



REGIONAL BOARD

26/06/25

BCSA Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER For Discussion

- 1.1 This paper features BCSA's Operational Plan to highlight the activity of the Students' Association throughout the academic year 2024-25.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Our Operational Plan is split into five sections which determine how our areas of work align with the values and goals set out in our Strategic Plan. The BCSA team meet regularly to review and update the Operational Plan to track our activity and ensure we are working together to achieve our strategic mission.






3.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION(S) REQUIRED





- 3.1 I recommend that the Regional Board: -
 - 3.1.1 Review the BCSA's 2024/25 operational activity.



4.0 BACKGROUND


- 4.1 This Operational Plan follows the same structure as our previous plans with updated actions for this academic year. Student Officers work together and independently to complete the actions of the Students' Association.


5.0 BCSA Operational Plan 2024-25



Not Started		In Progress		Complete		Some slippage but on track for deadline		Not Complete	
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Project	Action	Deadline	Status	Progress Report
Shaping the Life & Work of the College - Steering				
Student voices will be at the heart of decision making at Borders College.	Student Officers and BCSA Staff sit on all relevant Committees.	June 2025.		Student President and Support Officer sit on relevant committees. VP for Wellbeing & Activities will attend the Audit and Risk Committee. VP for Newtown attended Sustainability Committee.
	BCSA team involved in the College's recruitment process.	June 2025.		Student President invited to participate in staff recruitment. Student President involved in Micro-Teaches.
	BCSA team meeting regularly with College leaders to share the voices of students.	June 2025.		Student President regularly meets with executive staff and will support VPs to do the same. VPs being introduced to key staff for their roles.
	Class Rep voices used to shape curriculum and learning decisions at College.	June 2025.		62 Class Reps elected across the College. Organising class visits when Class Reps are having difficulties engaging. 35 classes shared October feedback with BCSA.

				<p>19 classes shared November feedback with BCSA. 31 classes shared January feedback with BCSA. 24 classes shared feedback so far for March.</p> <p>From October Class Rep feedback, we heard from 330 students. From November Class Rep feedback, we heard from 158 students. From January Class Rep feedback, we heard from 269 students. From March Class Rep feedback, we heard from 190 students.</p>
	Regular meetings between the Chair of the Regional Board and Student Officers.	December 2024.		Meetings scheduled in January and February.
Staff and students are aware of the valuable representative work carried out by BCSA.	Students are aware of the Class Representative system and other ways BCSA represents student voices.	June 2025.		<p>26 classes visited to introduce the Class Rep system. Welcome Session used to share Class Rep system with students at the beginning of term. 62 Reps elected.</p> <p>First Student Experience Committee held on 28th October.</p> <p>Class Visits used to re-promote Class Reps to classes.</p> <p>BCSA supporting Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre with student focus group.</p> <p>Worked with 8 students to participate in an external focus group review of the college's VLE system.</p>




				<p>Class visits carried out through February to promote Student President elections and wider college activity.</p> <p>BCSA supporting student engagement in the National Student Satisfaction Survey.</p>
	<p>Provide students with a range of ways to share views/opinions with BCSA on a range of important issues.</p>	<p>June 2025.</p>		<p>53 students participated in an induction pulse survey.</p> <p>Introducing class meetings to visit classes having issues or where the class rep hasn't engaged.</p> <p>Introducing feedback boxes on campuses to offer another way to share feedback with BCSA.</p> <p>Worked with the curriculum to promote the Student Sustainability Survey to students. 93 students took part.</p> <p>Promoted the College's Strategic Ambition survey.</p> <p>Worked with EDI Officer to promote Safety and Support Survey to students and received 50 responses.</p> <p>Worked with 9 students to participate in a focus group sharing their thoughts on the changing college spaces.</p>



