Glasgow Kelvin College

Item 08
For Discussion and Noting

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

Academic Board Meeting of 19 April 2024

Student Association Priorities Update

Report by Student Association Presidents

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress of the Student Association (SA) this session and give an overview of future priorities and plans.

GKCSA Glasgow Kelvin College Student Association

Since the start of the college session the SA have been busy raising awareness and assuring that the SA is available to students in campus and online, helping to share college information, answering general student enquiries, and supporting students with any arising issues.

As a voice for the student body, the SA have fed back quickly to management any concerns or issues raised.

The former full time Student President is now no longer in post within the college. The college now has a second part time Student President, Calum Campbell, in post to support the remaining part time President, Sonique Noreiga.

2. Update on Activity

<u>The role of the Class Representative</u>

Class Representatives were encouraged to ensure that their class groups were engaging with the Block 2 Stop and Check survey. This survey allows students to feedback on their learning experience at Glasgow Kelvin College and document anything the college could do to make it better and more enjoyable. Feedback from this survey will be used by the SA to identify and action any issues students are having as quickly as possible.

The SA have also encouraged Class Representatives to ensure that their class groups are engaging with the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey. This is an important survey overseen by the Scottish Funding Council which helps to provide comparisons across all of Scotland's colleges.

The SA are continuing to work closely with SPARQS (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland) to offer additional Class Reps introductory training to help develop confidence in their role. This is the recommended package for training reps in Scotland. This training comes in two parts.

- Part one is a self-directed study module hosted on the colleges VLE which was made available to all Reps on 19th September 2023.

- Part two is a bookable part of the training and was delivered by SPARQS online via Zoom. The training is designed for up to 30 delegates per session and lasts 2 hours. Presidents managed to organise three initial sessions, which were delivered October 3rd, 4th and 5th. Additional 'mop up sessions' were organised for Wednesday 24th January and Wednesday 7th February. Discussions with SPARQS are already underway to confirm part two training for the first week in October to ensure Reps for session 24/25 are supported to access appropriate opportunities as soon as possible after recruitment.

The SA are continuing to organise regular meetings throughout the year to ensure Reps are fully supported in their role. The last meeting was held on 20th March and had good attendance and engagement. The next meeting has been organised for Wednesday 17th April.

Meet the Managers

A Block 2 'Meet the Managers' event was organised by the SA for Wednesday 21st February to provide Class Reps with another opportunity to meet college Senior Managers to discuss students' experience of the college.

Panelist management included:

- Robin Ashton – Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality Enhancement
- Jeanette Evans – Vice Principal, Operations
- Lisa Clark – Director for Estates and Corporate Services
- Monica McKerlie – Head of Student Support Services
- Michelle Harding – Head of Digital and ICT Operations

This was a great opportunity for Class Reps to raise any issues from students, and for the college management to provide responses and agree actions directly to students. A block 3 Meet the Managers event will be arranged.

Student Executive Committee

The Student Association have fully recruited 11 volunteers to take up roles in the Student Executive Committee. Alongside the Student Presidents, the Executive Officers will be responsible for influencing change across the college, ensuring the views of our diverse student community are included and represented in how the college delivers services. The roles include;

- 2 x Vice Presidents
- 1 x Campaigns Officers
- 2 x Equality and Diversity Officers
- 1 x Women's Officer
- 1 x LGBTQ+ Officer
- 1 x ESOL & International Officer
- 1 x Care Experienced Officer
- 2 x Sustainability Officers

Some examples of progress being made by Officers include:

- Campaigns Officer helping to progress College Development Networks (CDN) '#LoveScotlandsColleges' campaign, which celebrates the outstanding innovation, hard work and best practice that takes place across the sector every day
- Equality and Diversity Officers have been linked in with Amrit Bedi, Equalities and Inclusion Lead
- Care Experienced Officer has been linked in with Nicki Campbell, Team Leader – Advice, Guidance & Learner Support
- Sustainability Officers have been linked in with Sarah Shea, Environmental Sustainability Manager

The SA are continuing to organise regular meetings throughout the year to ensure Executive Officers are fully supported in their role. The last meeting was held on 13th March and had good attendance and engagement. The next meeting has been organised for Friday 19th April.

