

Board of Management

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 27 March 2024
Paper No.	BoM4-D
Agenda Item	5.1
Subject of Paper	Students' Association Update
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Leo Subido, Student President
Date of production	13 March 2024
Action	For Discussion

1. Recommendations

The Board is asked to discuss the Students' Association's (SA) update for semester two.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to update the Board with a brief overview of student engagement within the main areas of work the Students' Association has undertaken this academic year.

3. Consultation

Each year, the SA outlines their programme of work after consultation with students during their induction and through Annual General Meetings (AGM), student surveys, and class rep feedback.

4. Key Insights

4.1 Diversity and Wellbeing

Through surveying and research, it was highlighted that students are at high risk of [food poverty](#) and reported high levels of mental health problems. The SA, alongside the Student Engagement Team, has been developing campaigns and events to help support the marginalised groups and our most at-risk student members.

4.1.2 Student Pantry

[The Student Pantry](#) was launched by CitySA in August 2023 to address food insecurity amongst our students by providing a resource open to all to access without guilt or shame.

- **3353 items since have been handed to students**
- **February has been the busiest month with 1020 items collected**
- **23 food referrals from Staff for students**
- **400 toothbrushes and toothpaste donated from Glasgow City Council**
- **96 toiletry products donated by Starter pack**

Our Student Pantry is now completely student-led, with 8 regular student volunteers staffing the service. In partnership with teaching staff, 14 students from school transitions group in supported study have engaged in a 'taster' volunteer session.

This year a total of 156.5 voluntary hours have been logged from our student volunteers for supporting the service.

4.1.2 Neurodiversity Awareness Campaign

During our Annual General Meeting (AGM) 93% of student voters voted for the SA to work on campaigns that celebrate and support neurodivergent students.

Championed by our current VP of Diversity and Wellbeing, Ciara McCarthy, the SA launched the ["We Can"](#) Campaign to celebrate our neurodiverse students and their achievements despite the barriers they face. Additionally, to raise awareness with the wider college population, the SA facilitated a virtual reality simulation for students to experience what overstimulation can feel like for neurodiverse students.

Over 150 students so far have engaged with this campaign through writing articles, participating in filming, engaging with online signposting and participating in our events on campus.

4.1.3 Regional Survey

In collaboration with the Glasgow Colleges Regional Student Executives (GCRSE) we launched a Healthcare and Wellbeing Survey to identify the key issues impacting the Student Experience, highlight gaps between National Health Services, and help improve the services currently provided by the regional colleges.

552 Students from the City of Glasgow College (COGC) engaged with us reporting the following:

- 56.1% of participants have engaged with our counselling services.
- Of the percentage of students that weren't able to access counselling support, 34.5% reported that they faced language and cultural barriers.
- 53.1% reported that they are waiting on a diagnosis to support them in getting Disable Student Allowance or Personal Learning Support Plan.

Using this data, we are now working with our institutions and the Regional Board to review how to improve the services provided internally and link with local organisations to improve the student experience of students in Glasgow.

A full breakdown of results from can be found in the appendices.

4.2 Sports and Societies

The SA helps facilitate a variety of recreational activities to enrich the college experience of students. We have had 13 different student-led societies running this year. We have also had 5 different recreational sports clubs, with 4 clubs a week and an average attendance of 15 students a session this semester.

4.3 Big Student Election

This year we had 16 approved candidates in our Big Student Elections an increase of 5 from last year. Elections are currently ongoing, and the successful candidates will be announced before the end of March. These successful candidates will join the SA in July to become the new Presidential Team 2024/25.

5. Impact and Implications

Failure to maintain student engagement throughout the academic year could negatively impact the reputation of the SA. By supporting and engaging with our students that are disproportionately affected by economic and social barriers, we aim to engage with students most at risk of course withdrawal.

Our student members have also indicated that the work undertaken this year has been valuable, engaging, and inclusive, which has led to an increase in engagement across all SA groups.

6. Appendices

- A. [Healthcare and Wellbeing Survey](#)**
- B. [“We Can be...” Video](#)**