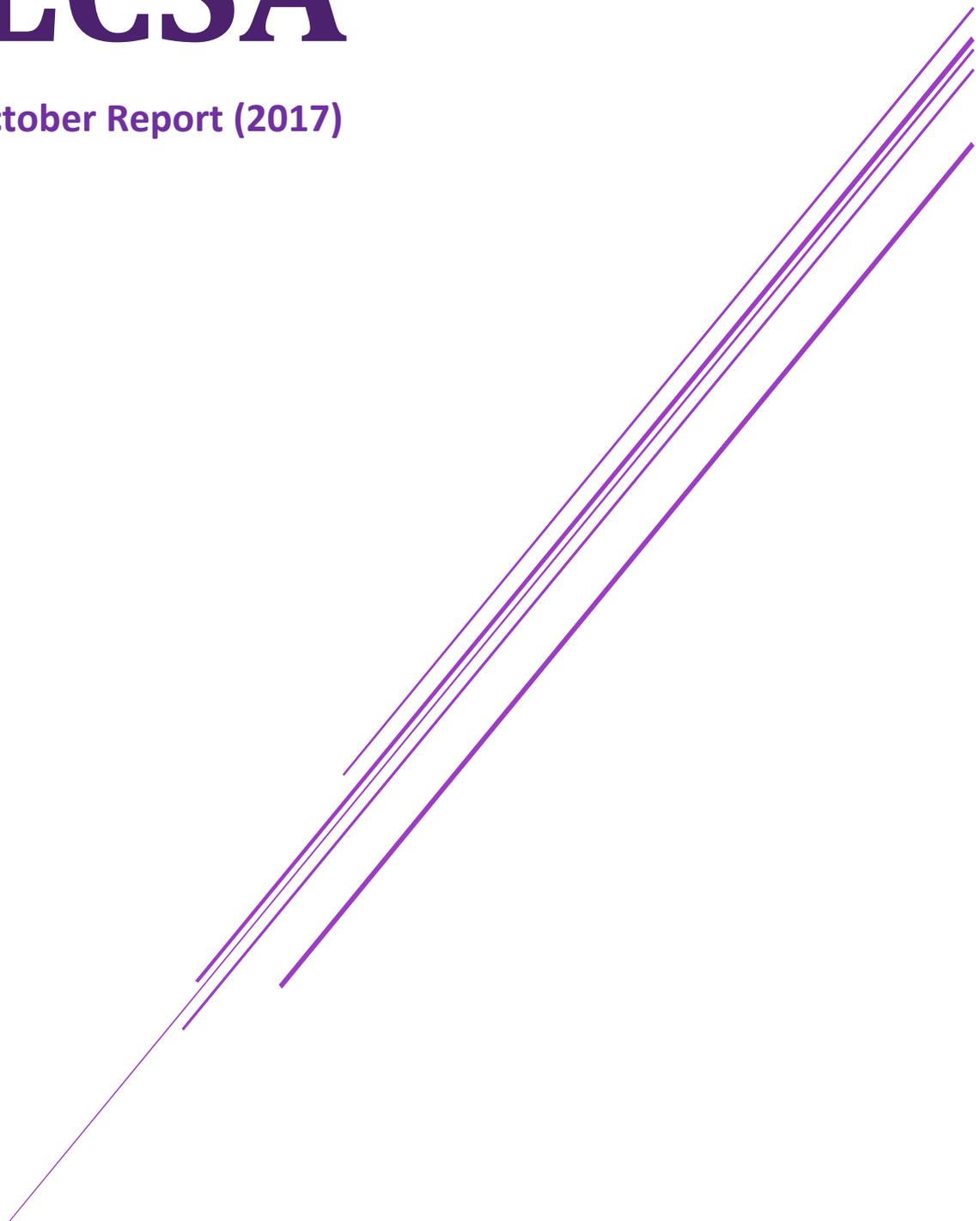


SLCSA

The October Report (2017)



South
Lanarkshire
College

East Kilbride

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Executive Summary

The following report was created to offer insight into the activities of South Lanarkshire College Students' Association (SLCSA) for the period up to, and including October, 2017.

