

## Board of Management

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Wednesday 2 October 2024</b>
<b>Paper No.</b>	<b>BoM1-H</b>
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>7.1</b>
<b>Subject of Paper</b>	<b>Students' Association Update</b>
<b>FOISA Status</b>	<b>Disclosable</b>
<b>Primary Contact</b>	<b>Ciara McCarthy / Polly Vaker</b>
<b>Date of production</b>	<b>September 2024</b>
<b>Action</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>

### 1. Recommendations

The Board is asked to discuss the Students' Association's (SA) update on the start of the Academic Year.

### 2. Purpose

This paper aims to provide a brief overview and facilitate discussion on the progress the Students' Association has made this year towards engaging with our wider student body and raising awareness of the campaign work.

### 3. Consultation

The Students' Association annually outlines its work after consulting with student representatives during their induction and through Annual General Meetings (AGM). In addition, we identify the Presidential team's manifesto aims that align with the

Students' Association's strategic plan. The SA's work is evaluated through various student feedback methods, including headcount systems, survey work, focus groups and digital analysis.

## **4. Key Insights**

### **4.1. AGM**

Each May, we empower students to shape their academic year by inviting them to submit suggestions for projects they would like the Students' Association to focus on and vote for them to be part of the SA Annual Plan. We had a range of successful projects suggested, with a 57% increase in students voting compared to the previous year.

During the 2023/24 academic year, students proposed and endorsed the following initiatives:

- 91% voted to Campaign for a Community Garden
- 95% voted for More paid positions within the SA
- 95% voted to Expand support for ESOL/International students
- 87% voted for the Inclusion of Trans Liberation within the SA annual plan

### **4.2. Presidential Team Ambitions**

The Presidential Team outlined the following as their key priorities for this year:

- To continue to develop our neurodiversity campaign work
- To support and campaign for our ESOL/International Students
- Continue supporting students affected by the cost-of-living crisis
- Research into the development of a community garden
- Improving the value of and engagement with Class Rep systems
- Engaging students with internal, regional, and national student-led campaigns

This work has been built into our operational plan for the year, alongside existing core work, with performance measures allocated to ensure we can monitor success.

### **4.3. Freshers' Fair**

The Freshers' Fair occurred from August 14th to 16th at the City Campus as part of Student Induction Week. The Riverside Freshers' event was held on September 5th and 6th during the second week of teaching to fit with Riverside timetables. You can find photos of the event in the appendices.

Events were planned in collaboration with City of Glasgow staff; both events ensured a smooth transition for new students, helping to raise awareness of the Students' Association (SA). Exhibitors were carefully selected to align with students' academic interests, providing relevant resources and services. The event attracted over 2,900 students across both events.

We also saw significant growth in our social media presence, which was instrumental in reaching a larger student audience:

- **TikTok:** 1,130 (up by 10.35%)
- **Instagram:** 1,950 (up by 7.20%)
- **Facebook:** 4,226 (up by 0.05%)
- **Twitter:** 1,947 (up by 0.15%)

Freshers' Fair generated £470 through local sales of stalls. Several stalls were also allocated to our advertising partner, Native, as part of our annual advertising contract worth approximately £ 5,500 per year.

#### **4.4. Community Pantry**

At our 2021/22 AGM, 295 students participated in voting on proposals, with 291 (98%) supporting the establishment of a community pantry to address food insecurity among students. The *Thriving Learners Report* indicates that 37% of students are facing food insecurity, and the NUS *Cost of Living Survey* reports that over 25% of students have less than £50 per month (£1.79 per day) available after covering rent and bills.

So far this year, we have successfully secured further funding from the Commonweal Fund (£2,266) and Tesco Grants (£1,500) to support our efforts. Thanks to generous donations from FES, the City pantry has moved into the CaféSA space within the Students' Association. It is operational two mornings and one late afternoon per week to assist students impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. Additionally, the Riverside Pantry has installed a counter and will operate on Friday mornings. Recruitment for volunteers to support operations is underway, allowing us to expand opening times.

#### **4.5 Faculty Ambassadors**

After the AGM was held in May, the Students' Association introduced new paid opportunities for students, which we believe will allow for more consistent engagement at the Faculty Board level alongside their other commitments. The Faculty Ambassadors (FAs) are responsible for gathering feedback from students and Class Representatives within their faculty and relaying this information to Faculty Boards to improve the Student Experience. They also support the Vice President of Learning and Teaching in training and assisting the Class Reps. Four Faculty Ambassadors started their induction in the first week of September.

- Derry Henderson – FA Nautical and STEM
- Jessica Elliott – FA Creative Industries
- Euan Buchanan – FA Hospitality and Leisure
- Anna Panton – FA Education and Humanities

In addition, the Faculty Ambassadors have seats in the Student Parliament, which gives them a platform to communicate updates and information from Faculty Boards.

## 5. Impact and Implications

While many aspects of the Students' Association (SA) operate continuously, failing to meet the yearly operational objectives could reduce positive student engagement and meaningful student representation. We aim to support and engage with students disproportionately affected by economic and social barriers, aiming to reach out to those most at risk of withdrawing from their courses. Our student members have also indicated that this year's work has been valuable, engaging, and inclusive, leading to increased engagement across all SA groups.

### Appendices



**City Campus Freshers**



**Riverside Freshers**

For new board members, we wanted to point to our SA website and most popular Social Media Channel:

[SA Website](#)

[SA TikTok Channel](#)