				Currently working to promote the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey to all students to support the college meeting their 50% response target.
	Work with different teams across the College, such as Curriculum, to build understanding of the BCSA and work collaboratively.	June 2025.		<p>Working with Student Support on a breakfast club initiative.</p> <p>Working with EDI Officer on a Mental Health in the Curriculum project.</p> <p>Supporting work undertaken by Active Campus Coordinator. Funded hiring of football pitch for 4 5-a-side events through October which will be brought back when we have better weather.</p> <p>Sharing free cupcakes to promote college's Strategic Ambition Student Survey.</p> <p>Presented at Student Support Team Meeting sharing exactly how BCSA works, what our team looks like and some of our current projects.</p> <p>Students' Association Support Officer presented at the Principal's Address to promote a better understanding of BCSA among staff teams.</p> <p>Supporting IT with gathering student feedback on Canvas and other systems. Worked with 6 students.</p>
Governance & Democracy - Democracy				




Our work will be determined by the wants and needs of our student population.	Elect and train Class Representatives.	October 2024.		62 Reps elected. Currently have 25 reps trained but training will be ongoing until the reps have engaged in training.
	Support the BCSA team to achieve their manifesto goals and work to hear the voices of students.	June 2025.		<p>2 VPs elected with different remits.</p> <p>VPs undertaking work on Hidden Disabilities, Sustainability, and food provision.</p> <p>VP for Activities & Wellbeing undertook a hidden disabilities information and survey session where they heard from 31 students and staff.</p> <p>Hidden Disabilities information leaflet and posters created. A support group is being created too.</p> <p>Newtown Office Litter Picks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VP for Newtown hosted two campus litter picks at Gala and Newtown. 6 participants at Newtown campus filled 3 bags. 2 participants at Gala filled 1 bag. May Litter Pick at Newtown with 5 participants. <p>Supporting our Voluntary Care Experienced Officers to represent the voices of care experienced students. First pulse survey session heard from 18 students on their understanding of care experience. Further sessions to take place.</p>



				Supporting a student to create a Student Social Group to help isolated students to socialise and meet new people. 5 meetings held between March and June with 6-12 students attending each meeting.
	Respond to developing issues facing students to help support them.	June 2025.		<p>Supporting student groups with class specific issues.</p> <p>Introduced campaign for Campus Pantry donations in response to cost of living and food poverty struggles.</p> <p>Identifying funding streams to support a free breakfast initiative.</p> <p>Restocking Stim Bins as required.</p> <p>Shared 74 sustainable period products to celebrate Environmenstrual Week and encourage students to access the college's free period product provision.</p> <p>On Wear Pink Day BCSA shared 37 free sustainable period products with staff and students.</p> <p>Developed a Winter Wellbeing Toolkit to share advice and guidance over the winter period.</p> <p>Campus Pantry supported 25 students</p>






				<p>Campus Pantry food kits created to support students accessing our food bank. Meal Kits provided individuals with 1-2 days of food – 20 kits have been collected from April.</p> <p>VP for Wellbeing & Activities worked with Booker to receive a £60 product donation to the Campus Pantry.</p> <p>Worked with UNCRC to promote and engage with students around the importance of young people knowing their rights.</p> <p>Shared free soup with 17 students at a Winter Wellbeing event hosted by BCSA. Student feedback was gathered on the wellbeing and mental health experience at college.</p> <p>Raising awareness of the changing bus routes which will affect students. Sharing new timetables with individuals who use the service.</p> <p>Campus Scavenger Hunts hosted to support students to better understand their campus and where to access certain types of support. 12 students participated.</p> <p>Offering free soup to students throughout May on a Thursday afternoon to support them during assessment time.</p>
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				Supporting students to understand what options are available to them as they transition out of college. Created a question sheet to help students find the right path for them.
Our democratic processes will be representative of our students and provide all students with a fair opportunity to influence change.	Elect Student President.	March 2025.		3 nominees stood in the Student President election. 127 students voted in the election. Our highest turnout in 3 years.
	Elect two Vice Presidents.	October 2024.		3 candidates for Activities & Wellbeing and 3 candidates for Newtown. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 VP for Wellbeing & Activities elected from Galashiels Campus. • 1 VP for Newtown Campus elected.
	Work to regularly engage with students through pulse surveys and focus groups to provide them with a platform to express their views.	June 2025.		53 students engaged in Induction Pulse Survey. Promoting Strategic Ambition Student Survey. Promoting Sustainable Skills Survey. 93 students took part. Promoting Student Safety and Support Survey. Work underway to introduce a monthly focus group for students to share feedback on a range of student issues. Held student interviews to better understand the student experience of the BYT mentoring



