
- promote NHS healthy lifestyle activities, for example, Change for Life and Couch to 5K; and
- promote any sporting or positive mental awareness activities organised by the College.

Inclusion

The College takes the view that the learning experience can and should be designed to help students feel valued and included as an individual.

Diversity is at the heart of the College experience to ensure that all students feel included in the college community. Students from all backgrounds should feel encouraged to engage proactively with the Student Association and the wider life of the College.

The College and Student Association will:

- promote events and campaigns to increase awareness and inclusion for example, Black History Month, 16 Days of Action and LGBT History Month; and
- work closely with the Student Support Services to encourage student participation in campaigns.

Digital inclusion and communication

Online learning is advancing at a fast rate; this has been fundamental during lockdown and restricted blended learning. The association will work with the new digital media officer to help students use effective communication channels, utilise various platforms available that the college provide and implement help and support to students when needed. We will campaign for additional Government funding as we want to enable access to every student and make sure no student is left disadvantaged.

The College and Association will:

- fully utilise the new Digital & Social Media Assistant and ICT staff within the College;
- host engaging events/social activities online;
- lobby for additional Government funding for digital access and learning; and
- raise awareness of health and safety whilst learning from home.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of gender (including gender identity/expression). It reflects and reinforces stereotypes and inequalities within society. It may deprive a person of their ability to enjoy fundamental freedoms.

Gender-based violence affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, psychological, emotional, sexual abuse, threats and also includes coercive control. Reports of gender-based violence have risen significantly over the past 6 months whilst the country has been in lockdown, we recognise this and will ensure there is appropriate support and resources available.

The Equally Safe Strategy sets out Scotland's commitment to take action on all forms of Gender-based violence. While the overarching aim is to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence

While the strategy sets out some early commitments it also develops awareness raising campaigns and gender-based violence prevention education and training programmes for students and staff.

The College and the Student Association will:

- continue to work in partnership with external organisation such as the White Ribbon Campaign, Woman's Aid and Rape Crisis Scotland to raise awareness of gender-based violence; and
- promote the student gender-based violence guidelines and actively seek to expand their knowledge base through online training.

Overall statement

Glasgow Kelvin College and the Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association agree to work together to pursue and address any issues arising from student feedback, as required throughout the year. Glasgow Kelvin College agrees to support the Student Association to fulfil their role to represent all students.

Through these challenging and unprecedented times, the Student Association will endeavour to support students through the use of technology and ensure that no student is disadvantaged.