**Dundee and Angus College**

**Conference Report**

**Summary of office structure and remits**

* The Student President is directly elected by students from across the college. The Vice Presidents are directly elected by students from their respective campuses. In the latest elections (April 2014), almost 600 students participated in this process, compared to a historic college sector average of 200.
* The President (a paid full-time sabbatical role) will act as a voice for the student body. They will travel extensively between campuses to ensure effective communication between the students, Students’ Association, the Board of Management, local and national Government bodies and other groups as the student body sees fit. In partnership with the Vice President and the Learner Engagement team, the President will ensure that our students are well represented in all decision making processes relating to their learning and the life of the college, in addition to supporting engagement activities and the enhancement of the learner experience.
* The Vice Presidents (a paid part-time sabbatical role) will support the President in ensuring effective communication. They will also play a key role within their designated campus, but will also travel between campuses, to support student representation, advocacy and engagement activities.
* Moreover, these elected officers will have seats on the college’s main boards. The President (as mentioned) will liaise with the college Executive (the Principal and, in particular, the Assistant Principal for Planning and Performance). In addition to that, each of the officers will sit on various committees in the areas of: Curriculum, Quality Enhancement, Equality & Diversity, Health/Safety/Wellbeing and ICT.

**Summary of staff support**

* Dundee and Angus College has greatly and generously invested a lot of money in expanding the Students’ Association, in order to entrench it as a valuable and effective part of the overall college structure.
* As part of this, each of our three campuses will have a full time Learner Engagement Officer, who will be based at the Students’ Association office. Their role will be to support, guide and advise the student officers.
* We also have a Learner Engagement Manager, whose job it is to oversee the work of the Engagement Officers. However, being an autonomous body, the Students’ Association works in conjunction and liaison with the Learner Engagement team, although is not directly accountable to them. The Manager’s main role in terms of working with the SA is playing a lead role in the development of learner engagement systems, arrangements and activities. They will support student representative arrangements, acting as a further mentor to support, guide and advise student officers.
* Assisting with the newly established Sports Union, there is now a full time member of staff (a Sport and Wellbeing Officer) whose job it will be to promote student participation in sporting events, and to raise awareness about both physical and mental wellbeing.

**Summary of structures**

* Currently, the structure of representation at Dundee and Angus is undergoing a comprehensive re-evaluation; representation and feedback mechanisms are being restructured in order to accommodate the new merged college, which brings together two very different cultures.
* At the moment, the structures include class and lead representatives from across departments, and focus groups and college surveys. Engagement levels and methods vary across the campuses.
* As we look at developing our representative structure, we will also be looking towards facilitating more flexible outlets for feedback and engagement – looking at a number of different methods to allow for full participation with the process; having students as partners. This will give students ownership of what they’re doing.
* Part of the representation restructure includes developing a new format and branding for the SRC, including the Student Executive and elected representatives.
* Campaign Officers (a voluntary position with opportunities for accreditation) are created by the Students’ Executive to support the activities of the SA. Any student can be a campaign officer, working with the SA to promote a cause, event or activity.
* Campaign officers – being unelected – would not be eligible to be members of the Students’ Congress, but would be welcomed to advise the Student Executive on different campaigns and issues of advocacy.
* The Student Executive comprises a President and three Vice Presidents (one from each of our three campuses). All of these posts are directly elected by student body and are accountable to them.
* There is also a Sports Union, which is a newly established arm of the Students’ Association.
* Many structural areas are yet to be finalised and are provisional at this stage.

**Main areas of activity**

* Representation
* Welfare and support
* Social, leisure and sport
* Enterprise and volunteering

**Main priorities for next year**

* Each elected officer at Dundee and Angus College will have their own individual projects to undertake throughout the next academic year, as well as all working together on combined projects.
* Student President will be focusing on promoting civic engagement in the college, encouraging students to register to vote and to participate in socio-political campaigns about any issues they have passion for. This will be accommodated in part by the aforementioned Campaign Officer roles, as well as a political awareness group which will be set up in conjunction with a member of the Dundee Youth Council. This will be manifested in the form of a Referendum debate and then a General Election debate to which all parties/campaigns will be invited.
* The Vice President at the Gardyne campus will be looking to engage with community education and community organising. He will be establishing links between the college and local charity/youth groups, encouraging students to participate with these organisations. This will boost students’ added value activities, and feeds into the ‘responsible citizen’ aspect of the Curriculum for Excellence.
* The Vice President at Kingsway campus, who has been re-elected, hopes to build on his efforts last year in attaining a bronze Green Impact award. Already, he has most of the boxes ticked for the silver award, and the Students’ Association this year will again be keen for this to be achieved. In conjunction with the President, they are looking into working with
* The Vice President at Arbroath campus hopes to raise awareness of the effects of alcohol. They will also be looking at working in conjunction with the Sport and Wellbeing Officer to establish an inter-college charity competition. This would be tied in with the Movember campaign.
* The Sport and Wellbeing Officer (a staff post) aims to promote participation in sporting activities, as well as increasing the recognition of such activities at the college. He seeks to formalise the competitive angle of sport, and promote sport for recreational use too. This will allow students to volunteer with the newly established Sports Union. Part of how he hopes to achieve this is by proposing an inter-college Varsity competition event.
* The recent HMI review at Dundee and Angus reminded us that more work has to be done to engage students with SA activities – particularly at the Kingsway campus. The Vice President is aware that there is an issue to be addressed, but the SA is looking at ways to do so. Part of this includes regenerating the space we have at that campus, by transforming it into a multi-use area, in order that an array of students will be attracted to coming along. This will include a student-run shop, which Arbroath already has, designed to boost entrepreneurialism in the college (the shop idea will be replicated at Gardyne too).

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| Students Association | Joint Efforts | Learner Engagement |
| Representation:   * Make sure to record and report all engagement with students. * Mandatory departmental focus groups (as a minimum) * Other optional means of feedback (class reps, lead reps, surveys etc.) * Incentivise good practice * Replace Student Representative Council with Students’ Congress * Presidential report | **Citizenship and Community:**   * Will also involve welfare * Involvement in community groups in both the East and West of Dundee (and Arbroath) * Involves volunteering opportunities * Extending the food bank to Angus (working with guidance team) * Equality and Diversity (working with staff) * School links | **TBC** |
| Campaigning for change:   * Changing the way things work within the college and beyond * Working with NUS | **Enterprise and Employability:**   * Entrepreneurialism |
| Sustainability:   * Working with BEST team | **Sign-Posting:**   * Pointing people in the right direction |
| Sport and Wellbeing:   * Sports events (*Craig’s specialism*) |  |