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## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

### AGENDA

A meeting of the Board of Management will be held at 14:00 hours on Tuesday, 15 June 2021 via Microsoft Teams.

		Lead Speaker	Paper
1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	Chair	
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Chair	
3	<a href="#"><u>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SCHEDULED MEETING</u></a> <i>for approval</i>	Chair	<b>A</b>
4	MATTERS ARISING REPORT		
	4.1 Matters Arising Update	Chair	<b>B</b>
	4.2 Equality Outcomes & Mainstreaming Report 2021-25 Short-Life Working Group Minutes	A Killick	<b>C attached</b>
5	BOARD STRATEGY SESSION 08.06.21 OUTCOMES & NEXT STEPS	Chair / A Cumberland	<b>Verbal</b>
6	PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT		
	6.1 Principal & Chief Executive Update	A Cumberland	<b>D</b>
	6.2 Workforce Plan 2021-23	A Cumberland	<b>E</b>
<i>The Item 6 is presently exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30, Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs</i>			
7	EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION		
	7.1 ECSA End of Year 2020/21 Report	J Wylie	<b>F attached</b>
	7.2 ECSA Strategic Planning & Funding 2021/22 Report	A Wilson	<b>G</b>
<i>Item 7.2 is presently exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 27, Information Intended for Future Publication.</i>			
8	COMMITTEE BUSINESS		
	8.1 <u>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</u> Recruitment & Retention Dashboard	J Pearson	<b>H attached</b>

Management Accounts Summary to April 2021	A Williamson	<b>I attached</b>
Indicative College Budget 2021/22 <b>for approval</b>	A Williamson	<b>J</b>
Financial Forecast 2020/21 to 2024/25	A Williamson	<b>K</b>

*The Indicative College Budget 2021/22 and the Financial Forecast are presently exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 27, Information Intended for Future Publication.*

8.2	<u>Nominations Committee</u> <u>Nominations Committee Minutes 12.05.21</u>	Chair	<b>L</b>
9	NATIONAL REPORT		
9.1	Colleges Scotland Draft Statement of Ambition 2021-25	Chair	<b>Verbal</b>
10	GOVERNANCE REPORT		
10.1	Governance Update	N Croft	<b>M attached</b>
10.2	Board Evaluation Report 2020/21	Chair	<b>N attached</b>
10.3	Evaluation of the Chair Report 2020/21	N Paul	<b>O attached</b>

*[Screen Break]*

11	CLOSED ITEMS OF BUSINESS		
11.1	Extraordinary Board of Management 26.05.21 <b>for approval</b>	Chair	<b>P</b>
11.2	Remuneration Committee Minutes 03.06.21	A Killick	<b>Q</b>

*Item 11.1 and 11.2 are presently exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30, Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs*

12	ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS		
13	FOR INFORMATION		
13.1	Remuneration Committee Minutes 26.03.21		<b>R</b>
13.2	<u>Policy &amp; Resources Committee Minutes 18.05.21</u>		<b>S</b>
13.3	<u>Academic Council Minutes 26.02.21</u>		<b>T</b>
13.4	<u>Audit &amp; Risk Assurance Committee Minutes 26.05.21</u>		<b>U</b>
13.5	<u>Corporate Development Committee Minutes 01.06.21</u>		<b>V</b>
14	FOR CIRCULATION		
14.1	Risk Management Report		<b>W</b>
14.2	Board of Management: Agenda Planner 2020/21		<b>X attached</b>
14.3	RIDDOR Report		<b>Y attached</b>

*Item 14.1 is presently exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30, Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs*

15	DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 29 September 2021		
15.1	<u>Upcoming Committee Dates</u>		
	Policy & Resources Committee	31 August 2021	
	Corporate Development Committee	07 September 2021	
	Academic Council	10 September 2021	
	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee	13 October 2021	



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<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Alex Killick		
Author/Contact	Marcus Walker	Department / Unit	Governance
Date Created	29.04.21	Telephone	
Appendices Attached	<i>Appendix 1: Short-Life Working Group Minutes 22.04.21 - Equality Outcomes &amp; Mainstreaming Report 2021-25</i>		
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

#### **SHORT-LIFE WORKING GROUP 22.04.21: EQUALITY OUTCOMES & MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2021-25**

**1. PURPOSE**

Members are asked to consider the minutes from the Short-Life Working Group (SLWG) created by the Board of Management to review revisions to the draft Equality Outcomes & Mainstreaming Report 2021-25.

**2. BACKGROUND**

On 23 March 2021, the Board agreed that a SLWG would be created to consider a revised draft Report and (if appropriate) endorse its approval to the Board.

**3. DETAIL**

The minutes of the SLWG meeting on 22 April 2021 are attached as Appendix 1.

**4. BENEFITS AND REQUIREMENTS**

Not applicable.

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to NOTE the minutes of the SLWG and the actions agreed by the Group.



**EQUALITY OUTCOMES & MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2021-25**  
**SHORT-LIFE WORKING GROUP - DRAFT MINUTES**  
**22 APRIL 2021**  
**MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

<b>Members:</b>	A Killick (Chair)	Jon Buglass	Bruce Cassidy	Sue Clyne
	Mike Cowley	Rose Dodgson	Kerry Heathcote	Gwen Raez
<b>In Attendance:</b>	N Croft	M Walker (Clerk)		

Item	Action by
<p><b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No apologies were received.</li> <li>• The Chair welcomed members of the Short-Life Working Group (SLWG) to the meeting, and outlined the following remit /purpose of the Group - as agreed by the Board of Management on 23 March 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Draft Equality Outcome &amp; Mainstreaming (EO&amp;M) Report 2021-25 review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>To consider the Equality Outcome relating to improved experience for LGBT staff and students;</i></li> <li>▪ <i>The creation of a meaningful metric to tackle racial / religious harassment and discrimination;</i></li> <li>▪ <i>The resources available to the College to tackle inequalities;</i></li> <li>▪ <i>And, if appropriate, to endorse a draft EO&amp;M Report for approval by the Board.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Annual equality outcome reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>To consider how progress against equality outcomes should be reported to the Board over the 2021-25 reporting period.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• The SLWG NOTED that a pre-meeting had been held between Non-Executive Members of the Group and the Vice Principal Innovation and Curriculum Planning, the Head of Curriculum Planning and the Head of OD &amp; HR to provide further clarity on the points raised by the Board of Management on 23 March 2021 - prior to amendments being made to the Draft EO&amp;M Report.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. Draft Equality Outcome &amp; Mainstreaming Report 2021-25</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SLWG NOTED a revised draft of the EO&amp;M Report 2021-25, which included an Executive Summary and the following amendments to the document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated titles for six (of the seven) Equality Outcomes for the period 2021-25;</li> <li>○ Further clarification around the success measures for EO1, EO4, EO5 and EO6;</li> <li>○ Further clarification around the actions contributing to a successful outcome for EO5 AND EO6.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Head of Curriculum Planning &amp; Performance verbally outlined the proposed revisions to the Group, based on feedback from the Board of Management on 23 March 2021.</li> <li>• The SLWG welcomed the updated Report, and DISCUSSED the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The positive engagement with students and ECSA around each of the equality outcomes;</li> <li>○ The representation of a diverse range of staff on the WAX-ED Group, and the development of a racial equality staff group;</li> <li>○ The engagement of the College through the Widening Participation group with schools and other key partners to ensure equality outcomes actions are addressed in part before students come to College;</li> <li>○ The communication of the agreed Equality Outcomes to students and staff, to ensure engagement with the core targets across the College;</li> <li>○ Outcomes related to poverty, and the wider factors affecting poverty at a national and regional level;</li> <li>○ The language around BAME and LGBT+, and the need to ensure it is appropriate and consistently used across the College;</li> <li>○ The clarity of statements relating to EO1, EO5 and EO6, and the appropriateness of each success measure.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The SLWG AGREED to endorse the revised Draft EO&amp;M Report for circulation to the Board (for approval), subject to minor changes to the titles and success measures outlined for EO1, EO5 and EO6.</li> <li>• The SLWG AGREED that the Clerk should circulate the Draft EO&amp;M 2021-25 Report to the Board for approval, with a deadline for responses of 29 April 2021. The Chair advised the SWLG that - if approved - the Report would be published on the College website by 30 April 2021.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">KH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MW</p>
<p><b>3. Annual Equality Outcome Reporting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SLWG NOTED a proposal for the Head of Curriculum &amp; Performance that the Executive Summary, within the EO&amp;M Report, would be used as the basis for a performance monitoring dashboard. The SLWG DISCUSSED the dashboard and AGREED to the proposed format.</li> <li>• The SLWG AGREED that the Board should review the EO&amp;M Dashboard annually, at its final meeting of each academic year. The Head of Curriculum &amp; Performance advised the SLWG that progress against equality outcomes would be monitored regularly by the WAX-ED Group.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">KH / MW</p>
<p><b>4. AOCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Next Meeting:</b> Not applicable.</p>	



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<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Jordan Wylie		
Author/Contact	ECSA	Department / Unit	ECSA
Date Created	07.06.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	<i>Appendix 1: ECSA End of Year Report 2020/21</i>		
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

**EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION - END OF YEAR REPORT 2020/21**

**1. PURPOSE**

To provide the Board of Management with an overview of activities conducted by ECSA in 2020/21.

**2. BACKGROUND**

Every academic year ECSA are asked to produce a report for the Board outlining its achievements and progress against its Operational Plan.

**3. DETAIL**

The ECSA End of Year Report 2020/21 is attached as Appendix 1.

**4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The report provides a comprehensive overview of the work of ECSA in 2020/21, and highlights key benefits and opportunities going forward.

**5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

The Board retains an overview of Students' Association activity in the interests of good governance.

**6. RISK**

Not applicable.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Board approved the 2020/21 ECSA funding bid in June 2020. The Students' Associations funding for the academic year was subsequently finalised in the College Budget 2020/21.

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**9. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**10. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**  
Not applicable.

**11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**  
Not applicable.

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to NOTE the information provided in the ECSA End of Year Report.





Edinburgh College

**Students'  
Association**

# Annual Report

## 2020/2021

**A year like no other**

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<b>Thanks</b>	<b>25</b>

# President's Introduction



Well, what a year that was, a year like no other!

As President of the Students' Association, I am so proud of how ECSA has not only faced the many unpredictable challenges the last

12 months has thrown at us, but, as a team, I believe we have thrived. The last year has allowed us to adapt and revolutionise the way we work, which will have a lasting influence in the years to come. So, this year has been an incredibly rewarding experience, all in all, despite the challenges we have collectively faced.

Similar to last year's report, we will highlight the progress on our priority objectives throughout and how it has fed into and complemented ECSA's core strategic aims. However, with the continued restrictions in response to the multiple new variants of COVID-19 that have emerged since July last year, we have had to adapt certain objectives to reflect the limitations of our presence on campuses.

