

**CURRICULUM, QUALITY &
STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
28/05/26**

BCSA Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER **For information**

- 1.1 This paper features BCSA's Operational Plan to highlight the ongoing activity of the Students' Association throughout the academic year 2025-26.

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 Curriculum, Quality, & Student Experience Committee:-
3.1.1 Review the ongoing work underway in BCSA.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This Operational Plan follows the same structure as our previous plans with updated actions for this academic year. The Student President will work with our Vice Presidents to achieve the work outlined in our Operational Plan. The different manifestos of Student Officers will help shape some of the actions within the plan.

5.0 BCSA Operational Plan 2025-26

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 2026.		Support Officer attending as support to Student Officers sitting on committees.
	BCSA team involved in the College's recruitment process.	June 2026.		Student President involved in Micro Teach. Student President invited to participate in stakeholder section of the Vice Principal – Finance and Corporate Services interview.
	BCSA team meeting regularly with College leaders to share the voices of students.	June 2026.		Student President met college leaders throughout the summer for introductory meetings. Student President has regular catch ups with the Vice Principal for Student Experience. Students' Association have presented our first BCSA Student Feedback Update to the Learning & Teaching Update following the dissolution of the Student Experience Committee.
	Class Rep voices used to shape curriculum and learning decisions at College.	June 2026.		Class Rep recruitment underway with 46 classes represented by a Class Rep and 55 Reps in total.

Staff and students are aware of the valuable representative work carried out by BCSA.				51% of Rep have been trained (+3% from last year). Class Rep feedback used to shape BCSA Update to Learning & Teaching Committee. Next Learning & Teaching Committee updates scheduled for 1st June.
	Regular meetings between the Chair of the Regional Board and Student Officers.	December 2025.		Meetings taking place prior to Regional Board meetings.
	Students and staff are aware of the Class Representative system and other ways BCSA represents student voices.	June 2026.		CPD sessions delivered to all delivery staff by sparqs and Students' Association Support Officer on Student Partnerships and the Class Rep system. BCSA working to promote our Advocacy service to staff and students through staff team meetings and promotional material.
	Provide students with a range of ways to share views/opinions with BCSA on a range of important issues.	June 2026.		Schools Academy pulse survey created to understand their experience of the start of college – completed by 22 students. Focus Groups being planned on vaping. Library Consultation focus group help with 10 students and their feedback was reported to staff at the consultation. 44 students provided input into the layout proposals for 'The Study' space. 34 students involved in a pulse survey asking about energy drinks on campus.

				21 Newtown students participated in Quiet Room survey. Vice President for Activities & Wellbeing working with Scottish Borders Council to hear student voices on their transport to and from College to shape bus service availability.
	Work with different teams across the College, such as Curriculum, to build understanding of the BCSA and work collaboratively.	June 2026.		BCSA working to promote our Advocacy service to staff and students through staff team meetings and promotional material. BCSA supported promotional work of the Sustainability Skills Survey through stalls to encourage students to engage with this project. Efforts across the college successfully engaged 207 students in this survey. Working with Student Support to gather student feedback which will shape the Student Advice Centre due to the upcoming campus changes. A student walkthrough of the space is scheduled to capture student feedback.
	Work across all campuses to ensure students are aware of BCSA and have the opportunity to work with us.	June 2026.		Campus visits have continued throughout the year to boost visibility of BCSA and represent all students.
Governance & Democracy - Democracy				
Our work will be determined by the wants	Elect and train Class Representatives.	October 2025.		Class Rep recruitment underway with 46 classes represented by a Class Rep and 55 Reps in total.

and needs of our student population.				51% of Rep have been trained (+3% from last year).
	Support the BCSA team to achieve their manifesto goals and work to hear the voices of students.	June 2026.		Student President has a manifesto tracker to support work to achieve manifesto goals. Student President Manifesto Goals: • Ensure All Students Feel Heard and Included • Advocate for Student Needs • Expand Hidden Disability and Neurodiversity Support • Organise Student Activities and Events Robert Manifesto Goals: • Support students to have their voices heard • Run more events, activities and groups at college • Raise awareness of support available to students Theya Manifesto Goals: • Making our campus a place where every student feels involved, supported, and proud to be part of the college community. • To create and support more events and activities across campus.