Active Campus Coordinator

The Student Association has been working closely with the college's Active Campus Coordinator, Grant Sutherland. We will continue to support Grant to facilitate the delivery of sport and physical activity on campus to promote positive mental and physical wellbeing to students.

Student Mental Health Agreement

Presidents have worked closely with the colleges Advice, Guidance and Wellbeing teams to produce a Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA) with NUS Think Positive. This project brings the Student Association and college together in partnership to develop, monitor and evaluate the mental health support on offer. Leading on this project means we will share some responsibilities, including reviewing the project resources and arranging and facilitating SMHA working group meetings. This new agreement was approved by the Academic Board at their last meeting on February 2nd and is expected to go live mid to late April.

Priorities/Next Steps

The role of the Class Representative

Class Representatives play a key role with inputting student feedback into end of block course team discussions, which take place during each down week. Prior to the course team meeting, Reps were encouraged to meet with the class on their own to collect feedback from their class group. College Senior Management were also encouraged Tutors to help Reps allocate some time with their class for these discussions. The class representatives used the feedback to input at the course team meeting and, following the meeting, took information resulting from discussions back to other learners. During block 3, the SA will gather relevant feedback from Class Representatives to allow us to better support future Class Reps and also assist the college to improve the overall student experience.

National Union of Students (NUS) Conference

NUS is led by students and students' unions. Every year they run a series of events across the UK to bring together students and build focused, high-impact campaigns. These events

are NUS' democratic conferences and held in each part of the UK, plus a dedicated Liberation Conference. Conferences also serve as a space to shape upcoming priorities for students, students' unions, and NUS.

A GKC Student President attended the Scottish conference, held in Stirling on 27th and 28th March.

Environmental & Sustainability projects

The SA has been supporting the Environmental and Sustainability Manager, Sarah Shea, with progress of 'Planet Earth Games'. This project allows GKC students to participate in a number of activities and challenges surrounding sustainability, with an emphasis on sustainable sport. This project will help students develop leadership skills and share knowledge and new ideas of sustainability. We will continue to work with Sarah, our students and community partners on a variety of projects throughout the year.

We have also teamed up with Alexander Paterson who is the colleges Cycling Officer. The month of March was 'cycling month' so a number of led rides, and cycling activities were planned for our students with the support of the SA.

Ongoing Student Association Awareness Raising

Presidents have been continuing to work hard to raise the profile of the Student Association and will aim to have a presence at each of our three campuses throughout the session. Presidents will also be working closely with the college's Marketing team to develop an updated strategy for the SA. Promotional videos and information have been posted on social media platforms, which has increased followers of the various social media accounts.

Networking and Partnerships

The SA will continue to work to enhance partnership work with services and organisations which can impact positively on the student experience. We will continue to meet with community partners to develop our main priorities including: Inclusion, Health & Wellbeing, Gender-Based Violence and Digital Inclusion & Communication. The SA Presidents also visited Dumfries and Galloway College on April 4th as part of a Student Support networking and sharing good practice event.

Student President Elections

Glasgow Kelvin College Students' Association will be recruiting for new Student Presidents in April. These roles attract a good salary and are a fantastic opportunity to get high-level experience in leading an organisation, representing students' voices at the highest level of the college and making a real difference to the lives and experiences of students.

Elections for the 2024-25 Student Association Sabbatical President roles will be taking place in April/May. Nominations for these posts will open on Monday 22nd April for a two-week period. With the elections being held from Monday 20th – Thursday 23rd May. The SA will promote all relevant information during progression month, on our social media channels and the GKC Student Teams page.

Future planning

Presidents will continue to be involved in meetings relating to 'Pre-course planning and retuning to college for session 24/25'. The college's Learner Engagement Officer returns from maternity leave early in June and will be actively involved in planning for session 24/25.

3. Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

4. Impact on Students

This report highlights the opportunities for better student engagement and the positive impacts on students by supporting them to improve their experience at college, creating opportunities to further develop and gain new skills and experiences.

5. Risk and Assurance

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

6. Equality

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

7. Data Protection

There are no data protection implications arising directly from this report.

8. Environmental and Sustainability

There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

9. Recommendations

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report.

10. Further Information

Members can obtain additional information on the contents of this report from Sonique Noreiga, President of Learning and Teaching and Calum Campbell, President Welfare, Community and Sustainability.

Glasgow Kelvin College
CC/SN
11 April 2024