Despite the constant changes to the academic year, I, as President, could not be more proud of the work and achievements ECSA have made throughout the last 12 months. From supporting students with their introductions to the College, to our events to promote equality, building new ways to interact with students, and supporting students through this very different student experience the past year has been. However, I would have to say our crowning achievement this year has been our ability to not only represent our members' voices, but to go on and feed their concerns, feelings and views into the larger discussions happening both within the College and at the national level across the College sector.

*"The team at ECSA have been truly invaluable members this year, leading the way in representing students in a virtual setting, shining a light on issues students are facing weeks in advance of them becoming*

*national issues, while also helping frame the conversations around how to find the resolutions that work in the students' best interests."*

*Matt Crilly, NUS Scotland President*

It would be no understatement to say that for another year, ECSA has been truly sector-leading in what we do and the way we do it. Our externally-funded work on sustainability is absolutely unique to the sector, and our Go Green team's ability to deliver their objectives in new and different ways has been an inspiration; delivering dozens of climate education workshops directly to classes through Microsoft Teams, creating a new online clothing Swapshop, and even getting those students who could never have afforded it free bikes and safety kits to get them on their active travel journeys.

In addition, our innovation and utilisation of our online tools and spaces has proved invaluable as we continue to foster a sense of community and connection in a remote world. Our virtual campus has truly become its own hub for students to reach out to each other, voice their concerns & opinions, and share news & updates to a much larger audience than we would have been able to in previous years.

As a team, we are incredibly proud of our work over the past year, but underpinning all our accomplishments has been partnerships; the partnerships with our members - the students, the various departments within the College, the senior managers, as well as a range of external organisations. This year has shown how crucial these ongoing partnerships are, as, without any one of them, we would not have the same level of success we have had over the past academic year.

I want to thank the Board of Management for all the ongoing support it has shown ECSA this year. Working with our partners to develop a positive and continually improving student experience in a virtual setting has been central to the successes of our members, which we have outlined in this report, and continues to be our core task.



# Our top 10 of 2020/2021

# Education & Representation

## Virtual Campus

Again this year, our virtual campus group has been vital for engaging with students online.

- 2400 members
- 1741 posts
- 10,646 comments



## Equalities events

- We held our first ever Black History Month stream with over 1100 views.
- £241 raised for LGBT Youth Scotland by LGBT Activity Month participants
- Student-led "I am me" campaign launched for Care Day

## Livestreams

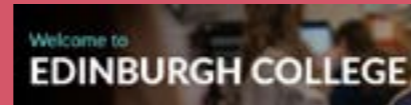
We set out to engage students through live video, and achieved a marked increase in engagement:

- 812 live viewers
- 8897 mins viewed (up 45% on-year)

## Induction events

We worked with the college's communications team to co-design a series of events to welcome students, delivered fully-online.

- 2318 watched live
- Over 500 on catch-up
- 340 questions responded to



## Class Reps online

- 564 Reps registered
- 240 Trained live
- 381 enrolled on the online Moodle training
- 441 attendees across 4 conferences, an average of 110 students



## Resolving funding

- Supported over 170 students with funding cases, an increase of 2329%
- Represented on Student Experience 'Lean' project to review and improve funding and induction processes

## The Great Big Student Thank You

This year we re-factored our annual teaching awards to instead pay thanks to lecturers, classmates, LDTs, and other staff in the college who've made an impact

## Go Green project

- Climate Change and Sustainability workshops delivered to 26 different classes
- 10 zero-waste cooking videos produced with over 1400 views
- Almost 110kg of donations to our Swap Shop



## Influencing decisions

- Lobbying through NUS won SFC Funding for new ECSA staff member
- Additional discretionary funds for students affected by covid
- Campaigning for summer funding support for students



## Joint working

- Livestreams with the Principal to directly respond to student concerns
- Working with HWSS faculty to ensure that students with required placements get the time on the job they need
- One-off £300 advance payments to students affected by the funding crisis

## Class Reps

Throughout 2020/21, for the first time ever, all Class Rep activities took place online, including Class Rep registration, training and conferences, with all activities hosted on MS Teams. Despite the challenging circumstances we have been pleased to see an increase in student engagement throughout the year.

Class Rep recruitment took place directly in the classroom with a [pre-recorded video of President, Jordan Wyllie](#), available for staff to show students ahead of the Class Rep elections. Once elected and registered, students were automatically added to the Class Rep Teams site as well as automatically receiving an email for them to sign up to online training. The Class Rep training was successfully delivered online through a combination of a Moodle training module as well as a 1-hour live training session on Teams. Class Reps have been hugely positive about their experiences of Class Rep training and with it being delivered online, the flexibility for students to sign up and attend when it suited them offered the opportunity for even more Class Reps receiving training. Students were offered training sessions during the day as well as a couple of evening sessions (7pm) to cater to students with other commitments. These evening sessions were popular and informed some of our planning regarding Class Rep Conferences for the year. All Class Reps have also had access to the online [Class Rep Handbook](#), which has tips for staying well while learning online as well as how to address any student concerns.

Despite moving activities online, we delivered all 4 Class Rep Conferences to an increased number of students. 441 students attended across 4 Class Rep Conferences compared to 250 the year before. Each conference was hosted twice, one at lunch time and one late afternoon, to ensure as many students could attend as possible. The Class Rep Conferences were themed around the student journey, specifically focusing on the online learning experience. Vital to the success of the online conferences were

the engagement tools used. We pride ourselves in gathering evidence-based feedback and we have continued to do so online. Students are invited to contribute via the microphone or the chat, but also through structured feedback tools such as webforms on our website. For all Class Rep Conferences we utilised online engagement tools to stimulate engagement and interaction, for example Padlet and Mentimeter. Both tools were hugely popular with students as they can engage in the activities while also providing feedback - it leads to a more coherent and live experience for everyone involved. The tools also allow us to gather further feedback and take the temperature about specific areas of work without surveying students as such.

Theme	Attendance
Induction & Retention	184 students
Course handbooks and online good practice	109 students
Student experience and student rights	89 students
Success & Progression + Class Rep feedback	59 students

In addition to scheduled Class Rep activities such as training and conferences, Class Reps are also invited to take part in focus groups and consultations. These students are well placed to engage in these as they have received thorough training in providing constructive feedback and are used to speaking about their student experience. We are pleased to have supported students to take part in regular focus groups with SQA, Education Scotland and Royal Society of Edinburgh as well as internal student experience groups.

## Class Reps in numbers:

- 564 Reps registered
- 520 on Teams site
- 240 Trained live
- 381 Class Reps enrolled to the online Moodle training
- 4 Class Rep Conferences

- 4 Class Rep Conference Reports
- 441 attendees across 4 Class Rep Conferences, an average of 110 students

All Class Rep reports for 2020/21 can be found [on our website here](#).

## Identifying student issues and solutions

The success of online Class Reps has supported the identification of student issues and concerns. Understandably, this year has been difficult for many students and there have been concerns along the way. Fortunately, through the success of our online student engagement, we have supported students to provide further feedback and address concerns to support retention and success.

Throughout the year, we have identified student issues as they arose through engaging with students on the Class Rep Teams site, the all-student Virtual Campus, the virtual drop-in and through the Full-Time Officers. It is vital to note that, even though this academic year has been focused on issues relating to studying from home and learning during a pandemic, the student concerns raised in a 'normal' year are still the same. Students are still living in poverty, struggling to get adequate mental health support and housing. The difference is that bigger crises were at the top of the list this year.



Hearing directly from students has been instrumental in being able to respond as well as being proactive about any arising concerns. In semester 1 we saw and heard reports of student funding delays leading to many students struggling. Full-Time Officers worked closely with

the Advice and Support Coordinator to manage student queries and ensure correct guidance and sign-posting was utilised. As this was a wider issue a regular group was set up between ECSA and Student Experience to support a solution. A resolution was found through a partnership approach and was communicated through a livestream with funding and guidance staff available to answer queries. For more details about casework and the incredible work of our Advice and Support Coordinator, [see here](#).

Unique to this extraordinary year has been student concerns around on-campus activities and ability to go on placements necessary to complete a course. Class Reps were specifically key in highlighting concerns as well as students getting in touch directly for support. In both cases, the Virtual Campus and Class Rep spaces have been useful to gather information and feedback about student concerns making it possible for us to bring this straight to the relevant partners for resolution. Regarding placements, President Jordan, communicated the concerns of students directly to department heads and arranged for further communication and reassurances to be brought to students leading to his regular involvement in the College placement working group.

We are proud to be able to work with partners, internally and externally to come to solutions and improved experiences for Edinburgh College students. While it wasn't possible to work around the need for students to come onto campus to complete closed book assessments, students were able to voice their concerns and suggest ways of making them feel safer on campus leading to a video guiding students through [what to expect when coming onto campus](#).

Part of the Priority Objectives set out by the Full-Time Officers were about improving information for students, empowering them to engage further in their own learning journey. This has included consulting students on their experience and expectations of course handbooks as well as exploring ways of incorporating this onto Moodle in partnership with the Moodle Team, ensuring the information is clearly accessible and visible. Students were keen to have more information generally, but specifically having access to information when they need it, online was

high on their list (e.g. timetables, assessment schedules, referencing guidance, etc.). We continue to work with the relevant departments to identify areas of good practice as well as areas to improve the information supplied to students. The hope is that all students will have easy access to staff contact information, key deadlines, student policies, absence forms and importantly information about their course and assessments.

## External/National Campaigns and issues

The Full-Time Officers were elected in March 2020, and the following week campuses were shut and we were told to stay at home. Here we are, more than a year later, and it is clear that one of the strengths of this officer team has been to work with other officers nationally. President, Jordan and VP Welfare, Rose, have regularly attended NUS Scotland officer meetings with the purpose of highlighting student issues, as well as support national campaigns. They have been imperative in raising issues such as student work placements, assessments, and the impacts of industrial action taken by EIS.



As a result of national student campaigns, the Scottish Funding Council announced funding for Students' Associations across Scotland. This funding is life-changing for many SA's and will be used to further wellbeing support as well as offer

more opportunities for students to engage with their student experience. At ECSA, this additional funding will cover a fixed-term staff member to support student activities and groups, focusing on delivering these online and transitioning students back to in-person events. This is a welcome addition to a team of 4 core staff members (+2 CCF funded project staff).

Alongside the successful campaign for further funding for SA's, the Scottish Funding Council also announced additional funding for the discretionary fund. This came as a result of student officers relaying student concerns and experiences straight to NUS Scotland who lobbied the Scottish Government. Students have been unfairly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and this additional discretionary funding will ensure students have a fairer chance of success without going into poverty or debt.

The Scottish Funding Council is currently doing a review of coherent provision and sustainability of education with a number of workstreams relating to supporting students through COVID-19, but also what education will look like after the pandemic. The Full-Time Officers have been involved in review meetings with other student officers to ensuring a clear student voice in the reviews and will continue to engage in the process as it progresses.