				<p>project. This feedback was shared with Student Support to help shape BYT support.</p> <p>Supported Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre to work with 6 students to review their young people's service.</p> <p>Supported Youth Borders to engage with 42 School's Academy students on a survey looking at Trusted Adults.</p> <p>Surveyed 155 students on their experience of Careers Advice and the 'My Career Hub' at college.</p> <p>Wellbeing Pulse Survey engaged 93 students to share their thoughts on mental health and wellbeing as college students</p> <p>LGBT pulse survey asked students and staff what awareness activity/information they would be interested in seeing on campus. 23 individuals engaged at Gala campus, Newtown session to be held mid-March.</p>
	Work with students to create our Student Partnership Agreement.	December 2024.		Published on website.
Aware and Active Students - Engaged				
Voluntary opportunities and activities will be accessible to all students.	Provide students with opportunities to hold Ambassador roles within BCSA so they can champion matters and issues important to them.	June 2025.		Identified 2 students holding voluntary roles as Care Experienced Officers.






				2 Care Experienced Officers raised £50 over two bake sales to raise funds for a Care Experienced Group.
	Work with external organisations to provide students with opportunities to volunteer.	June 2025.		<p>Actively promoting volunteering opportunities to students.</p> <p>Introduced a Volunteering hub on the BCSA Student Portal to promote volunteering opportunities to students.</p> <p>Working with external organisations to promote awareness raising activities.</p>
Students will feel confident bringing issues to our attention.	BCSA team regularly visit all campuses.	June 2025.		<p>Ongoing throughout the academic year. Visiting campuses depending on the time that best suits their students.</p> <p>BCSA team working together to visit all campuses.</p>
	See increased engagement from students in BCSA activity.	June 2025.		<p>Increase in Class Rep numbers.</p> <p>Candidate numbers running for our Vice President positions doubled this year. Vice President election voting numbers increased by 8% this year.</p> <p>Increased number of students interested in and standing in the Student President election.</p> <p>Increase in election turnout.</p>



	Students involved in monitoring the work carried from the Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA).	June 2025.		VPs will support/initiate this work once elected.
	Increase visibility of BCSA with students to build stronger relationships.	June 2025.		<p>Attended 16 Welcome Sessions to introduce students to our work and mission.</p> <p>Supported Quiet Introduction sessions through summer to share our work with new students.</p> <p>Class visits underway to greet students.</p> <p>Worked to introduce a News section to the Student Portal to share updates with students as they will see this page most often.</p> <p>Worked to introduce a 'Key Documents for Students' section on the college document hub so that students are more aware of their rights and responsibilities before and during their studies.</p> <p>Hosting campus tours for incoming students throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Dates set to support Quiet Introduction Sessions through summer 2025.</p> <p>BCSA active during Essential Information Week to meet new students.</p>
Sustainable Resources - Sustainability				

Annually review the roles available to students within BCSA to ensure they meet the needs of our student community and reflect the diversity that makes up our student population.	Student President reviewed Vice President roles.	August 2024.		Roles reviewed and VP for Wellbeing & Activities introduced as Student President is taking a more active role in the Education remit.
	Support Officer meets with Student Officers at the end of their time in office to review their roles, review the support they received, and work to improve the experience of future Student Officers.	June 2025.		Dates scheduled.
Student Officers and the BCSA team are equipped with the skills and knowledge to be effective leaders and student representatives.	Newly elected Vice Presidents supported through Staff Induction, and Induction to BCSA and their role.	November 2024.		
	Regular team meetings to review the ongoing work of the BCSA Team.	June 2025.		Regular weekly meetings between Student President and Support Officer. Team meetings set up between Student Officers taking place weekly on different campuses.
	BCSA team receive appropriate training for their roles.	June 2025.		Student President attended That's Quality! Event for Student Officer delivered by sparqs during summer. Team will work together to understand training and development needs when VPs are elected. Working with Mental Health Coordinator to deliver an overview session on student mental health. Attended NUS Scotland Conference during April to meet peers and find out national information.

