



South Lanarkshire College

Students' Association

Board Report

May 2023

YOUR COLLEGE
 **YOUR WAY**

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Overview

It's been another busy period for the SA with lots of different events and activities taking place towards the end of the year.

The SA was delighted that students were involved in the interview process to appoint a new Principal for the College. It was important to the students that their voice was heard, and they were grateful to be given such a valuable opportunity to be part of this process. We would like to pass on our congratulations to Stella in her new post as Principal!

The SA has been busy conducting class visits to our January starts. We also celebrated Purple Friday (24 February), as part of LGBTQ History month and had lots of fun activities for students to get involved in, including coffee and cake mornings, nail painting, glitter tattoos, and fun stalls on the ground floor.

We helped to promote the Love Scotland Colleges campaign, and students were more than happy to share their thoughts with us, which we promoted on our social media channels.

We had lots of fun celebrating International Woman's Day by creating love hearts with encouraging messages written on them and making engaging video content for TikTok with our female students and staff members. On the same day, the SA and their Student Ambassadors supported the Step into Future Careers event hosted by our Construction team. Our Student Ambassadors led tours for students looking to find out more about careers involving sustainability.

The 2023/24 SA Election campaign is well under way for a new SA President and Vice President. We have promoted this with posters being distributed around the College, posts on social media, newsletters, and class visits. The Student President has also been carrying out class visits and had a stall in the Atrium promoting this at lunch time to answer any students may have.

We are incredibly proud of the work that's been undertaken so far and very much look forward to implementing lots of fun and engaging activities for our students throughout the remainder of the academic year!



New Principal

We are very grateful that students were invited to participate in the recruitment process to appoint a new Principal. They interviewed all the candidates' asking questions of each of them to make sure the student experience continues to be of a high quality for themselves and future students. It was a great opportunity for our students to have the experience of being on an interview panel and having the student voice heard.

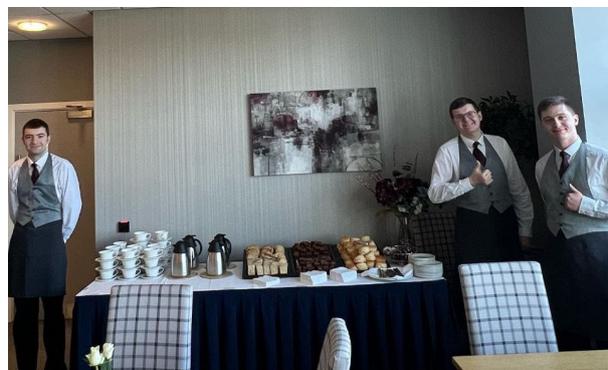
Thank you to all our wonderful students for taking the time to be involved. We are delighted to have Stella as our new Principal and very much look forward to working with her.



LGBT History Month

Throughout the month of February, the SA and the College celebrated LGBT History Month. SLC is a community where everyone should feel they are treated with respect, fairness and understanding and hosting events such as this helps to create such an environment.

Throughout LGBT History Month the SA hosted several events such as free coffee, cake, and chat sessions for students in The Study Restaurant. These took place on Thursday 23 February and Monday 27 February. We would like to extend our thanks to the College's fantastic Hospitality lecturers and students for providing the cakes and setting to help us to host such a great event.



Purple Friday – Friday 24 February

Alongside this we took part in Purple Friday on Friday 24 February! On this day we encouraged everyone to wear something purple to show their support for LGBT+ equality. Rainbow badges were available to pick up at the SA stall in the Atrium and we invited different organisations in to provide advice and support to anyone who wants to have a chat with them.

Our fantastic Beauty Students provided free purple nail painting, glitter tattoos and face painting.



Focus on Student Poverty & the Cost-of-Living Crisis

We continue to ensure our students are fully supported during the current cost of living crisis by providing free soup and sandwich, as well as a healthy breakfast. As detailed in the last SA Board Report, we expanded this provision and the uptake has increased even further. In March 2023 we provided 1,087 servings of free soup and sandwich and 2,309 servings of breakfast! As always, we are grateful to Inspire for their support in helping us provide this much needed service to our students.

The SA are also delighted to have been allocated a further £10,000 from the SLC Foundation, in addition to the previous £3,000 already provided. This will enable us to support students who are experiencing poverty by providing free soup and sandwich and free breakfast throughout the rest of the academic year. They have also generously provided these funds to help students at the start of AY 2023/24 and to ensure the incoming SA President and Vice President can continue to provide this support.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the SLC Foundation for these funds. This support is having a real and positive impact on our students by allowing them to focus on their coursework and not worry about how to afford lunch or breakfast throughout the week. As part of the bid to the Foundation, the SA collated student feedback of this service, with the following statements being provided by students directly:

"I think the free soup and sandwich and the breakfast is a great idea, it is a massive help. Money is tight for all students, especially being a mature learner buying breakfast and lunch is too expensive every day. It is a struggle having enough time to make breakfast before coming out as I am getting my daughter sorted for school whilst getting ready myself and taking her to school before coming to college, so the days the free breakfast is on is great as I know I don't need to worry about trying to grab breakfast before I go or going without and having to decide between lunch or breakfast. It is also the same for the soup and sandwich as I don't then need to spend time making lunch the night before, which relieves stress and money worries."