Once again, the student learning experience has been disrupted due to lengthy industrial action, leading to student anxiety and confusion. Through the excellent student engagement tools used throughout the year, students were able to receive direct information about the strikes, the context and any negotiations and resolutions. Students were understandably frustrated as the strike days affected valuable online learning and assessments, leading to even further delays in a most difficult year. The frustration showed through student engagement, both at Class Rep Conferences and on the Virtual Campus where the main topic discussed was industrial action. ECSA took a lead in making sure we found out the most up to date information and supported students to understand how it would impact them. Although we could not resolve the issues, the work we did on facilitating communication between students and the College was vital in reassuring many who would otherwise not have



coped with the stressful situation.

Ahead of the Scottish Elections, ECSA ran a campaign urging students to register to vote involving social media and Class Rep Conference content. This is increasingly important as students tend to move regularly. To influence Scottish Election candidates, the Full-Time Officers worked collaboratively with NUS Scotland to create [the Student Guarantee](#), a pledge for candidates to sign up to, showing their commitment to secure the rights of students and a plan to rebuild a fairer education system. VP Welfare, Rose, took part in the [accompanying video campaign](#) as well as encouraging students to sign the student guarantee and email their local candidates. Finally, to ensure students were front and centre in the Scottish Elections, NUS Scotland hosted online hustings which we invited students to watch as part of a watch party on the Virtual Campus. This sparked conversation about strikes and student funding which the Full-Time Officers were able to engage with positively.

## Student Engagement

This year we have continued our sector-leading student engagement work. In a year like no other, the ways of engaging with students have changed. ECSA adapted quickly and from the very outset of the initial lockdown, a Virtual Campus was set up for students to interact with each other. There are many other ways we have kept up with students though.

The Virtual Campus has been instrumental in continuing to engage with students in real time. This isn't just a feed for ECSA to share information hoping students will read it. The Virtual Campus is much more about students posting and sharing their experiences and



helping out their student colleagues by answering their queries. To gather student opinion we have used polls on the Virtual Campus to great success. This has been helpful to replicate some of the casual student conversations we would have on campus. Being able to use the Virtual Campus as a sounding board has proved incredibly useful, especially at times such as strikes or during funding delays.

While the Virtual Campus is useful for students to interact, it has also been instrumental in ensuring clear communication to all students. Evidently, during the EIS industrial action in March and April, students were often confused and uncertain about classes and why they were facing disruption. Being able to share documents and updates directly onto the Virtual Campus often meant students would hear within minutes of announcements coming from Colleges Scotland or EIS. Any questions were also brought directly from students to relevant groups through the Full-Time Officers. We believe that without this way of communicating, students would have fallen off the radar during industrial action and it is an important lesson, that regular messaging and interaction often is preferred, even if there's no immediate change.

MS Teams has mainly been utilised for engaging with Class Reps, but has also been a base for other projects and activities such as Wellbeing Wednesday and Chat 'n That. By having dedicated Teams, students have been able to set up chats, calls and posts whenever they want to. This has been especially successful in the Chat 'n That group where students come together just for a chat either on a call or through messages.

When engaging with Class Reps, Teams has been invaluable. All Class Rep Conferences and training sessions have been delivered through Teams, with students automatically added to the site as they are registered as Class Reps. Being able to send out reminders through the site has increased engagement with the Class Rep Conferences, but the format of the calls have also supported further students to take part, being able to use either voice or writing, as well as tools such as Menti or Padlet.

Like the Virtual Campus, using Teams has been a direct channel between students and ECSA in

a way that students are already using for their learning. Similar to being on campus, if you are already on Teams as part of your learning, it is easy to nip over to a social Teams site to see if there's any news or good chat happening.

While survey fatigue is a real concern, we have continued to run our successful '[Your Experience](#)' survey, available to all students, but aimed mainly at Class Reps. This survey was key in identifying early student concerns and it influenced the direction of ECSA projects for the rest of the year. Funding concerns as well as placement and deferral concerns came through clearly in this survey and they became some of the real themes for the year.

## Elections

Our [9th annual ECSA Full-Time Officer Elections](#) were successfully delivered entirely online despite the challenging circumstances. We saw 6 candidates standing for our 3 Full-Time posts who took an active part in a full week of online voting and campaigning. Voting took place over 5 days, with students casting their vote through our online voting system. Since the vast majority of students have not been on campus this semester, or even, this entire academic year, it has been an uncertain and very different process to deliver elections this year. However, we adapted how we promote the elections and how to engage students in the process.

For maximum engagement and exposure, the process to get students engaged with elections started early on, with elections featuring in the February Class Rep Conference as well as election information sessions and targeted election social media posts. Once nominations closed, candidates received a more comprehensive support experience as campaigning online can be challenging and new for most students. They received tips on running online campaigns, ideas on how to use social media and a short guide to public speaking. To give students the opportunity to hear directly from the candidates we hosted an online Candidate Question Time during voting week. Additionally, ECSA visited 42 classes directly to do Election Shout Outs, promoting the elections

and all candidates equally by showing their campaign videos.



## 2021 Election in numbers:

- 9th year of cross-campus ballot
- 3 full time posts
- 6 candidates
- 42 class shout outs
- 5 days of voting
- 1229 votes

# Advice & Support

The 2020-21 academic year saw yet again many changes in the types of cases and numbers we have dealt with. We've had to entirely manage our cases and walk-in queries online and as a result have had to adjust the way we record issues as well as interact with students and staff.

Student issues can be broken down into two main categories:

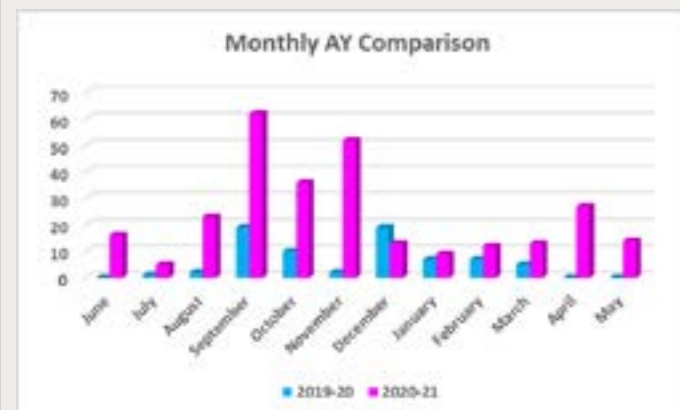
- Cases: require more time or investigation due to their complex or unusual nature or require input from many parties
- Talk-in enquiries; are run of the mill issues that this year have been solved in usually a solitary phone call, email or message, or video call

## Cases

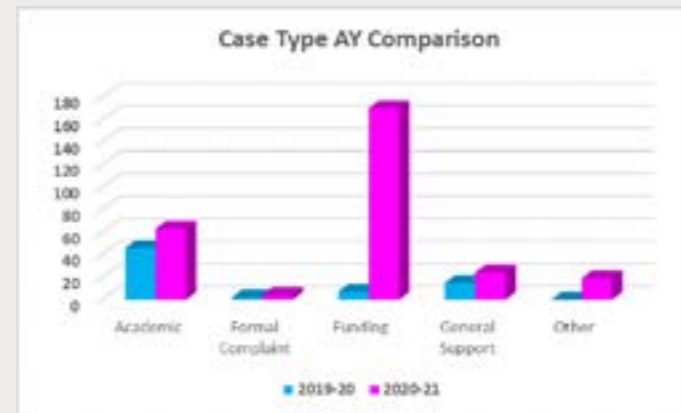
This year we have seen a huge 292% increase of recorded cases, compared to the same period last year. This is in large part due to the expected challenges faced when starting a new academic year in pandemic conditions, such as staff shortages due to furlough and illness, as well as the challenges faced by staff working at home alone.

ECSA has recorded 282 cases at the time of writing, although, by the time term ends, the numbers will most likely be slightly higher with students submitting academic appeals and progression issues.

## 2019/20 – 2020/21 Year Comparison



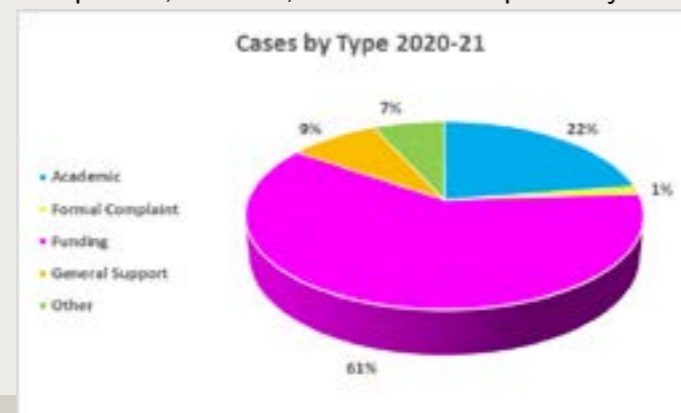
We've seen a massive increase in cases month by month, even in months that normally have little to no cases, with the exception of December, as can be seen in the graph. We can only guess that, as the College was solely online for much of the year, services and offices that students would normally assume were closed for holiday periods, were more visible and more easily accessible for online.



We have also seen a major swing in the most common type of cases we have dealt with this year from academic to funding. Most case types rose by 2 – 19 cases this year, opposed to the 2329% rise in funding cases, where we have seen the number balloon from 7 to 170 cases.

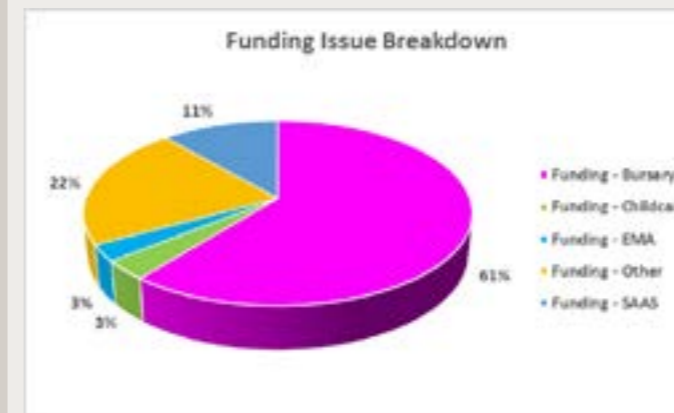
## Cases by Type

Funding cases accounted for 61% of all cases. Academic cases which include academic issues, academic appeals and disciplinaries accounted for 22% of the total. The remainder of cases were split between general support (eg. problems accessing College support services, homelessness, and other personal issues) other (eg. Timetabling and IT issues) and formal complaints; with 9%, 7% and 1% respectively.



## Funding Cases

There has been a massive rise in funding cases this year. Funding processes both in the College and externally have seen significant processing problems due to front-line staff being thrust into solo/remote working or roles unfamiliar to them. This mostly caused problems for students that had circumstances outwith the norm. This issue, although it had a terrible impact on the current cohort of Edinburgh College students, will have a beneficial impact for future students and the College itself, as it has highlighted where there is a need for staff training and improvement of resources, services, and processes.



College bursary funded students accounted for 61% of all funding cases, with the majority of students experiencing delays due to misinformation, processing issues or gathering evidence from external sources such as evidence of benefits ending.