Recent activities of SLCSA have led to increased student engagement through the formation of the 2017/18 Student Executive Committee, and working closely with our peers and partners such as, NUS Scotland, College Development Network (CDN) and sparqs. The overall effort of the SA, as evidenced in this report, has resulted in there being a full team, who we can offer formal training, similar to that which NUS Office Bearers receive but, tailored to develop the aspirations of our individual Officers.

The profile of SLCSA has been raised both internally and externally and this enables the team to help represent students on a national level through the sparqs College Advisory Group and Oversight and Development Group, which starts 23 November 2017.

The SA were among many who celebrated SLC's achievement of the LGBT Charter Mark Award at a special presentation on Tuesday 31 October.

Fortunately, there are still many challenges to overcome, for example: parking; our affiliation with UWS; and engagement with class groups.

Report headings group activities into the main areas of focus for 2017/18 are: management; development; engagement; representation and, activities, as stated in the current operational plan. Tables, images and, photographs have been used to help illustrate the overall impact of SLCSA.

Management and Development

Full House

The SA has managed to fill all eight of its student officer positions for the academic year 2017/18. All officers were approached by the President and asked to identify their own vision for the SA and what they thought their role should look like. Their collective vision will contribute to the framework for planning this year's SA activities. Below is a brief description of how each officer will represent and influence SLCSA, based on their interests. Areas of focus for SLC Student Officers 2017/18, appear in the table below.

Student Officer Roles 2017/18

Officer	Leading
Alan	Events and campaigning
Kyle	Clubs and groups
Zara	Mental health and politics
Hannah	Mature students
Hugh	Engagement
Josh	CPD
Liam	Support Officer
Calvin	Support Officer

Exec Training

SLCSA is proud to offer bespoke Executive Training to its Student Officers, for the first time. A training framework, based around the teachings from NUS FE Lead and Change (2017) has been developed in alignment with the stated aims of individual Officers, to ensure relevancy for our collective needs. The SA is working closely with our NUS Development Consultant for Lanarkshire, to create an initial induction workshop. The Exec induction is booked to take place on Tuesday 21 November 2017 and all attendees will receive a certificate for their participation. The Executive

Induction will be followed by 2-hour training sessions throughout the year which will reflect the current needs and activities of the SA Exec at the time.

Officer Induction Pack

An induction pack was issued to all officers as a reward for volunteering and an incentive to stay engaged throughout the year. Each pack cost approx. £40 and included supporting documents such as a list of useful contacts that allow everyone to recognise existing contributors to the SA. For a list of contents, see below.

Contents of SO Induction Pack

Items	Documents
SLC Student Officer hoodie	Latest issue of the SA newsletter
SLC/Inspire Steel Mug	Operational plan
SLC diary	List of useful contacts
SLC lanyard	5 free drinks and then 10p off drinks, when using SLC steel mug
Purple SLC sunglasses	
Poncho	
SLC pen	
SLC LGBT badge	
'Now is Your Time' black tote bag	
White SLC drawstring sackpack	



Actions of the SA Executive Committee

The first SLCSA Executive Committee meeting of the year, took place in the Library Group Study Room on Friday 13 October and lasted approx. two hours. The agenda for the meeting ensured we covered all of the basics while ensuring everyone had a chance to ask questions, understand and speak freely. The following topics were discussed, resulting in several actions for SA leaders to follow up on.

Allies for Equality Group

Due to the lack of student engagement during last year's Focus Groups, the President has suggested one Group, working under the title, "SLC Allies for Equality". The idea initially received positive feedback, however, this needs to be discussed further to ensure this is valuable use of SA time and encompasses all the support requirements we want to offer students.

Food bank collections

Arrangements have been made to meet with the Manager of East Kilbride's Universal Connections/Key Youth Centre regarding the possibility of the SA contributing to a local food bank. This is based on the work of a Student Officer, whose interests and ideas are always presented with a call for action. The SA is happy to support the needs and interests of our members and those of the external community and are looking forward to meeting with Universal Connections.

