



STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT AND KEY PRIORITIES FOR 2017-2018

Introduction

The engagement, involvement and representation of students (both individually and collectively) is critical to the success of Dundee and Angus College.

As the College embarks on its Good to Great strategy, and embeds the student focus of service design as a central way of working, the input and role of the Students' Association in College life is more important than ever. Our joint desire to support and encourage a vibrant and effective Students' Association continues to play a key role in improving and enhancing the College for the benefit of current and future students.

In addition to the benefits accruing to the College and student body as a whole, involvement and engagement through the work of the Students' Association adds significant value to the learning experience and progression opportunities available to individual students.

Involvement within an active and vibrant Students' Association is promoted as a benefit for individual students, as well as adding significant value to the College as a whole and to the local communities within which we work.

Dundee and Angus College, and the D&A Students' Association are committed to working together in partnership to promote and achieve these outcomes.

Partnership Working

Dundee and Angus College is committed to improving opportunities for student feedback and engagement that allow all students to become confident learners who are engaged actively in their own learning and in the development of the College.

To achieve this the College and the Students' Association will work together to promote a culture where students and staff are valued as equals and where student-staff relationships are positive and respectful.

Staff and students should work together honestly and constructively in ways that support engagement and provides regular and open opportunities for students to discuss and contribute feedback and ideas directly with the staff involved on any matters or issues of importance. Where this takes place students should expect to have this input considered and/or acted upon in an appropriate and professional way.

Similarly, staff should expect students to act in a mature and responsible way, providing and accepting constructive feedback and guidance.

The role of the Students' Association in fostering and supporting this culture and in providing support on a representational and advocacy basis is critical.

In addition to encouraging positive behaviours, the College will ensure that the practical arrangements offered, particularly through the Students' Association working with other relevant support services, primarily Learner Engagement, Sports Union, Student Services and Learner Resources, encourages and support partnership working.

This practical support will include the following.

- Providing appropriate funding and support for Students' Association events, activities and arrangements;
- Ensuring Students' Association representation on all standing College committees, supported by appropriate information, guidance and advice to help students to make effective and informed contributions to these committees;
- Providing regular and open communication between the Student Office Bearers, senior College staff, and the Board of Management;
- Supporting the operation of class and lead representative arrangements that are organised on a basis that meets student needs and provides for collective representation and advocacy where necessary.
- Providing regular opportunities for students to give open and honest feedback, through surveys, focus groups, consultation events and other activities.
- Providing opportunities for Students to complete voluntary work experience and work shadowing.

All of the above opportunities and expectations will be promoted regularly to all students through the use of promotional materials, My D&A, social media and the on-going work of the Students' Association independently and collaboratively with other support services.

Our D&A Pledge

Dundee and Angus College and its Students' Association have jointly signed up to the following key principles and pledges. These will underpin the work we undertake and inform the way in which we will work together.

Working together in partnership, we pledge to create a College based on principles that are

Dynamic and Ambitious

Creating a learning experience of all students that enables them to succeed above and beyond their course and expectations.

Delivering and Achieving

Ensuring enjoyable and challenging learning approaches and opportunities so that students can achieve their full potential.

Developing and Accrediting

Giving every student opportunities to develop and receive fair recognition for their efforts and achievements, both in terms of their academic and wider achievements.

Dedicated and Able

Staff and Students' Association Officers who dedicate themselves to enhancing the experience of students through providing an environment and opportunities within which they can thrive.

Diverse and Accessible

We will provide a College culture and environment that is inviting, vibrant and dynamic – whilst celebrating and promoting diversity.

Direction and Accountability

From elected Students' Association officers that are accountable to the student body, listen to the student voice, ensure that students are central in decision making, and work as part of a professional partnership with College staff.

Benefits and Achievements

Getting a job or a university place after College can be tough. Dundee and Angus College is committed to ensuring that all students involved in Students' Association events and activities are supported in recognising and "trapping" the benefits of this input.

To achieve this the Learner Engagement team will provide opportunities for those involved in the Students' Association to achieve additional certification and recognition for the activities they undertake through the D&A Attributes scheme.

The Learner Engagement Team and the Students' Association will work jointly together across a range of activities to promote the work, outcomes and positive impact of the Student's Association.

2017/2018 Key Priorities

To support this partnership agreement and further develop opportunities available across the College the following five Key Priorities have been established for session 2017/2018.

The Students' Association, Learner Engagement Team and others will work together to achieve the following key priorities and will report on progress made in respect of these during and at the end of the year.

1. To make the Students' Association and its work more visible and prominent for students and staff.

This will include improving the range of activities, events and opportunities for students to become involved in, but will also include better marketing and awareness raising of the activities already taking place and improving the Students' Association facilities we have available. We will promote awareness and use of the Students' Association website and make better use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

2. To support the development of Health and Wellbeing activities

The Sports Union will develop and organise a wide range of sports and wellbeing events, competitions and activities for students on each campus. The College will provide funding and support for the Sports Union and will also look at how it can make practical changes (such as in student timetables) that will encourage greater involvement in sports and wellbeing activities on each campus.

Students' Association will support work delivered by the Sports Union in the delivery of activities that feed into the Healthy Body Healthy Mind Award scheme, providing opportunities for students to participate in Health and Wellbeing activities across the college.

3. To improve class representative and feedback arrangements

This will include the College and Students' Association working in partnership to promote the use of the Class Representative Planners and to support the innovative use of social media as a feedback mechanism. We will also work together to further develop and improve the lead representative role and training, and to develop staff understanding and awareness of the importance and value of effective class/lead representation.

4. To ensure that Students' Association events and activities are open to (and taken up by) students from all departments and campuses in the College.

This will include ensuring that the range of events and activities we provide meet the needs of students from all areas – "something for everyone". We will also focus on meeting the needs of student groups that do not usually get involved. As part of this, the College will provide staffing support to ensure that there are equal opportunities for students to get involved in activities within each of the main campuses and through our Outreach centres.

With inclusiveness key to the success of a strong student voice, we will be working closely with external partners including Scottish Partnerships in Quality Scotland (SPARQS) and the National Society of Apprentices (NSoA), to represent a more diverse range of students who may have previously been underrepresented.

5. To be international in our outlook

Dundee and Angus College is a large and vibrant organisation and the Students' Association and Learner Engagement Team will work together to support and encourage students to expand their horizons, look at opportunities beyond our local area, and think about the issues and opportunities that exist in the wider world. This will include encouraging and supporting students to look at overseas study and travel options; looking at how we welcome and work with our international students; and support campaigns and events that help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Signed:

Grant Ritchie
Principal

Joshua Gregory
President - Students' Association

Date:

Date:
