



South Lanarkshire College

Students' Association

Board Report

January 2025

YOUR COLLEGE
 **YOUR WAY**

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Overview

It has been another busy period for the SA with lots of different events and activities taking place towards the end of 2024. We celebrated Halloween, Christmas Jumper Week, took part in the 16 Days of Action against GBV, attended lots of fantastic student events, created new opportunities for students and continued our commitment to tackling student poverty to name but a few.

As this report will highlight, we have established a fantastic network of student volunteers who, along with our Student Officers, are keen to be involved in SA and college events by collaborating with us to continually improve student health, wellbeing and helping ensure all events run smoothly. We received some amazing feedback from our student volunteers and look forward to providing them with more opportunities to get involved with the SA throughout the rest of this academic year!

The festive period can be a challenging time for many of our students, so we were keen to ensure we highlighted the support services available within the College in both the run-up to the holidays and re-iterated this again in January for all our new students beginning their studies. As part of this work, we created a specific newsletter to highlight to students the support that was available within the community while the College was closed over the Christmas holidays.

We are incredibly proud of the work that's been undertaken so far and very much look forward to carrying this on through 2025 with lots of fun and engaging activities for our students!

Student Engagement

Over the past few of months the Students' Association have been hosting a variety of fun events and activities for students to participate in to give students a better chance of getting to know who the SA are, where the SA offices are located and what the SA can do for them!

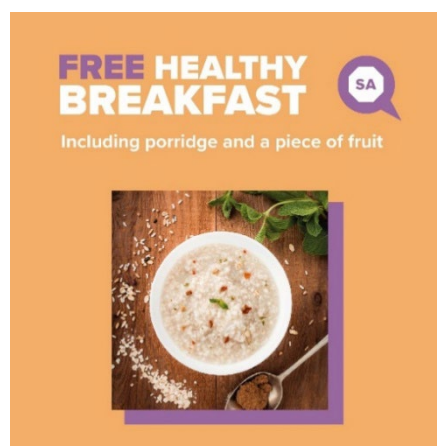
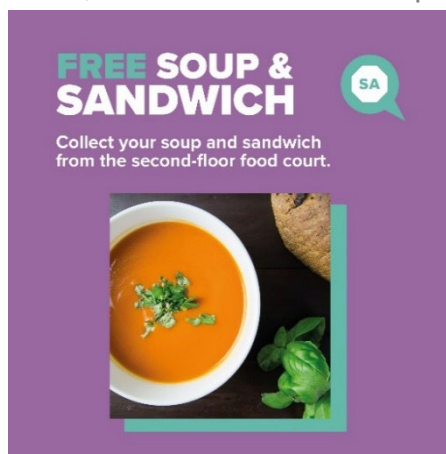
Halloween saw the return of our annual Costume Competition with prizes for the most creative efforts from our many guisers who participated. Our complimentary student meals and larder continued to be highly valued by our students. STEM returned to SLC and as always was a massive success. The much-anticipated Graduation Ceremony proved to be a wonderful occasion for the graduates of 2024 and their families who came along to celebrate their achievements. We are committed to working with Think Positive on our latest Student Mental Health Agreement and have held different activities to help the students know we are here for them if they need assistance with any issues that may come up. Supporting local initiatives has also been a consideration for the SA.

Complimentary Student Meals and Student Larder

The ongoing cost of living crisis is still greatly impacting our students, and the Student Association is committed to helping them through this challenging time. We are incredibly grateful to be able to continue to provide free healthy breakfasts and free soup and sandwich, with the financial support of the South Lanarkshire College Foundation, to our students. The SA looks forward to working with our new supplier Aramark to continue delivering this important initiative to our students on selected days each week.

We are also committed to continuing with our food larder for students as it has provided a lifeline to some of our students facing financial distress. They know they can access this much needed service by visiting the SA office whenever they need to. Located within the Student Association Office students can come in anytime and take whatever they need, including food and toiletries. In the larder, we also provide free stationary such as notebooks and binders.

Reminders of how to access both initiatives are shared across our social media channels, SA newsletter and on physical posters across campus.





STEM Event

Students who volunteered for the Step into STEM event in October were invited to a special appreciation gathering to thank them for the time they generously dedicated to the event. During the gathering, they received certificates and goody bags from Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). Each goody bag included a £10 Amazon voucher along with practical gadgets, all of which were gratefully received by the students.



Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA)

The College and Student Association have both committed to signing up for the Student Mental Health Agreement in 2024, with a view to undertaking a further 2-year plan on how to best support student mental health. The Student Mental Health Agreement is an initiative by Think Positive with the focus being to improve and promote student mental health support across Scotland. We are looking to building on the existing work already undertaken with regards to student mental health.

For example, as a focus on men's mental health the SA hosted a "Pizza and Patter" session. The session was held within the construction wing during lunch break in the hope of attracting our target audience. Twelve pizzas and canned drinks were provided for the students to come along, eat pizza and get chatting. Once the students heard about the free pizza they were pouring through the door. The response was excellent, and we had a lot of student engagement. The pizza ran out within 2 mins which was just what we wanted. Leaflets from relevant support organisations were given out. It was a fantastic opportunity deliver the message that men's mental health matters too and where we can, we will support them or signpost them onto someone who can.

To continue supporting student mental health a lunchtime Mindfulness Colouring Club has been running through the academic year. Activities on offer include board games, wordsearches, word jumbles, with colouring books and pencils all being made available. Seasonal materials are introduced during opportunities such as Christmas and Halloween.





Halloween

Halloween was a brilliant day with lots of students and staff taking part throughout the college in their amazing Halloween costumes. The SA President hosted a table with “What’s in the Box?” and there were screams and laughter aplenty while students felt their way through a myriad of touch sensations to guess the correct objects and claim their prize. Fun giveaways and party bags were handed out for the best costumes while the ultimate winner collected a meal voucher for The Black Rooster restaurant. There was a real buzz around the College and the student feedback was really positive. Two of our NC Photography students, Emma Gillespie and Corren McNeil, volunteered their time to capture the day on camera. The event wouldn’t have been such a success if it hadn’t been for Maura Higgins. Maura is one of our Student Officers who is studying British Sign Language and is an absolute whizz at designing and creating all our promotional posters.





Kilbryde Hospice – Giving Back to Our Community

Students had a great time raising awareness and funds for Kilbryde Hospice through a bake sale. The cake didn't last long and was sold out in 20 minutes. The students also went to the Kilbryde hospice for a half day field visit to learn more about the hospice environment. The bake sale raised an amazing £308! What a wonderful achievement.



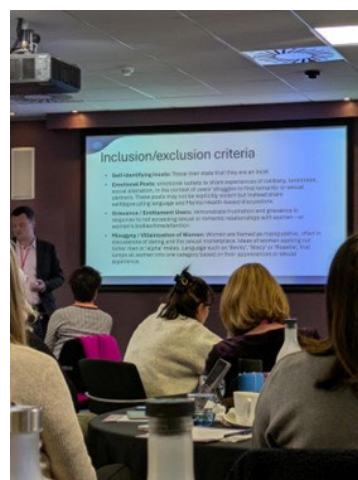
Carers Rights Day

On Carers Rights Day we were pleased to welcome Social Security Scotland to campus. Throughout the day, the team engaged in workshops and met with unpaid student carers to provide support, guidance and financial advice.



EmilyTest Charter

The SA continues to work closely with the College with regards to the annual review of the EmilyTest Charter. We submitted the second part of our Charter submission in November 2024 and are currently awaiting feedback. Members of the Student Services team and the SA attended the most recent EmilyTest Conference in November. It was an excellent day learning about the different support initiatives in place, as well as meeting lots of different people from a variety of organisations.