Promoting the free shuttle service on the student portal

Many are unaware of the free shuttle service offered by the College. We hope by promoting this service this could potentially help to alleviate some of the demand for parking spaces by catering to students who live locally and save money for individual students.

Affiliating with UWS

The meeting with SAUWS has been postponed until our contact arrives back from official leave. Our plans to gain access to the university's clubs, societies and bar haven't changed since the release of our last report.

Promote our newsletter using Text Tools

The President has approached the Quality Unit, who keep our Class Reps engaged, to request that their 'text tools' system be used to update students on the release of the SLCSA Newsletter and state the three main locations where a stock is always available; The SA Office, the Library and, the Student Advice Centre. There are plans to purchase a magazine stand to help promote the SA Newsletter across the college campus.

Parking

Parking continues to create difficulties for staff and students alike. At the outset of the year, it was hoped that this commonly-shared problem could present an opportunity to help the student population significantly by tackling just one issue. This is not the case at present. Difficulties with parking are affecting many on an individual basis and it's impossible for the SA to devote enough time and energy to investigate all of them – one at a time. Therefore, a plan of work is currently being created to establish a Parking Focus Group and will be distributed to the Student Exec for consultation by mid-November. With adequate support and interest from students, we could hold a meeting to gather data and make improvements before the New Starts arrive in January.

Governance

The SA are currently working on the structure of an SA Governance Group to offer the Execs insight and advice from professionals with experiential knowledge in carrying out similar work to what we intend to do. Membership will include two external advisors and one member of staff from SLC. The Terms of Reference for the Group are currently being prepared. However, the involvement of the President on external Governance Groups and the offer of an introduction to the Framework from NUS at the start of our first meeting, allows us to move forward with planning, confidently.



Inspiration: Presidents learn the benefits of good governance, together (12/10/17).

Engagement

Facilitating Engagement

The SA has been approached by several parties looking to enhance their engagement with our student population. Internally, we've been asked to advertise the training restaurant, join and follow class groups on Yammer and promote Pink Day, the massive collective effort to fight cancer, organised and carried out by our wonderful Events class.



Images: (top left) Student Officer, between our peers, helped to cycle the distance from the College to Ben Nevis in effort to encourage support for Breast Cancer Care, and just some of the fabulous prizes up for grabs in the raffle (top right). Below: Some advertisements we've shared for the services students offer.

**WEEKEND READY
BLOW DRY**



Treat yourself to a shampoo & blow dry or a dry style on your lunch, or at the end of the day
EVERY FRIDAY • 12.15PM - 1PM / 3PM & 3.15PM

SLC South Lanarkshire College East Kilbride

20% STUDENT DISCOUNT + 10% STAFF DISCOUNT

For more information or to make an appointment, visit our Hair & Beauty reception on the second floor

**South Lanarkshire College
Training Restaurant**

Asian Infusion Theme

Tuesday – 3rd October 2017

1200-1300 – 2nd Floor

£9.95 – 3 Courses

**To book phone the restaurant
or jump into the restaurant on
the 2nd floor**

Tel: 01355 807780

Reaching Out

The LGBT Charter Mark Award

SLC staff and members of the Student's Association were honoured to accept the LGBT Charter Mark on Tuesday 31 October, 2017. This accreditation has taken years of hard work and personal dedication from many individuals and departments within the College.



Above: Some of the main contributors to the Charter mark were present to embrace this step forward in creating equality and ensuring an inclusive learning environment for all. Below left: The Head of Student Services says a few words of appreciation and thanks for having the opportunity to take part in such a significant piece of work. Below right: our Vice President shines between Principal, Stewart McKillop and the LGBT Youth Scotland Representative.



Inductions

The President popped in to the sparqs Class Rep training on Wednesday 25 October to represent the SA. One student asked why their class hadn't had a visit yet and many others appeared to want an answer too. It was explained that invitations were sent out to every CM offering this service and that no one who accepted the offer was let down. While this helped to clarify the situation until now, that's not enough in the long-term and inductions will be carried out again on a drop-in basis before the Christmas break. Further inductions will be carried out in the new year to welcome students starting with us in January 2018.