				• I also want to focus on strengthening our Student Ambassador community. • Commitment to being approachable and supportive.
	Create opportunities to share regular updates on the work of BCSA with students.	June 2026.		Student President working towards completing regular updates to be shared with all students for the next academic year as this has slipped this year.
	Respond to developing issues facing students to help support them.	June 2026.		Currently responding to student issues concerning food access on different campuses. BCSA worked to place a fridge on the Tweedbank Campus in response to student feedback collected from their Feedback Station. Working with local supermarkets to provide a regular supply of food for the Campus Pantry at NSB. Wellbeing Wednesday, in collaboration with Student Support, is being hosted at Newtown Campus to provide students with free hot soup over lunchtime. 34 students accessed over 3 sessions.
Our democratic processes will be representative of our students and provide all students with a fair	Elect Student President.	March 2026.		Election process completed. 4 candidates stood for election and Cherene Thomson has been re-elected for another academic year.

opportunity to influence change.	Elect two Vice Presidents.	October 2025.		1 VP for Wellbeing & Activities elected 1 VP for Newtown elected
	See an increase in our voter turnout across our elections.	March 2026.		Student President Election – 126 votes (-1 votes on previous year) Vice President Election – 85 votes (-6 votes on previous year)
	Work to regularly engage with students through pulse surveys and focus groups to provide them with a platform to express their views.	June 2026.		Big Student Survey heard from 126 students on Induction. Partnership survey heard from 93 students. Health and Safety survey heard from 38 students. 34 students involved in a pulse survey asking about energy drinks on campus. Pulse survey on the use of the Quiet Room heard from 20 students. Sustainability Skills Survey – supported work across the college to engage 207 students in this national survey.
	Work with students to create our Student Partnership Agreement.	December 2025.		93 students shared their views on partnership working which will shape this year's partnership agreement. Student Partnership Agreement being sent to SLT and Regional Board.
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 2026.		Currently have 2 voluntary student ambassadors with other students keen to get involved. Student Ambassador Activity: • Supported student tours over the Open Day. • Supported Red Nose Day activity on-site. • Held stalls at Student Drop-ins to promote BCSA.
	Work with external organisations to provide students with opportunities to volunteer.	June 2026.		Student Ambassador hosted table promotions with freebies of the Youth Borders Young Persons' Lead Group to get young people involved in the group. Student Ambassador also visited 4 Schools Academy groups to promote this opportunity. Students' Association supporting The Drop-in by having a stall once a month.
Students will feel confident bringing issues to our attention.	See increased engagement from students in BCSA activity.	June 2026.		Increase in Student Ambassadors. Groups: • Student Social Group with 6 students regularly attending. • Dungeons & Dragons running weekly with 7 students regularly attending. • Pool League underway with 21 students taking part. Doubles competition taking place after Christmas.

				• Biology Study Club underway hosted by Student Ambassador for 4 students. • Vice President for Activities & Wellbeing beginning Care Experienced Group.
	Students involved in monitoring the work carried from the Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA).	June 2026.		Mental Health Awareness Week used to speak to students about the actions they take to look after their own mental health and to gather feedback on what the college has done to support their mental health/wellbeing and what it could do better. This will help shape the next SMHA.
	Provide students with regular opportunities to meet with Student Officers.	June 2026.		Student President has regular student meeting time across campuses alongside VPs.
	Ensure students are aware of initiatives offered to alleviate food poverty and review support offered so that it meets the needs of current students.	June 2026.		48 Campus Pantry Kits provided since the beginning of term. 25 students accessed Campus Pantry. Working to provide all campuses with a regular supply of food. BCSA worked to place a fridge on the Tweedbank Campus in response to student feedback collected from their Feedback Station. Working with local supermarkets to provide a regular supply of food for the Campus Pantry at NSB.

				BCSA working to come to a solution regarding a Galashiels campus microwave to provide students with access to heating their own food. Wellbeing Wednesday, in collaboration with Student Support, is being hosted at Newtown Campus to provide students with free hot soup over lunchtime. 34 students accessed over 3 sessions.
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 2025.		
	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 2026.		Role review time scheduled with officers.
	Review the role of Student Ambassadors.	June 2026.		Review time scheduled with Student Ambassadors.
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 2025.		
	Regular team meetings to review the ongoing work of the BCSA Team.	June 2026.		
	BCSA team receive appropriate training for their roles.	June 2026.		Student President completed their summer induction to support the beginning of their role.