				Involvement in Trauma Informed Skills Training and Coaching Training.
Value & Impact - Growth				
The services and activities offered by the Students' Association fit the needs of our students and allow them to engage in new experiences.	Organise events and activities for students to feel supported and have fun.	June 2025.		<p>Hosted Freshers' Fair.</p> <p>Hosted daily induction events for students.</p> <p>Cup of Kindness events to promote Campus Pantry and collect donations.</p> <p>Free cupcake events to promote surveys.</p> <p>2 Dungeons & Dragons clubs running for a second year.</p> <p>Pool Tournaments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pool League: 6 sessions held engaging 16 students in pool competitions. With 1 winner named champion. • Mini Pool League: Schools speed pool session held with 8 students taking part. With 1 winner named champion. • Doubles Pool League ran through February and into March. 16 students participated with two winners at the end of the sessions. • May Speed Pool Tournament – 8 participants and 1 winner. <p>Weekly Therapet sessions on Galashiels campus</p>

				<p>Organised a college Christmas Jumper Day which raised £40 for Cash for Kids.</p> <p>Winter Wellbeing Shop to support staff and students to access affordable festive gifts. The gifts were donated by staff and students. This raised £137.02 for our Campus Pantry and the therapists.</p> <p>LGBT History Month Celebrations. Session held at Gala to promote LGBTQ+ awareness, share freebies, and rock painting – 38 individuals got involved. Newtown session scheduled for March.</p> <p>Worked with Just Cycle to provide 23 free bikes to students and staff.</p> <p>Easter Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 students involved in Easter Egg scavenger hunt. • 16 students took part in Easter hat parade. <p>Care Experienced Drop-ins hosted by Galashiels Care Experience Officer.</p>
	Pulse surveys, focus groups and Class Rep feedback used to assess the needs of students and better understand what they would like from their College and BCSA.	June 2025.		<p>Planning of required focus groups and surveys underway.</p> <p>Class Rep feedback being shared at committees and with teams.</p>
	Student feedback shapes the services and activities available to them.	June 2025.		<p>Class Rep system has been updated and shaped by student feedback.</p>

				<p>Supporting a review of the Border Young Talent system with a series of interviews with care experienced student by Support Officer.</p> <p>VLE Focus Group.</p> <p>Student space adapted from student feedback to make it more accessible.</p> <p>Student feedback being used to shape new campus spaces.</p>
The achievements and impact of BCSA will be visible to students, staff and stakeholders.	Student Newsletter to be continued by Student President and Vice Presidents.	June 2025.		
	BCSA share monthly Staff Newsletter articles.	June 2025.		Monthly updates shared with all staff.
	Weekly Student President updates on activity shared with students.	June 2025.		
	Student Officers and staff attend NUS, sparqs and other relevant external events.	June 2025.		<p>Attendance at That's Quality!</p> <p>Attendance at Tertiary Quality Student Expert Group hosted by sparqs.</p> <p>Support Officer engaging in the Student Engagement Staff Network led by sparqs.</p> <p>Attended NUS Scotland Conference during April to meet peers and find out national information.</p>
	Host annual BCSA Staff and Student awards.	May 2025.		<p>Winners selected awards being shared during May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 winners and 9 highly commended.

	Work with Marketing Team to promote work, projects and successes.	June 2025.		Regularly promoting BCSA opportunities with Marketing
	Create and share annual round up of our activities.	June 2025.		Currently underway to be shared over summer via social media. Then it will be shared over induction with students to support students to better understand some of what BCSA do.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

6.1.1 No direct financial implications.

6.2 Learner Implications

6.2.1 The work carried out by BCSA reflects the interests and needs of the students we represent. Their views and opinions influence and shape our areas of work.

6.3 Staff Implications

6.3.1 No direct staff implications.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications/Equality Impact Assessment

6.4.1 Some of the activities and initiatives we participate in, and host are influenced by the college's Awareness Calendar.

6.5 Sustainability/Environmental Implications

6.5.1 No direct sustainability/environmental implications.

7.0 RISK COMMENTARY

7.1 BCSA's operational plan is designed to mitigate risks for students.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 For further information on this academic year's work please discuss with the Student President or Support Officer.

Chris Alder and Eilidh Forrest

Borders College Student President and Students' Association Support Officer

12/06/25

Previous Board or College Committee Approvals:

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