Mentoring

NUS Scotland launched their mentoring project on Thursday 26 October to a small group of Student Officers and six volunteer mentors. The attending mentees had expressed their interest in receiving peer-to-peer support from SA professionals, during FE Lead and Change in July 2017. The President of SLC was paired up with Josie M^cKay,



Communications and Media Coordinator at GCU. Regular one-to-one contact has been established and Josie is being updated on our research into SLCSA policies. There is currently no particular focus on Josie's area of expertise within SLCSA but, this will help us to maintain the informal style of support, originally asked for. It's the desire of the President to strengthen the overall link between our SAs, as a result of the developing relationship.

Hoodies

SLC hoodies are still an effective engagement tool. Our stock dropped to just eight and several students were coming in repeatedly during the week to check for new stock. We stocked up on the most asked for colours and sizes in an order for 60 items. Many of the students who had been eager to get a College hoodie in their size/colour have returned to purchase their long-awaited tops. Their satisfaction and the delivery on our promise to re-stock has boosted engagement to a point where it seems like everyone is happy to be in the SA office.

Representation

GAP

The SA is one of three departments at SLC, including the Principalship, to have expressed their interest in advancing the government's Gender Action Plan, through sparqs. The project is highly relevant to us as two of our three faculties (Care and Construction) tend to be dominated by one gender, meaning achievement of the overall 2029 goal will change the dynamic of classrooms dramatically throughout the College.

The President is realistic about our members' need for the project, stating in email to sparqs that there isn't currently a visible demand for gender equity among our peers. However, it's possible that this could be due to prospective students having been put off enrolling, as a result of existing imbalances. Gender equity on our College Board of Management was highlighted as an inspiration for the SA and a driver for undertaking some action of our own that will support the College and help to promote our courses as being open to all.

In an effort to describe for sparqs, the reality for SLC students in classrooms with heavy gender imbalances, the President noted caring men with aspirations to be paramedics, social workers, and carers as well as female students in construction who are feminine, enthusiastic, and artistic. While the need for this government target may not be immediate to the student collective, it is a requirement for us to work towards and it would be worthwhile to find out more about this issue simply for the chance to spend more time with these independent and innovative students.

It was encouraging to hear back from Lindsay Isaacs at sparqs, who confirmed that the Head of Quality had already been in touch, adding; *"it's great to know that enthusiasm for taking part extends across both the college and SA"* (Isaacs. L, 2017). This confirms that the efforts of the SA are recognised among our stakeholders as coming from an individual unit. This is encouraging feedback.



FE Fair Attendance Survey

The SA stall for Health and Wellness Week saw us working with NUS to deliver information on the FE Fair Attendance Survey. Despite many students saying they haven't had issues in meeting their bursary requirements, our students were invited to play a game of 'roll the dice, to see if you get your bursary'. The overall opinion of the 50+ students we spoke to find the 100% attendance requirement for FE students to be unrealistic.

The opinion of our students and the support from Student Services for fairer bursary requirements – particularly for care leavers - informed the Lead Representative's contribution to the survey which argued that attendance alone can't accurately reflect intentions, commitment or, character. It seems unreasonable to expect others - particularly those on the first rungs of the development ladder - to achieve 100% attendance. 80% attendance sounds fair on most but remains a significant challenge for students who find it difficult to keep a sense of continuity in their basic self-management when there are additional responsibilities with regards to documenting their activities/attendance. The difficulty level of any absence documentation process has to equate with an individual's ability to complete them, otherwise, this can cause mental and emotional frustration for students.



Students at SLC appear to be satisfied and are able to meet requirements for receiving their college bursary but, remain concerned about the potential for unfairness on others.

National Student Representation

The SLC President has been invited to join both the sparqs College Advisory Group (CAG) and the Oversight and Direction Group for college SA development (ODG).

The opportunity arose shortly after a day of governance training for student Board members with the College Development Network and while SA Executives were establishing the terms of reference for our own Governance Group.