"Free soup and a sandwich helped me out when I was not able to buy anything from the cafe"



"Many students struggle with funds here at South Lanarkshire College and the food larder provides students with food and essentials. During my break and lunch, I have been able to comfortably use the food larder without feeling any stigma, the food larder also includes a variety of different foods and snacks including vegan options and more".



The SA Food Larder also continues to be heavily used with students regularly visiting the office to access foods and toiletries. We've received the following positive feedback from students on this:

"I think the food larder is a great way for students to feel comfortable with getting something to eat while not being able to afford lunch money. Or even forgetting money or packed lunch, it's a good way to help give that energy boost during the days of college."

"The food larder has helped me multiple times when I have forgot my lunch or money for the cafe, I am very comfortable using the food larder as it is located in an office out the way from everything else and the college provide bags so I can walk home without everyone being able to see what I have took."



SA Elections

The promotion of the SA elections for AY 2023/24 is now fully underway. We have promoted the elections through the student newsletter, social media, emails to all Curriculum Areas, stalls in the Atrium, posters, and class visits. The timeline for elections has been promoted to both staff and students and is outlined below:

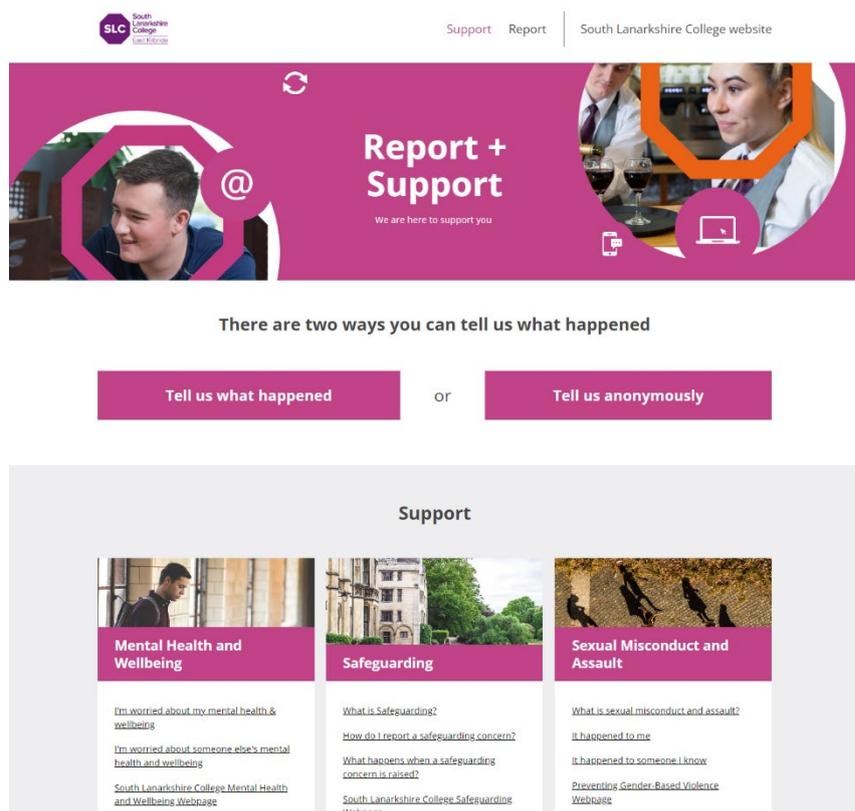
- **Mon 3 – Fri 28 April Nominations:** Open Nomination packs will be available from 3 April on the SLC website or on request from Karen Pirie. Packs must be completed and submitted no later than Friday 28 April.
- **Tue 2 May Candidates Briefing:** Candidates will be given information on how the election will run and how they can campaign for votes.
- **Wed 3 May – Wed 17 May Voting:** Voting will take place online on Moodle, and all students will have one vote for their preferred candidates.
- **Thu 18 May Checking & Counting:** SLC Staff will check and count all votes.
- **Fri 19 May Results:** Results will be announced.



The deadline for nomination packs is Friday 28 April. The current SA President looks forward to working with the College to ensure a smooth handover to the incoming SA for 2023/24.