The 'Funding – other' case type was the second most common issue for 22% of all cases this year, students with cases in this category are normally experiencing hardship due to a variety of factors, the main one usually reported as being ineligible for any type of FE funding. We did experience quite an increase in students reporting these issues, mainly due to these students losing or not being able to gain any employment in the midst of the pandemic. However, we are pleased to report that due to the relaxed eligibility criteria of the COVID-19 Winter fund, these students were able to get help and continue their studies, where normally they would have potentially faced withdrawal or extreme hardship.

## SAAS, EMA, and Childcare Funding

Students applying to SAAS accounted for 11% of funding cases. The main issues students faced were with the application form itself, whether this was EU students who have lived in Scotland for many years, applying for the EU students fee-only award or students not understanding the tick box options of living cost funding to apply for; this had a major impact on students as by the time they receive their award and realise it's wrong, they then have to submit evidence and wait many, many weeks for the correct funding such as student loan or bursary.

Childcare made up 3% of all cases and were often caused by delays due to evidence or timetable changes. EMA also accounted for 3% of funding cases, again this was mostly due to delays and confusion from Schools College Partnership students on who to speak to or how to get information on their application.

## Academic Cases

Academic issues can be further broken down into three categories; academic with 50 cases, disciplinary with 6 cases and academic appeals with 3 cases.

“Academic” issues mainly comprised of students having to undertake an extra year to sit assessments, placements or other things missed in academic year 2019-20 and this year; other cases cited issues with students feeling unsupported on their courses, progression issues and problems arising due to classroom management issues.

“Academic Appeals” comprised of students appealing estimated or inaccurate results from last academic year and “Disciplinary” comprised of cases where alleged inappropriate behaviour and academic malpractice were cited as reasons for disciplinary action.

## General Support Cases

The most common general support cases were students that were struggling to access or utilise a support resource or service both internally and externally, such as learning support, wellbeing,



student services and student status confirmation or student cards.

ECSA supported several students experiencing accommodation issues this year, with issues ranging from homelessness after a relationship breakdown to supporting a student to find accommodation and support with issues with their letting agents.

ECSA have also provided one to one emotional support to students who have not felt confident to access College or external support services themselves. The majority of these students have then went onto access external support or the College's wellbeing and counselling teams.

### Other Cases

"Other" can be broken down into estates, timetabling and IT issues. This year there have been no estates cases, however 15 students needed support for significant IT issues that prevented them from accessing their course. ECSA supported 4 cases involving timetabling issues, that included students who were given timetables from the rest of their class, timetable clashes with their childcare and were requesting support to move to another group with a different timetable and not receiving a timetable at all.

### Formal Complaint Cases

Four students have approached ECSA for advice and support to make a formal complaint; two of these complaints involved the significant funding delays experienced this year and two were complaints about their course.

### Common Themes through Cases

One of the most common themes throughout cases is communication. This doesn't just apply to the levels of communication the students receive through the College such as during the funding and application processes or having enough staff to answer queries in a timely manner.

It's also about how 'staff and staff' or 'staff and students' communicate with each other. This

issue can be applied across a plethora of cases that are brought to our attention; whether it's a highly distressed student that is having trouble communicating in a healthy way, having contact cut off or disciplinary action, instead of being referred to the wellbeing team; or staff being able to communicate professional and personal boundaries in a healthy way with other staff and students, leading to fatigue and burn-out that have a knock on effect in teaching and support. Whilst many of these circumstances are not uncommon, the issues have been magnified and exacerbated by remote working, with communication breakdowns going unresolved, rather than addressed at the time. We have seen how this has left all parties frustrated and alone, rather than being able to speak informally to resolve conflict as would likely have happened if staff and students spoke to each other in-person.

This year has highlighted a very real need for active-listening and trauma-informed practice training within all teams of the College, as the events over the past year have caused untold isolation and trauma in many students and staff.

As a College, thought must be given to how we can practice healthy communication and set boundaries in all areas of practice; whether that's how disciplinaries are handled, how we communicate our needs or boundaries with others.

### Talk-ins

We've recorded interactions with 640 students this academic year through our 'Talk-in' form and helped them with 885 individual issues. Although the new 'Talk-in' form has been used, it hasn't been used consistently during busier periods but can give a reflection of the types of common issues students were approaching ECSA for help with.



## Housing & Finance Survey

In December 2020 we ran our [Housing and Finance survey](#) through till the beginning of February in an identical format to the year 19/20, and plan to run the survey again in 21/22, as to give a clear insight into the housing and financial situations that students face through a year-on-year comparison.

It has been a common theme over the past few years that a student officer in each new team of sabbaticals has had some form of objective relating to student housing or finance.

By having this data recorded annually we can not only use it to help frame objectives in a much more targeted way, but also by having year on year analysis gives a clearer picture on how previous objectives have made an impact on the student body.



Some of the major talking points to come out of this year's survey are, while 42.1% of respondents stated that they are living at the family home with parents, 39.1% stated that they were currently living in private rented accommodation. When we look to the students' income, 70.1% of respondents stated that monthly they will earn less than £901.

Given the median rent costs for a 2 bedroom flat in Edinburgh is £1,050, students may be unable to live independently. If you couple that with the fact that mature students (over 21s) make up the largest cohort of the student body, this may indicate a much deeper issue and we will keep an eye on in next year's survey as COVID-19's impact may be a factor in some students having less income.

## Universal Credit / Benefits advice

This year the pandemic amplified the glaring problems students who claim Universal Credit face when applying for funding.

This can affect students in different ways depending on their level of study and individual circumstances:

FE students mostly face lengthy delays when waiting on confirmation of benefits ending after the start of their course

DWP/SSSA staff are unaware of FE Funding Policies and are therefore misadvising students

Students are often given or find general information, unspecific to their circumstances, which later causes confusion and often readjustments to their funding

It's important, that all organisations are agreed in the funding advice that they are providing and are aware of the challenges faced by students when transitioning from benefits to funding.

ECSA will continue to work together with the college to ensure that information available to students is of a high quality and hopes to meet with representatives from the Department of Work and Pensions and the Scottish Social Security Agency in the coming months to develop this work further. This year, we have developed [specific advice](#) to help make sure students understand the issues and we will continue to study the impacts of this next year to mitigate impacts.

### Homelessness priority objective

This year, one of the priority objectives was to set up a more focused support system for students facing homelessness. As we conducted research, it became apparent that we needed to adjust to ensure the end goal is achievable. However, there have been numerous setbacks to this objective as there are critical gaps in qualitative



and quantitative data. As such, it will be a project that is ongoing into the next academic year. This objective aims to develop a system that identifies the factors that have led to a student struggling with homelessness while maintaining user-friendliness to both staff and students. The design should be a simple procedure of a student/staff member filling in an online form, the purpose of these questions will act like a flow chart disseminating what core factors have been at play. Once these factors are identified, using a premade and regularly updated database, the user should then be directed to a list of organisations that provide wrap around support in that particular area with contact details for self-referral. President, Jordan, has been leading on this and has already amassed a network of contacts in local support organisations who are keen to work together to make sure students who are most at risk, don't slip through the net, but get the help they need, when they need it.

## Supporting Students

In a year where isolation and loneliness has been a real concern amongst our students, the activities and events we have focused on have been to alleviate some of those worries for students. Giving them different ways of interacting and minimising that isolation but leaving it up to them to engage when useful to their wellbeing.

With the support and inclusion of Class reps who showed an interest, we created a weekly online meeting space for students to share wellbeing/mental health tips. The "Wellbeing Wednesday" society has been held every Wednesday lunchtime or afternoon (depending on students time preferences) throughout the year via MS Teams and provided a slightly more relaxed space to talk about mental health and how we are all coping.

We also developed a new weekly event called "[Chat 'n' that](#)" which was a purely social online space for anyone to meet up with other students and chat. For some, a weekly online coffee break with other students was the most social contact they had, so this was vital in maintaining links and avoiding loneliness for those most isolated.



The Officers have also led on highlighting specific issues throughout the year, relating to mental health and isolation. For suicide awareness week, [our President wrote a blog](#) about his experiences and emotions relating to the subject, encouraging others to talk about it more openly. Our Vice President Welfare [wrote about her experiences of lockdown](#) and how she used open water swimming to clear her mind from the depression of the daily news conferences. Finally, our Vice President Activities encouraged students to connect with nature through gardening to battle the stress of the pandemic, linking up with the Go Green Team to giveaway free seeds and growing advice to students throughout [Mental Health Awareness Week 2021](#).



# Equality & Diversity

At ECSA we continue to champion equality and diversity through everything that we do. In 2020/21 we have delivered activities specifically to raise awareness, educate and engage students and staff with different minority groups. VP Welfare and VP Activities, Rose and Victoria, have worked closely with Edinburgh College Equalities Officer, Bethany Parsons, to strengthen the activities and knowledge of minority students and the support they need.

## Policies & Documents

A clear focus in the partnership with the Equalities Officer has been to get the basics right and ensure there is a base off which we can support and celebrate diversity. As the Full-Time Officers took office in July, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion were high on their agenda and rightly so. The first task was an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement to make it clear the commitment ECSA has to championing equality, not just at Edinburgh College, but also beyond. An important part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement is that it is a live page with links to current events, activities and blogs. It also offers students the opportunity to feedback about their thoughts on the statement and their experience at Edinburgh College. Additionally, the page has direct links to support organisations that might be useful for students. You can see more on our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion page here](#).

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



Throughout the academic year ECSA and Equalities have met every 3 weeks to collaborate on projects and campaigns. As part of the work to update the College Equality Outcomes and

input into the Mainstreaming report, we hosted Equality Outcome consultations with Class Reps on Teams. This was a hugely successful exercise and provided the Equalities Officer with an opportunity to engage students directly about their experience of Equality & Diversity at Edinburgh College. Furthermore, VP Welfare Rose, has been heavily involved in the Equality Outcomes consultation through Board of Management and fully supports the approach to reporting on equalities.

Further partnership work is taking place as part of the LGBT Charter Award, where ECSA VP Welfare and Advice & Support Coordinator is involved as well as a couple of Class Reps. The charter working group is continuing to work towards award status which includes campaigns and changes to LGBT student reporting and policies. This is an exciting project, that we are pleased to continue to be a part of.

## Celebrating Diversity

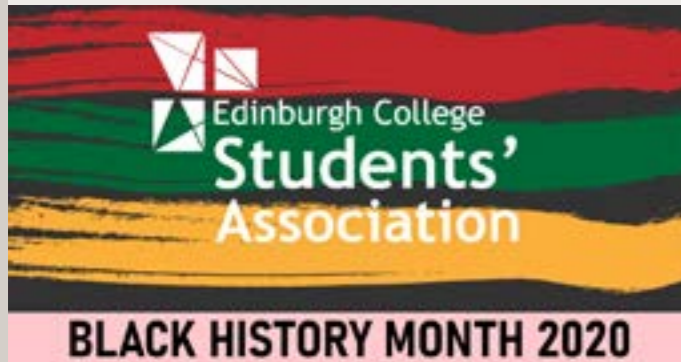
At ECSA we haven't just spent time talking about Equality and Diversity, we have also celebrated our diverse students and engaged them in activities throughout the year.