				Vice Presidents have completed induction training for their roles.
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 2026.		Freshers' Fair saw 20 organisation host stalls to advertise their support to students and staff. Freshers' Scavenger Hunts shared 16 Baxter Storey prizes/tokens with students to help them learn to navigate Galashiels Campus. Mini Freshers Fair NSB – 39 attendees. Freshers' Game Activities took place at Newtown Campus to let students meet their Student President and meet new students. Freshers' Pool tournament - 7 students take part. Freshers' Rock Painting activities for Newtown and Galashiels – 18 students participated. BCSA stall at Suicide Prevention Drop-in – 35 students engaged. Pool League scheduled for 21 students. Student Social Group taking place every two weeks with 6 students attending.

				Therapet visits continued throughout the year. Care Experienced Week • VP hosted Children's Rights Bingo – 15 students took part. • Scavenger Hunt – 25 students took part. Halloween: • Bingo – 7 students. • Fancy Dress – 17 students + 3 staff. Winter Wellbeing: • Wellbeing Bags sharing information about support services and free hot drinks shared with 33 students. • February session shared with 24 students. Christmas Bingp • 13 students Open Day • 21 student tours delivered to groups varying in size from 1-10 individuals. Wellbeing Drop-in: January's Blue Monday session visited by 13 individuals.
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				Stress Awareness Month stall visited by 26 students. LGBTQ+ History Month Celebrations: • 36 students participated in Galashiels and Newtown activities which shared information about LGBTQ+ key dates in history, games, and freebies. • Sessions held at Galashiels and Newtown have prompted student groups to be created for members of the LGBTQ+ community. Supported the Find Your Vibe Class to fundraise through a range of activities to support the Campus Pantry. They raised £97.50 over 2.5 hours. Voter Registration Campaign: • NUS Scotland visited Galashiels Campus to promote registering to vote in the upcoming Scottish Parliamentary election and 15 students registered to vote. • Electoral Registration Officers visited Newtown Campus - 1 student registered to vote and 5 enquired. • Further sessions at Gala and Tweedbank were held to register a further 6 students
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				• 22 students in total registered to vote through our voting campaign. International Women's Day: • 25 students and staff submitted their inspirational women which have been displayed in Reception. • IWD Craft Stall hosted at Newtown where 10 students took part. • Supporting a HND Business Student through their work placement with BCSA. They are working on a social media campaign to celebrate International Women's Day activity across March. Easter: • Scavenger Hunt completed by 9 students. Earth Day 22nd April: • 60 students participated and collected free Keep-Cups to promote sustainability in partnership with Baxter Storey. Wellbeing Walk: • 4 students and 4 staff members participated in a wellbeing walk outside of college to enjoy nature.
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				Supporting the Active Campus Coordinator to host Football and touch rugby sessions throughout May until the end of term.
	Student feedback shapes the services and activities available to them.	June 2026.		Student feedback shaping the campus redevelopment work: • Library Consultation • Student Advice Centre • 'The Study' layout Student feedback being collected on wellbeing support at college to support changes to Student Support Services. Big Student Survey Feedback: • Helps shape student induction
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 2026.		Student President will work to re-start this for next academic year.
	BCSA share monthly Staff Newsletter articles.	June 2026.		Student President Newsletter first edition shared with all students. Staff Teams Page being used to further update staff on BCSA activity.
	Student Officers and staff attend NUS, sparqs and other relevant external events.	June 2026.		Student President attended That's Quality! ran by sparqs to introduce them to the quality process. Student President attend VOX Scotland Conversation Café on the 30th of September to discuss mental health.

				Support Officer attended Borders Know Your Network Event to co-chair a thematic discussion on the UNCRC: Shaping Support with and For Young People Student President STEP student representative with QAA Scotland. Student President co-chairing NUS Scotland Membership Meeting for Student Officers. Student President working with NUS to raise student awareness of Scottish Parliamentary Elections taking place in May. VP for Wellbeing & Activities and Support Officer attending Equality and Human Rights Commission event hosted at Galashiels Campus for 'Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the South of Scotland'.
	Host annual BCSA Staff and Student awards.	May 2026.		Nominations underway to select winners and awards to be distributed.
	Create and share annual round up of our activities.	June 2026.		

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 Activities undertaken by BCSA are often shaped by college's Equalities Awareness Calendar.

6.5 Sustainability/Environmental Implications

6.5.1 No direct Sustainability/Environmental Implications.

7.0 RISK COMMENTARY

7.1 Without the ongoing work of BCSA students' risk being unrepresented.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 For further information on the ongoing work of the BCSA please discuss with the Student President or Support Officer.

Eilidh Forrest & Cherene Thomson

Students' Association Support Officer & Student President

14/05/26

Previous Board or College Committee Approvals:

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