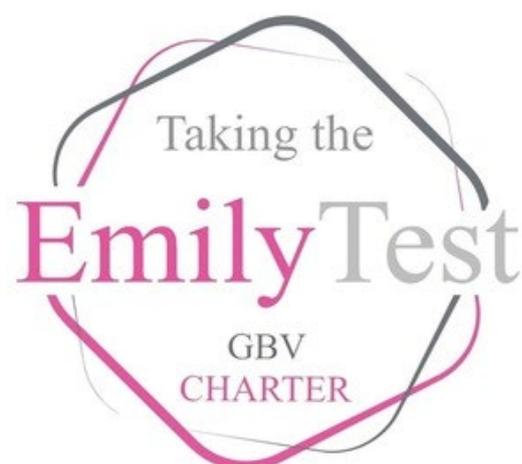
Report and Support

The SA were involved in recently promoting the College's new Report and Support software to all students. This new addition to the support services available at the College means that students can now make a formal report to the Student Services team directly through the software on the Student Portal. This report can be created either by providing contact details or choosing to make an anonymous report. We will provide support in directing students to this new feature, as well as signposting to our Student Services team as required by students. Further promotion of this will take place throughout the year and into the next academic term.



EmilyTest

We are delighted that the final submission of the EmilyTest GBV Charter took place on Monday 17 April. The College and SA have worked incredibly hard over the last couple of years to raise discussions surrounding gender-based violence and put in place strategies to help tackle this. The SA have been involved in multiple focus groups, along with students to ensure their voice is heard and to help shape the work that is taking place. We look forward to receiving the update on our submission on 26 May. Looking ahead the SA will continue to be heavily involved in GBV prevention work and we already have several initiatives planned for go forward, including a GBV



prevention survey for students, reviewing an e-module by Lanarkshire Rape Crisis that may be rolled out to students and also participating in annual events such as the 16 Days of Action against GBV.

We would like to acknowledge the fantastic support provided by EmilyTest in creating this submission and thank them for the excellent partnership opportunity provided. We look forward to seeing the work conducted by them going from strength to strength in the future.

Events

Step into Future Careers Event – 8 March 2023

We had a great time working with our Construction team in partnership with DYW (Developing the Young Workforce) to host the Step into Future Careers Event on 8 March! The event attracted over 100 visitors and 25 employers with the aim of providing secondary school pupils, and anyone looking for a new career, with a wider understanding of the future green and sustainable jobs sector and industries.

Our Student Ambassadors did a fantastic job of welcoming visitors and employers to the event. They also took tours around the Low Carbon House to showcase the sustainable technologies and skills available to learn at the College. After the event we arranged a thank you session for the students and gave them each a certificate for volunteering.



International Women's Day – 8 March 2023

Wednesday 8 March was a busy time for the College with our Step into Future Careers Event and celebrating International Women's Day! Throughout the day we had stalls in the Atrium and SA volunteers wrote out positive messages to share with staff across the College, celebrating the amazing work they do!



Congratulations to our Foundation Apprentice Students

Our Foundation Apprentice students celebrated completing their apprenticeship courses in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and placements with local employers. Students spoke about their positive experiences of choosing to undertake an apprenticeship course while at secondary school. The skills they have learned have helped towards being accepted into university, college and employment and the value of experiencing college life before leaving school.

The SA had a fantastic time celebrating with our students. Thank you to our lecturers for supporting our students and the commitment from local employers to help make our students such a success. Congratulations to all our students and we wish them good luck in what they decide to do next!



Forthcoming Events

Employer Engagement Event – 27 April 2023

The SA and Student Ambassadors will be providing volunteer support for the Employer Engagement Event on 27 April. The College has invited a host of Built Environment companies to visit the College, which is being organised by Nicola Murray and the Employability team.

We look forward to meeting with all the employers taking part and encouraging students to network and engage with them on the night.

Mental Health Awareness Week – 15 May to 21 May 2023

Mental Health Awareness Week, now in its 23rd year, runs from 15-21 May and is hosted by the charity, Mental Health Foundation.

This year, the theme is 'anxiety'. Across the UK, people are encouraged to get involved by sharing their experience of anxiety and the things that can help with the hashtag #ToHelpMyAnxiety. As part of the campaign, the Mental Health Foundation will be publishing guidance on how we can manage and improve feelings of anxiety and prevent them from developing into a more serious mental health problem.

For more information about this year's Mental Health Awareness Week visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk/mhaw

The SA will work in partnership with the College to promote the event and host activities during the week.

College Way Market – week beginning 15 May & 29 May

The SA is helping to promote the upcoming College Way Market Pop-Up Shop during May. This event is being organised by our Supported Programme students and lecturers to encourage sustainable practices. They are asking students to donate clothes for everyday use and workwear and then during the market students will be able to choose 5 items of clothing each for free!

The SA are helping to highlight the clothing recycling bins that are located around college and promoting the event through our social media channels and student newsletter.