The purpose of CAG appears to be the more important of the two and is described as being to give sparqs, “*a strong student perspective*” (McDade. A, 2017), on their work and direction. The ODG group was described as “*optional*” with the purpose of the group being to ensure that the work of NUS Scotland and sparqs is “*suitable*” (McDade. A, 2017).

Meetings for both groups are held on the same day, three times per year with the dates for 2017/18 being as follows:

- Tuesday 28 November 2017
- Thursday 1 March 2018
- Tuesday 15 May 2018



Upcoming Activities

The month of November will be appointment-heavy for the SA. Involvement of the SA Exec at meetings and events will help the President to deliver on the promise made to students at the sparqs Class Rep training event, to carry out further in-class inductions.

SLCSA Diary for November 2017

Date	Activity
06/11/17	SLC Graduation Dinner
07/11/17	SLC Graduation Ceremony
08/11/17	UCAS Event
22/11/17	SLCSA Executive Training
23/11/17	NUS Zone Conference
28/11/17	CAG and ODG
29/11/17	sparqs Academic Rep Coordinator's Meeting

References

Isaacs, L., 2017. *RE: GAP Project*. [E-mail]. Available through: Appendix A, p. 14 [Received on 17 October 2017 at 11:03].

McDade, A., 2017. *RE: Invite to join sparqs College Advisory Group..... and the Oversight and Direction Group for college SA development*. [E-mail]. Available through: Appendix B, p 15. [Received on 16 October 2017 at 17:37].

Appendix A

RE: GAP Project

Hi Julie

Thank you very much for such a thoughtful and considered message – we're delighted that you'd be keen to be involved in the pilot GAP project. We've already heard back from the College, so it's great to know that enthusiasm for taking part extends across both the college and SA.

We'll be reviewing all the nominations in early November and will get back to you as soon as possible after that date.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do get in touch.

All the best

Appendix B

RE: Invite to join sparqs College Advisory Group..... and the Oversight and Direction Group for college SA development

Hi all, we are currently seeking to recruit new student members for the **sparqs College Advisory Group (CAG)** and would like to invite you (or another member of your officer team) to join a pool of students with a view to ensuring we have at least a couple of students at each meeting, to give us a strong student perspective on our work and direction. There are **three meetings per year**, and prior to each one we'll check availability and identify who is free to attend, so you don't need to commit to attending all three meetings.

As well as the student members, the group comprises a range of college staff and sector agency staff from NUS Scotland, the College Development Network and Education Scotland, who act as a sounding board for sparqs' work. The meetings are held at the College Development Network offices in Stirling, from 10.30am-12.30pm and the 2017-18 dates are as follows:

- **Tuesday 28th November 2017**
- **Thursday 1st March 2018**
- **Tuesday 15th May 2018**

In addition, there is an optional opportunity to sit on the **Oversight and Direction Group (ODG) for the college students' association development project**. The ODG meetings directly follow the sparqs CAG meetings, on the same dates noted above, from 1.00pm-2.30pm. Lunch will be provided for those attending both meetings.

The ODG oversees the work of the NUS Scotland and sparqs project on developing college students' associations, which is the support you get from your consultant around the Framework. The group includes members from the SFC, the Scottish Government, College Development Network and Education Scotland, as well as a chair of a regional board, a college senior manager, and some student officers, which is where you come in! The purpose of the group is to make sure that the work NUS Scotland and sparqs do to support college students' associations is suitable, and to offer suggestions on ways we can tackle particular problems. You'll get an update each meeting on what both NUS and sparqs have been doing, and you'll be able to feed into our plans for things that are coming up.

We hugely value student perspectives at both meetings and are looking forward to welcoming some new student members into the pool.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding whether you would like to join the pool of students for CAG, and if so, whether you would also be willing to stay on to contribute to the ODG meetings directly afterwards. Please feel free to discuss with your officer team and nominate someone else if that suits – the role would be suited to whoever has an education remit. **If interested, please let me know by Tuesday 31st October.**

Kind regards,