16 Days of Action Against GBV

SLC came out to show their support for #16Days and was well supported by students and staff in an array of brilliant ways to get behind #16Days.

The SA ran a social media campaign throughout the #16Days highlighting the key messages and priorities in tackling the scale and prevalence of violence against women and girls in our society. This makes it everyone's business to tackle this issue.

We hosted a coffee and chat event getting students together to discuss and raise awareness of gender-based violence and its many forms. The event was well attended and informative. It gave some students the opportunity to better understand the meaning of gender-based violence and how widespread it is in the day to day lives of many women and girls. Everyone left a little more enlightened.

Students and staff braved the freezing weather to participate in the Reclaim the Night March. The team set off from Castle Street in Hamilton and marched through the streets passing The Town Hall which was lit up in orange in another show of support to end violence against women and girls.



Egg Box Appeal

Refueewegee is a community-led charity in Glasgow. They offer people who have been forced to flee their home countries a warm welcome and some of the things needed to make feel that little bit more at home here in Scotland.

Every Monday they buy fresh eggs in bulk to distribute through their free store. The eggs are always extremely popular but still have to make it home in one piece and that's where the egg boxes come in.

The SA launched the egg box appeal back in August and students and staff didn't let us down! As a result of this huge, ongoing support we have found other sustainable uses for the egg boxes within the College. They are being recycled within our Horticulture department for planting seedlings and are being used to break down soil for planting in our college garden. The larger boxes were also donated to Loaves and Fishes who have also found good use for them.



Graduation Ceremony

Our class of 2024 had a fantastic time at the resplendent Hamilton Townhouse celebrating their graduation ceremony. It was their time to celebrate their achievements in a packed house full of their family and friends. We were delighted to be part of such a positive event.



Christmas Activities

The festive season was full of fun. We had Christmas Jumper week, our Christmas tree of support, guessing games and the Elf on the Shelf made daily appearances.

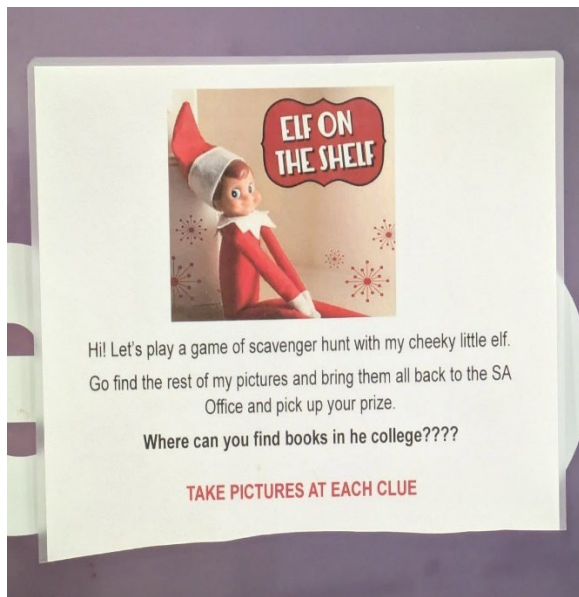
The students got really creative with their Christmas outfits. They went way beyond jumpers with festive accessories, make-up and nails.

Students were invited to colour a Christmas bauble or write a message of support before hanging their bauble on the SA Christmas tree, located in the Advice Centre.

The guessing games went down well with winners receiving care packs including hot chocolate sachets and marshmallows.

The Elf on the Shelf got up to all sorts of mischief including leading the students on a scavenger hunt and appearing in a different scenario each day as a bit of light-hearted fun for the students. It was a good laugh to see what he was up to every day.





Forthcoming Events

Re-Freshers'
 Love Your Planet
 Valentine's Day
 CE Care Day
 Purple Friday
 Easter Egg hunt
 Ongoing Men's Mental Health Drop-in
 Rebranding of Complimentary Breakfast and Lunch Posters.

28th – 30th January
 14th February
 14th February
 20th February
 28th February
 Easter 2025