In October ECSA joined up with the Edinburgh College Equalities Officer to celebrate Black History Month. We asked students and staff to help us celebrate by contributing to our Black History Month recommendations list, which was launched later in the month. In addition to that, the full time officers Victoria and Rose partnered with colleagues across Edinburgh College to showcase work by black and minority ethnic



students. This included a recorded workshop about make up for black skin, a watch party of a documentary about the history of slavery in Scotland, a pre-recorded dance performance as well as a live conversation about navigating white spaces between VP Activities Victoria, former PASS student Kimberley and Ethelinda Lashley-Scott, Curriculum Manager. This was hugely popular and had 1114 viewers. You can check out the Black History Month recommendations and [watch the live conversation here](#).



For LGBT History Month in February ECSA hosted an activity challenge for students to get involved with supporting and raising awareness of LGBT History Month and the charity LGBT Youth Scotland. When students signed up to the challenge they were asked to share a story about someone who is their unsung hero, whether a friend, family member or someone they don't know. This fit in with the theme of LGBT History Month 2021; Unsung Heroes. You can see some of the unsung heroes students shared [here](#). 12 Students took part in the challenge and pledged a variety of different activities, with the majority walking everyday as well as students pledging to read for leisure, or complete a form of exercise every day. As part of the activity challenge, students were encouraged to ask for sponsorship from College staff, friends and family in order to fundraise for LGBT Youth Scotland. A total of £241 was raised directly to support the valuable work that LGBT Youth Scotland delivers.



At the end of February, we launched a new student-led campaign "I am Me!" in time for Care Day 2021. The campaign is dedicated to telling the story of students from all walks of life, who are all individuals with their own stories worth telling. As it was launched on Care Day, the first student stories were from two students who grew up in care. Further student stories will be shared in the coming academic year but for now you can read more about the campaign and their stories [here](#).

To mark International Women's Day ECSA and Equalities hosted Women's Hour on MS Teams, an informal gathering for students to get together with other women. 17 students attended Women's Hour and resulted in students getting further involved with the Facebook Women's group, where they have continued the conversation.

For Deaf Awareness Week, we teamed up with Fife College Students' Association. Deaf Awareness Week 2021 focussed on 'coming through it together' and in that spirit we have worked in partnership with both Edinburgh College Equality Officer and Fife College Students' Association to create some content, allowing deaf students to lead the conversation.

Fife student Talli had a conversation with Jade, VP Welfare of Fife College to talk about all the things not to say to a deaf person. They recorded their conversation and we promoted it on our website and our social media channels alongside short videos teaching simple British Sign Language.

## Supporting Diversity

### Online Groups

To support our diverse student population, we run a number of online groups and spaces for students to make their own. Continuing to work in partnership with the College learning support team the Care-Experienced student group has been in place for another successful year. The space is useful for students to ask questions and get relevant information and opportunities. The group currently has 114 members.



Other online spaces include similar groups for LGBT+ students, Student Parents & Carers, Women's group, BAME student group and Disabled student group. Importantly, President Jordan, has continued to work with the Men's Support Network to ensure a supporting environment to ask for help and share experiences. The Men's Support Network has 54 members and activity has included livestreams and work out sessions online. Common for all these groups has been the difficulty keeping content up to date with a small team, however with an incoming additional member of staff to support this work, we are hopeful to see an increase in student activity with these groups.

## Sunflower Lanyard Hidden Disability Scheme



With the new challenges COVID-19 has brought when accessing services, and following queries and feedback from students on the ECSA Virtual Campus, we worked with relevant College teams to work on behalf of Edinburgh College to sign-up to the [Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme](#). The sunflower lanyard or identification card allows us to recognise students with hidden disabilities, who for example might be exempt from wearing face masks, or needing assistance when accessing College services and facilities. As part of joining the scheme, Edinburgh College are committing to train staff on how to recognise

the Sunflower scheme, ensuring they have a deeper understanding of hidden disabilities, and the confidence to approach and support those with hidden disabilities.

Students and staff can get a lanyard for free by filling in a quick collection form and will be able to pick it up during normal college hours from their specified campus the next day.





# Sustainability & Go Green

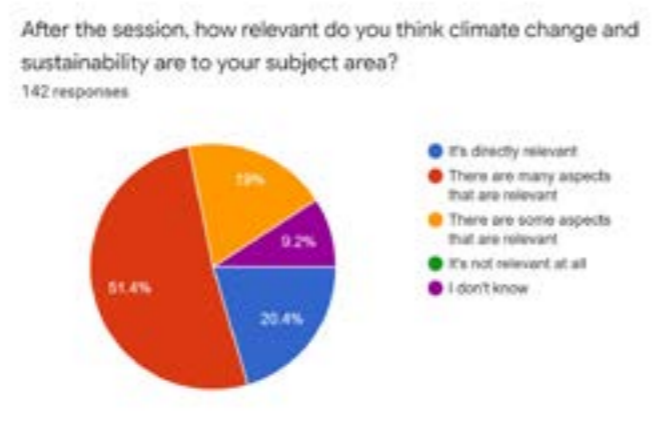
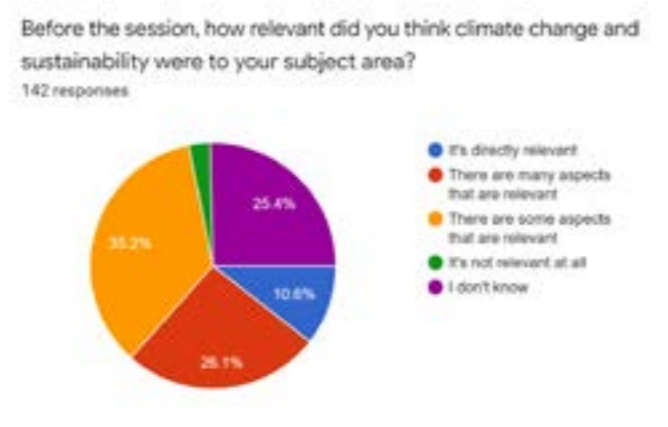
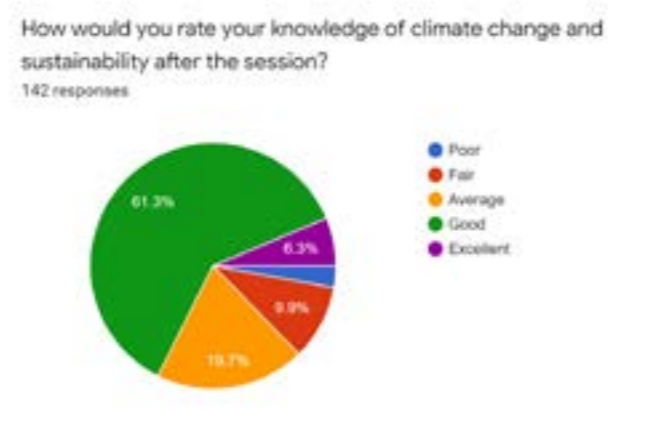
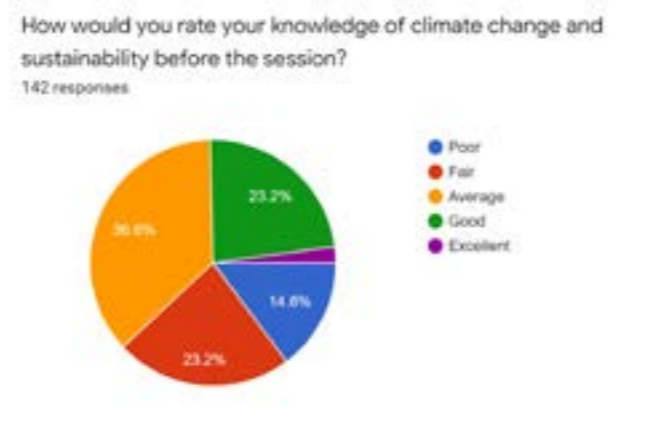
## Climate Change Awareness

This academic year we've been able to deliver Climate Change and Sustainability workshops to 26 different classes (359 students) - ranging from Professional Cookery and Bakery, through to Brickwork and Childhood Practice. This was enabled through reaching out to LDT's at the start of the year, followed by advertising these sessions in Staff Newsletters. Staff members would get in touch to express an interest, then we would talk them through the different sessions we had available, to then decide on which was most appropriate to the class they were working with.

To begin with, this was done through a simple PowerPoint presentation, with a feedback form link posted at the end of the session. As this was only gaining a 17% response rate to the survey, we decided to buy a Mentimeter membership, so we could make our presentations more engaging for students. This allowed us to go from 17% of participants responding to our survey (32 responses from 193 students across 15 classes), to 65% of participants engaging in our questions through Mentimeter (108 responses from 166 students across 11 classes).

At the start of the session, we ask students how they would rate their current knowledge of climate change, and how much they think it relates to their course. We then ask these questions again after the session, and the results in changes in knowledge and understanding of relevance can be shown through the graphs opposite.

We have also produced two different Sustainability guides for students - an [Ethical Consumer Guide](#), and a [Sustainability at Home Guide](#). Both of these resources were developed by one of our part-time student staff members, and give lots of tips to students on how to live a more sustainable lifestyle, even when they've had to be at home more than normal due to Government restrictions. These guides have had 22 and 16 unique page views, respectively.



These, alongside three online film screenings of films with a sustainability focus, have allowed us to continue engaging our students with climate change while they've had reduced access to physical events on campus. Once restrictions eased after the Easter holidays, we also ran two seed giveaways on campus, in collaboration with Victoria (VP Activities) for [Mental Health Awareness Week](#). This allowed us to have discussions with students about the environmental and mental health benefits of gardening.

Through this project, we have also been able to have all five members of Go Green staff (two Sustainability Officers and three Sustainability Assistants) attend Carbon Literacy for Communities training. This has greatly helped us with formulating content for our climate change class workshops, and has also provided these staff members with a chance to gain a greater understanding of topics relating to climate change and sustainability.

## Travel

Due to campuses being closed for large parts of this academic year, we have had reduced chances to influence students' travel behaviour to campus. One way we have engaged students with travel considerations during the phased return of students and staff to campuses after summer has involved creating [COVID-19-specific travel guidance documents](#). These guides promoted sustainable and active travel methods, and highlighted safety considerations and guidance from transport providers. These were sent out to all staff and students before their return to campus. One tool that was highlighted in these guides was our [myPTP travel planning widget](#), which is supplied through our Liftshare membership and creates bespoke travel plans to people based on their start and destination postcodes. These plans prioritise active travel methods when journeys have a low mileage. Throughout the year, 76 travel plans have been sent out through this service.

In November, we launched our [Be Bright Be Seen campaign](#). Usually this would include physical events run in conjunction with Edinburgh City Council, but as Government guidance was fairly

strict at this point, we were instead provided with free high-visibility items and bike lights to give out to our students. We combined these with bike bells and better-quality bike lights we purchased through our funding, in order to give active travel safety packs out to our students. While restrictions allowed, we gave these packs out to students outside campus buildings, but during phases of full lockdown we were able to send these out to students in the mail. This approach has allowed us to distribute these items to 30 students, who have given extremely positive feedback about the provision of these resources.

We're extremely excited to be able to offer our students the opportunity to [apply for one of five free bikes](#), and a range of safety equipment to go along with them (helmet, lock, lights, etc). This has come about through collaboration with the College's Estates team, as they received a fleet of free bikes from the University of Edinburgh a while back that weren't successfully used for a loan scheme. We've therefore split the cost of new parts and servicing with the College, so that these bikes are safe to give out to students. We've now opened up an application form for this through our website, which we have firstly distributed to the College's Guidance Team, who will pass this information on to students who they believe would get the greatest benefit from receiving a bike. The first review of applications will take place after an initial deadline of the 18th June, and if there are still bikes available after this, we will reopen this form at the start of next academic year.

## Community Fridges

Due to the minimal access we have had to campuses this year we have postponed the set-up of our community fridges to academic year 2021/22. However, that hasn't stopped us from engaging our students with food waste reduction! One of the main ways we have delivered this outcome is through our [Zero Waste Cooking Series](#). This is a collection of videos focused on giving practical tips and visualisations on how to use more parts of an ingredient, whilst communicating the importance of reducing our food waste. A total of 10 videos have been released to date, with one more scheduled to be published before the end of this term. These



were presented by our previous Sustainability Officer, Grace, and were predominantly edited by our student staff member Paige. These videos have received 216 views on YouTube and 1192 views on Facebook.

While the views on these videos have been positive, we also wanted to provide a more active learning opportunity, which led us to collaborate with Rose (VP Welfare) to run a live event as part of her Wellbeing Wednesday series. The [zero waste "cook-a-long"](#) involved cooking alongside students with demonstrations on how they could reduce their food waste and chats about energy saving tips. To limit the possible barriers of getting involved in this event, we offered a free food box of ingredients to the "cook-a-long" from a local company. Based on research of local independent companies around Edinburgh based on their ethos, locality of produce and sustainability of their deliveries conducted by our Sustainability Assistant Chloe, which selected The Eco Larder to provide food boxes to 5 of the 6 students who attended. The feedback from students about the event was very positive.



We have also provided students with the opportunity to keep a household food waste diary to help them engage with their food waste levels whilst spending more time at home. The first attempt to run this project was unsuccessful, so we revised our approach and advertised this again through social media and in a newsletter to the Environmental Society as part of a [New Year Pledge](#) campaign. It was more successful this time, with 5 students expressing interest, and 3 students completing the project. Students were offered a small incentive of a £10 voucher to a local zero waste shop for their participation.

After collecting base line data of initial food waste levels in their households, students were contacted to discuss how they could reduce their food waste via email or a 1 to 1 discussion through Teams. They were then contacted a couple of weeks later for follow-up data to see if our food waste reduction tips had made an impact on their food waste. All participants successfully reduced the amount of food waste in their households, which allowed us to collect data for our carbon report whilst engaging students with this topic.

Due to the significant impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on our ability to run events for our students, we were looking at a significant underspend for the first year of the project. Fortunately, we were able to make the case to our funders for us to use this money to purchase an electric cargo bike and trailer. This will allow us to collect food donations for our fridges in an environmentally friendly way, as well as offering an alternative transport option for moving resources between campuses for ongoing events and activities.

## Swap Shop

Although we haven't been able to get our Swap Shops set up on campus, we have found an alternative - a virtual Swap Shop! This is hosted [through the ECSA website](#), and includes an image and information about each piece of clothing we have available. To ensure that our students are the only people able to access this, they first need to log onto our website with their student login. Once they're logged in, they can add any of the free items to their shopping bag, then checkout with these items. To allow this to happen, we've taken donations from students and colleagues to stock this Swap Shop. So far, we've received almost 110kg of clothes and accessories donations - about 10kg of which has been given out to students across 9 orders. We've also added sections to the site for books and small household items, to make it clear that these items are also accepted. We're also aiming to have a physical swap event on Granton campus before the summer holidays, in order to get some direct student engagement before they're off campus for a couple of months.

# Pandemic Response

## Building Online Services

In our last End of Year Report in June 2020, we dedicated a significant section of the report to the activities and response to the lockdown that we all found ourselves in for the last 3 months of the academic year. This year, we have had a full academic year of working and supporting students, entirely remotely, dealing with the ever-changing issues that the pandemic has thrown up, and working in partnership to react to and lead on the response to the pandemic.

We have spent a lot of the past year building on the online services which we established right back in March 2020. Some of the temporary solutions became permanent, and new ways of working became the norm. [Our Virtual Campus](#), as has been mentioned, has acted as a springboard for further student engagement and support. A private Facebook group encompassing approximately 2,500 members, it has helped us get key information out to students quickly, gather instant feedback on issues, answer student queries quickly, and helped us foster a sense of community in a time when most were sitting at home alone. With over 1,700 conversations to date, it has been the hub of activity for student engagement over the year.

Another new service we established this year has been the [virtual drop-in](#). This is a single-click access to speak to a member of our team on a video call. This service has been running since May 2020 and has proven a vital lifeline for students who found themselves "digitally lost" as they tried to access the College remotely. As the service is run using Google Meet, it doesn't require log-ins or access to College systems to be able to get through, so it is the most accessible live digital service we could possibly have offered. This proved instrumental in helping the most anxious and confused students speak to a member of our team and get live assistance for anything from logging into the College systems, to advice on funding, questions about timetables, and anything else that they just didn't know where to go to for help. In short, many students

who would have been left alone had somewhere to go to for help from a single click from our website.

Our success in developing these new services was quickly picked up by our colleagues in the Student Experience team who approached us for help to establish an online drop-in system of their own. Working with colleagues in Student Experience, Communications, and IT, a new drop-in service was developed to sit on the Microsoft Teams platform. As all students have access to Microsoft Teams for the online learning, this means that, so long as they are logged into the College system, they can access the drop-ins a certain times of the day, rather than clogging up email inboxes requesting appointments with an advisor, or coming to us asking who is best to contact. The Student Experience virtual drop-ins are now a fixed part of the Microsoft Teams landing page, so students can access these pages all year round, helping accessing student support that bit easier.

## Identifying Issues & Working Together on Solutions

As none of us have ever experienced a year quite like this before, it wasn't always obvious where the issues were going to crop up. Our work on engaging students throughout the year and giving them obvious places to go for help or information, has resulted in us being better placed to identify issues. Gathering feedback through the Virtual Campus, supporting individual students through our online services, and listening to our network of Class Reps. Most of these issues we have been able to raise quickly with the relevant College teams and worked together on developing solutions.

The scale of the student funding crisis experiences during the first semester became more clear as we were able to take growing concerns from students who had contacted us directly and test them with a wide variety of students to see if they had similar experiences. Once identified, we were able to report it back to



the relevant member of the Senior Management Team and work on how we can support a solution. This resulted in us working very closely with the Student Funding Team, hosting a live online Q&A with the Principal and members of the Student Experience Team, and weekly monitoring meetings with the Head of Student Experience and the Vice Principal Innovation, Planning & Performance, right through until Christmas. Students waiting for delayed payments were given a one-off advance payment of £300 until the backlog was eventually cleared in mid-December. In Semester 2, ECSA has joined with a range of colleagues to take part in the lean project management exercise to identify changes to the student funding processes to avoid such major issues occurring again in the future.

Another issue where we have worked very closely with the College to address has been the development and delivery of assessments and placements in a year where both have been majorly disrupted. The cancelling of exams by the SQA and the development of the alternative assessment model left a lot of students confused and anxious about being treated fairly, potentially not completing their courses, and concerned for how it might impact their future studies or careers. We worked closely with the Quality Team, Heads of Faculty, Vice Principals, and the Communications team to ensure the messages about assessments were clear and support was available for anyone wanting further information or needed additional support.

Our work with [NUS Scotland](#) allowed discussions at a national level to include real life examples from our members to help shape the responses of government, national organisations and Colleges. This was also the case when discussing work placements for courses which rely on these placements as a core part of their qualification. Again, working with national organisations, we raised the potential issues around non-completion, impacts on future studying, or entering certain professions. At a local level, we have been part of the Placements working Group, led by the Head of Faculty for Health, Wellbeing, and Social Sciences, where the vast majority of the essential work placements are based. With restrictions remaining in place to very late in the semester, and placement providers still trying

to get back on track with re-opening, it was very satisfying to see hundreds of students access essential placement opportunities throughout May and into June.

As restrictions have lifted and a small proportion of students have been back on campus, we have supported many of them to deal with the transition from remote learning, to on campus practical lessons and in-person assessments. Many students have been studying remotely for well over a year and were shocked, anxious, stressed, and concerned about being asked to come onto campus for these one-off days, with some having never been on campus before. Again, using our network of Class Reps, we quickly realised that the issues affected quite a range of students and courses. We worked with the relevant curriculum staff (Heads of Faculty, Curriculum Managers, and Curriculum Leaders) to arrange an open Q&A session for any student to attend and get their concerns aired. The outputs from this meeting included a new [“what to expect on campus for assessments” video](#) being produced, and many courses offering support for campus orientation to ease the stress of assessment days. Although it was not possible to offer alternatives to being on campus for most students in this situation, there was a heartfelt appreciation from students that the faculty staff took their time to listen and answer as many questions as they could.

## Supporting the College's Response to the Pandemic

From the beginning of the global pandemic back in February 2020, ECSA has positioned itself to be an equal partner in the work involved with reacting to the every-changing situation, and making sure the student voice is at the core of decision-making. At a College level, this has taken several forms. We have been an active member of a variety of working groups addressing specific issues facing students. These have included groups planning and authorising on-campus activity, virtual Welcome Events, student work placements, digital support services, review of the student funding process, and dealing with the operational impacts of industrial action by lecturing staff. We see our place as, not shouting from the side lines, but

being equal partners in honestly discussing issues facing students and working together on developing solutions.



We have worked very closely with the College Communications Team to ensure that students are getting the right information as quickly as it becomes available and offering follow-up opportunities for students to ask questions or clarify things. This has also included designing and producing the [College's first ever fully online Welcome Events](#) and pre-recorded videos from the Principal to students with major updates. We have also worked closely to promote critical calls to action around Government guidance including travel restrictions, face covering on campus, lateral flow testing, and the vaccination programme.



## Engaging Students Throughout the Year

Some of our major areas of activity and events throughout the past year have been focussed on keeping students engaged – both to keep them informed, and to maintain a sense of community whilst working and learning remotely. Supporting students to get online at the beginning of the year was a monumental task. It is usually quite challenging to explain new systems and processes in person, but doing it remotely was another level.

Our online services held up well during this period of intense activity as thousands of students attempted to get online over the course of a few days on unfamiliar systems. Our telephone line, e-mail inbox, and Facebook messenger inboxes were all extremely busy, but our [single-click online drop-in](#) proved the most popular for students to seek help. Here, we were able to share screens, talk them through the process and check systems with them 'in person'. Between Welcome Week and the first week of term, we recorded 494 drop-ins, with the average call taking approximately 10 minutes. Throughout the start of term, we had calls from all across Scotland, England, continental Europe, and beyond as students got set up to learn remotely.

We have been very conscious to ensure that we are not merely generating static content or pre-recorded videos for students, but seeking to develop interactive opportunities, especially for specific complex issues. With this in mind, we have delivered various live stream Q&A events, allowing us to facilitate discussions directly between students and decision-makers. These have covered a wide range of issues including plans for the year with the Principal, student funding issues with the Funding Team, [employment opportunities with the new St James' Quarter](#), and end of year assessments & work placements with Heads of Faculty and Curriculum Managers. This is a model that has been very successful as students get the information directly from decision-makers, but it also allows us to record the interactions and share them with anyone who couldn't make it along to the live event. This wouldn't be so easy



if we were holding physical events on campus, so we see this as a really positive development from a challenging time.

Another area we worked on in terms of engagement was promoting some real positives from the year. It is clear that many students get swept up in the stress and anxiety of not knowing what is going to happen next, and have not given themselves time to pause and take stock of the positives. In December, we held an online Christmas party to allow students the chance to socialise and relax with each other in a safe online space. With quizzes, Christmas crafts and plenty of laughs, it was a good chance for people to relax for a change. We also asked students for nominations for the [“ECSA-mas Nice List”](#). This was a chance for students to nominate other students who had been a real help for them over the course of the first semester. It was a great experience with more than 50 students nominated. We rewarded the short-listed students with Amazon vouchers (to spend on themselves!) with the overall winner getting a locally-sourced Christmas hamper to enjoy with family and friends.

- 142 Lecturers
- 53 Students
- 12 LDTs
- 9 Other staff



All “Thank You” were sent to every individual who was thanked and we published [a searchable list](#) on our website to show everyone the lovely positive messages which were submitted. The students who submitted the thanks were involved in the development of videos to highlight the people who had helped them and promote the message of thank you and positivity to staff and students alike. After the year we have all been through, with the successes we have had, despite the challenges, it feels fitting to end with “Thank You”.



Our final act of the academic year to keep students engaged and enthused, quite fittingly, was our [“Great Big Student Thank You”](#). With all of the stress of the pandemic, the disruption to courses, the changes to government guidance, the industrial action by lecturers, and the general feeling of being bashed about all year, we found that many students were, quite rightly, thankful for all the help they had received to make it through the year. So, this was an opportunity for students to submit a note of thanks to anyone on the College who had helped them. We received over 300 “Thank You”, recognising 216 individual people from across the College, including students, lecturers and support staff:

# Thanks

On behalf of everyone involved in ECSA, we would like to thank the huge amount of wonderful people who have contributed to another successful year - colleagues from across the institution including teaching staff, support staff, the leadership team, the Development Trust, and not least the Board of Management itself. We are grateful and enthused by your ongoing support and want to say a huge thanks for working in partnership with ECSA throughout the year.

To our partners out-with the College, we have had some pretty amazing initiatives, events and support over the past 12 months. We have worked very closely with organisations such as NUS Scotland, sparqs, the Scottish Youth Parliament, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, The Scottish Funding Council, Keep Scotland Beautiful, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and Edinburgh Community Learning & Development.

For an organisation with 3 full-time officers, 4 permanent staff and 2 project-funded staff, these links are invaluable and help us to continue to punch above our weight as a developing College Students’ Association and for this, we say thanks.

Finally, we have to save the biggest thanks to our phenomenal students. In a year that has seen challenges and uncertainty beyond compare, they have stuck together, adapted and overcome everything that was thrown at them. The word ‘resilience’ gets thrown around a lot these days when people are struggling. In our view, Edinburgh College students have been the epitome of what it truly means to be resilient. They are the reason we’re all here and we are very proud of every one of them.

The ECSA Team are excited to see what 2021-22 brings and hopes to continue to do everyone at Edinburgh College proud in the months to come as we set about work on our new Strategic Plan and our new way of working.

Reflecting on the year that was, all we can say is, in a year like no other, team work most definitely makes the dream work!

Thank you.





**Powered by students** | **Driven by values** | **Committed to better**

Edinburgh College Students' Association is a charity registered in Scotland. Charity number SC028544



<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Jonny Pearson		
Author/Contact	Jonny Pearson	Department / Unit	Executive
Date Created	04.06.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None.		
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

## **2020/ 21 RECRUITMENT & RETENTION UPDATE**

### **1. PURPOSE**

This paper aims to provide the Board with an updated overview of the College’s performance against its 2020/21 activity target and to provide ‘year-on-year’ comparative data to enable benchmarking of performance. *[The figures in this paper are accurate as of 04 June 2021]*

### **2. BACKGROUND**

For academic year 2020/21 the Edinburgh College activity target is **187,869** credits. This is comprised of:

Core Credits	ESF Credits	Total Credits
186,612	1,257	187,869

As in previous years, the college is required to achieve its core credits (186,612) before we are able to claim the 1,257 ESF credits.

In addition to this, SFC have given us a target of achieving 4,015 Early Years credits (from HNC and SVQ Level 3 programmes) as part of the 186,612 core.

### **3. DETAIL**

The current credit position is **192,375**, which puts the College 4,506 credits over target.

#### **2021 / 2022 Full-time Recruitment**

Academic Year	Applications	Offers	Accepted Offers
2019 / 20	12,859	5,775	5,228
2020 / 21	11,488	5,625	5,614
<b>2021 / 22</b>	<b>11,889</b>	<b>7,842</b>	<b>6,644</b>

**4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

By evaluating last year's retention figures we have implemented changes designed to further improve our performance indicators for 2020/21. Constant analysis of comparative data has enabled us to make pro-active changes to the curriculum, for example - replacing poor recruiting programmes with additional occurrences of more popular provision and assess the effects of early withdrawal on student numbers.

**5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

The Board is responsible for the financial sustainability of the College. It is Good practice for the Board to monitor all areas of performance that can impact on the College's viability.

**6. RISK**

At the most recent Risk Management meeting it was noted that, whilst there was an improvement in both Recruitment and Retention, the risk score for each should remain the same.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Bodies fundable by the SFC are required by the Financial Memorandum to deliver their outcome agreement. Failure to achieve targets agreed with the SFC may result in financial clawback.

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**9. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**10. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

Achieving this level of continued growth improves our reputation and helps both SG and SFC have confidence in the direction of travel of Edinburgh College

**11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to NOTE the information provided by the Vice Principal Educations & Skills.



<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Alan Williamson		
Author/Contact	Lindsay Towns	Department / Unit	Finance
Date Created	07.06.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	<i>Appendix 1: Management Accounts to April 2021 – Executive Summary</i>		
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

#### **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO APRIL 2021**

- 1. PURPOSE**  
To provide the Board of Management with an update on the financial performance of the College.
- 2. BACKGROUND**  
The Board are asked to review the management accounts at each meeting, in order to assess the College's current financial position.
- 3. DETAIL**  
Appendix 1 contains an Executive Summary of the Management Accounts to April 2021.  
  
The full Management Account to April 2021 can be accessed [here](#).
- 4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**  
The Board is responsible for the financial sustainability of the College, and it is considered good practice to monitor all areas of performance that can impact on the College's viability.
- 5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**  
Content inherent within strategic objectives.
- 6. RISK**  
Content assists monitoring College's financial performance.
- 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**  
Inherent within content.
- 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**  
Some content may cover legal issues.
- 9. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**  
Some content may cover workforce issues.

**10. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to DISCUSS and NOTE the Management Accounts to April 2021.

**The following report provides an update on the financial position of  
Edinburgh College at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**CREDITS AND SFC GRANTS**

Edinburgh College's core SFC activity target for academic year 2020/21 is **186,612** credits (in line with 2019/20), plus an ESF target of **1,257** credits, equating to a total **187,869** credits. The College also has to deliver **6,774** additional credits relating to the Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) and National Transition Training (NTT) funds. Income of £1.8m in relation to these funds is included in the forecast. The College's initial target includes 4,015 HNC childcare credits. The College has achieved **190,911** credits to date.

**ADJUSTED OPERATING POSITION**

As per SFC Measurement basis	<u>Annual Budget 2020/21</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>YTD Budget 2020/21</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>YTD Actuals 2020/21</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>YTD Variance 2020/21</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>Previous YTD 2019/20</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>Full Year Forecast 2020/21</u> <u>£000s</u>
<b>I&amp;E Operating Position</b>	<b>(1,658)</b>	<b>(866)</b>	<b>(660)</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>(1,715)</b>	<b>(854)</b>
<b>Add:</b>						
Depreciation net of deferred capital grant release	2,515	1,964	1,964	-	1,837	2,515
Non-cash provision adjustment	-	-	-	-	-	248
<b>Deduct:</b>						
Revenue funding allocated to loan repayments **	857	643	643	-	581	1,017
<b>Adjusted Operating Position</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>(460)</b>	<b>892</b>

\*\* The forecast for revenue funding allocated to loan repayments has increased by £160k owing to additional payments in relation to our Granton student accommodation (provided in the 2019/20 accounts).

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

	<u>Annual Budget 2020/21</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>YTD Actuals</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>YTD Variance</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>Previous YTD</u> <u>£000s</u>	<u>Full Year Forecast</u> <u>£000s</u>
Funding Council Grants	49,880	35,873	34,983	<b>(890)</b>	35,459	51,872
Tuition Fees and Commercial & Other Income	12,494	11,031	9,727	<b>(1,303)</b>	11,714	10,517
Job Retention Scheme (JRS) Income	-	-	789	789	-	805
Deferred Income	2,486	1,944	1,944	-	2,279	2,486
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>64,860</b>	<b>48,848</b>	<b>47,443</b>	<b>(1,404)</b>	<b>49,452</b>	<b>65,680</b>
Staff Costs	47,570	35,663	36,148	<b>(485)</b>	35,928	48,934
Other Costs	13,946	10,143	7,704	2,440	11,124	11,863
Depreciation	5,001	3,907	3,907	-	4,115	5,001
Exceptional Support Costs	-	-	345	<b>(345)</b>	-	736
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>66,517</b>	<b>49,713</b>	<b>48,104</b>	<b>1,610</b>	<b>51,167</b>	<b>66,534</b>
<b>Operating (Deficit) / Surplus pre year-end pension revaluation adjustments</b>	<b>(1,658)</b>	<b>(866)</b>	<b>(660)</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>(1,715)</b>	<b>(854)</b>

The College's annual budgeted operating position is a deficit of £1,658m, which results in an adjusted operating budget for the year of **break-even** (refer para 1.3). This includes savings of £2.1m to be identified during the

year. The full year forecast is in line with our mid-year financial review return sent to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in early April.

The operating position to April shows a deficit of £660k, against a profiled budget deficit of £866k. The main variances are:

- A favourable income variance of £789k from Job Retention Scheme (JRS) income.
- An adverse income variance within tuition fees, commercial & other income of £1,303k (mainly FWDF, SDS, managing agents, residencies, bespoke contracts & scheduled courses).
- An adverse income variance of £890k within 'other' SFC grants (primarily lower childcare funds which are offset by lower associated expenditure), and deferred capital formula funds which are partly off-set by grants for mental health counsellors & access to sanitary products.
- An adverse expenditure variance within staffing costs of £485k (the net effects of not achieving full targeted efficiency savings but partly covered by savings from vacancy churn and VS).
- A favourable expenditure variance within non-staffing costs of £2,440k (lower childcare costs of £679k, reduced premises costs due to campus closures, a reduction in catering requirements due to lock-down, reductions in re-negotiated contracts and lower VAT associated with lower overall operating expenditure).

The SFC confirmed that the College will receive £1.8m of credit based unbudgeted YPG & NTT funding to support 16-24 years (YPG) and age 25+ years students, the unemployed and those at risk of redundancy due to Covid-19 (including furloughed workers)—unchanged from last month. The funding also includes an additional £0.44m of student support funds, which might not be fully required.

The College has also received £1.5m of additional non-recurring funding to address financial sustainability, protect jobs and help students finish their courses and gain qualifications. This figure has been included within the College's projections (and is unchanged from last month).

Costs associated with all of the above additional funding (most of which was notified to the College in March) is still being quantified, with expectations that such costs will largely be staff related, but may also include student ICT equipment, catering function subsidies, accommodation deposit refunds, and lost commercial income. As a result, £144k of net additional costs to address future premises and ICT needs have been included in this month's year-end forecast.

The recent VS scheme cost £736k and will result in savings of £256k in the current year, and recurring savings of £1.22m from 2021/22. Posts given up will also save £0.25m on a recurring basis.

An additional provision of £0.25m has been made for Granton Accommodation vacant rooms, but this will not affect current year payments so does not impact on the adjusted operating position forecast.

The adjusted operating position forecast is unchanged from March 2021 accounts. High-level movements in April 2021 are as follows:

	<u>£'000 - Fav /</u> <u>(Adv)</u>
Tuition fees (managing agents and associate degree students).	50
Commercial & international income (bespoke £25k, SDS £23k, residencies £14k and gyms £9k)	75
Other income (net Job Retention Scheme income)	19
Other operating expenditure (mainly higher Granton accommodation costs and expenditure to address premises and ICT future needs)	<u>(144)</u>
<b>Total movements during April affecting operating position:</b>	<u><u>-</u></u>

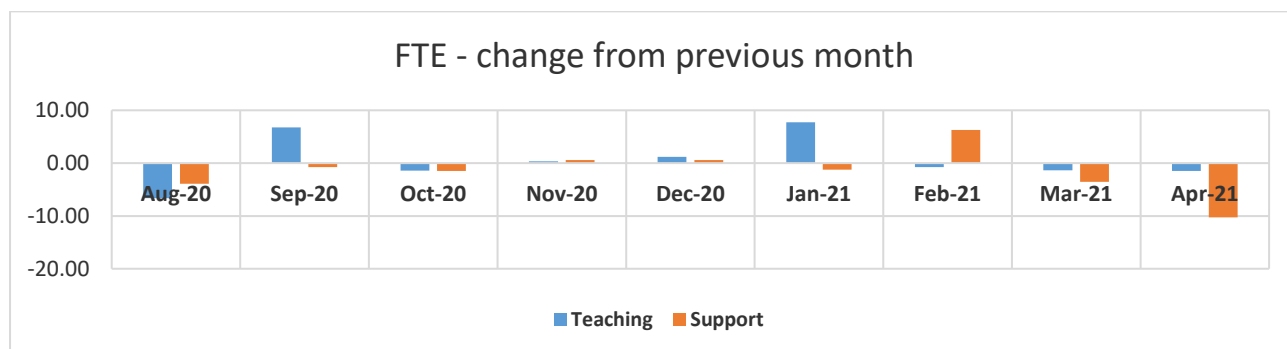
In comparison to the full year B/E budget, the adjusted operating position shows a surplus forecast of £892k, as shown below:

	<b>£'000 - Fav / (Adv)</b>
YPG & NTT funding (including the SAAS element of £69k)	1,758
Non-recurring additional SFC funding	1,477
Net 'other' SFC Grants (increased capital spend of £500k, partly offset by grants for mental health counsellors, access to sanitary products & ECSA of £245k in total)	(255)
Catering operation subsidy costs	(129)
Staffing (see para 5 for details)	(1,629)
VS costs less associated current year efficiency savings	(471)
Net tuition fees, nursery, all commercial & international contracts	(1,568)
Job Retention Scheme income	805
Other operating cost savings (from campus closures, including expenditure associated with additional SFC grants of £245k)	1,184
Granton student accommodation vacant rooms costs	(280)
<b>Total YTD movement also affecting cash:</b>	<b>892</b>

#### STAFF (FULL TIME EQUIVALENT)

FTE	31/07/20	30/04/21	YTD Movement	30/04/20
Teaching	479.0	483.5	4.5	490.7
Support	528.7	514.9	(13.8)	535.1
	1,007.7	998.4	(9.3)	1,025.8

Staff numbers have decreased by 11.8 FTE during the month, primarily due to VS support staff leavers. The FTE monthly staff movements are shown below:



#### CASH

Opening cash	Year-end cash	Comments
01/08/2020	31/07/2021	The cash-flow forecast includes all changes to the forecast as outlined in para 1.5 above. The year-end cash balance of £3.2m is unchanged from March 2021.
£'m.	£'m.	
1.52	3.2	

## CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Opening Fixed Assets	Additions	Dep'n	Closing Fixed Assets	Comments
01/08/20	30/04/21	30/04/21	30/04/2021	
£'m.	£'m.	£'m	£'m.	Capital funding is allocated as follows: <b>(1)</b> £0.99m to maintain the estate, <b>(2)</b> £2.19m for condition survey backlog works, <b>(3)</b> £0.76m for priority works/economic recovery' and <b>(4)</b> £0.26m for student digital poverty. £3.8m of capex has been incurred since the start of the funding year (environmental, wellbeing, ICT projects, student equipment, health & safety and building fabric work). The balance of (£0.4m) is committed.
163.8	3.2	(3.5)	163.5	



<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION / DECISION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Nick Croft		
Author/Contact	Nick Croft / Marcus Walker	Department / Unit	Governance
Date Created	25.05.21	Telephone	
Appendices Attached	<i>Appendix 1: Draft Annex to Standing Orders for Virtual and Hybrid Meetings</i> <i>Appendix 2: Board Calendar 2021/22</i>		
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

## **GOVERNANCE REPORT**

### **1. PURPOSE**

This paper provides an update on ongoing governance matters within the College.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

The report provides an update on matters brought to the attention of the Board in its March 2021 report, and further governance developments within the College, and the College Sector, over recent months.

### **3. DETAIL**

#### **3.1 Chair of the Edinburgh College Board - Recruitment Process**

On 12 May 2021, the Scottish Government advised the College that in preparation for the appointment of a new Regional Chair an early engagement meeting between the selection panel and both the Principal and the Board Secretary would be held in early June 2021 (- date to be confirmed). Following the early engagement event, the selection panel will hold a planning meeting in late June to finalise the selection criteria and application form.

A verbal update on the early engagement event and a timescale for appointment will be provided at the Board meeting on 15 June 2021.

#### **3.2 Review of Code of Good Governance**

As previously reported the release of an updated Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges ('the Code') was delayed in the academic year 2019/20 due to the UK Parliament General Election, and the requirement to schedule a change in primary legislation (Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013). This delay was then extended further in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

On 24 May 2021, Colleges Scotland confirm that a meeting of the Good Governance Steering Group would take place in September 2021 (date to be confirmed) - to consider

and (if appropriate) approve an updated version of the Code. A further update on this will matter will be provided to the Board at its next meeting on 29 September 2021.

### **3.3 Standing Orders - Annex for Virtual and Hybrid Meetings**

The Board agreed at its last meeting that an annex to the Standing Orders of the Edinburgh College Board of Management should be drafted to ensure the order and effective conduct of virtual and hybrid meetings.

Attached, as Appendix 1, is a draft *Annex for Virtual and Hybrid Meetings*. The Board are asked to consider the Annex, and (if appropriate) approve its inclusion in the Standing Orders.

### **3.4 Online Access to Board of Management Information**

In agreement with the Information Management Team, the Clerk to the Board has finalised a file structure for all Board and governance related documentation. The file structure has been created by the IT Team, and the design tested before files can be transferred over to OneDrive.

It is expected that all Board related papers and information will be available online by the start of the next academic year. The Board will be advised once files are available to access through OneDrive.

### **3.5 Board Improvement Plan**

The Board approved the 2019 Board Effectiveness Plan and its accompanying Improvement Plan on 30 March 2020. Both documents were submitted to the SFC in April, in alignment with the requirements of the Code of Good Governance.

The 2019 Board Effectiveness Review can be viewed on the College website [here](#).

An updated 2020/21 Board Improvement Plan which outlines the current status of all recommendations, and actions, arising from the Board Effectiveness Review can be viewed [here](#).

The 2020/21 Board Improvement Plan will be considered by the Chair and the Board Secretary over the summer, along with outcomes from the annual Board self-evaluation processes (see Paragraph 3.6), and an updated 2021/22 Improvement Plan will be considered by the Board on 29 September 2021.

### **3.6 Annual Board Self-Evaluation**

The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges states that boards must keep their effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. Further to this, the Board has undertaken the following self-evaluation exercises:

- On 12 May 2021, the Nominations Committee agreed that a **review of membership and attendance report** would be circulated to members following the final meeting of the Board in 2020/21. Any points arising from the report will be reported directly to the next meeting of the Board in September 2021.
- **Committee self-evaluations** were undertaken at all meetings in May and June 2021. Actions arising from the self-evaluations will be considered by each committee at their next meeting.



- A **Board Questionnaire** was circulated to all members with a deadline of 31 May 2021. Key themes arising from the survey are outlined in the 2020/21 Evaluation Report (PAPER N).
- **One-to-one meetings with the Interim Chair** took place during the weeks commencing 24 & 31 May 2021. Reflections from the process will be fed back to the Board as part of the 2020/21 Evaluation Report (PAPER O).
- The **Evaluation of the Interim Chair** was conducted by the Interim Vice-Chair at the end of May 2021, and allowed Board members to reflect on the Interim Chair's performance in 2020/21. Matters arising from the process will be fed back to the Board as part of the 2020/21 Evaluation Report (PAPER O).

### 3.7 Board Calendar 2021/22

Attached as Appendix 2 is the Board and committee calendar for 2021/22 as endorsed by the Board following a period of consultation in May 2021. The Board are asked to note the dates of upcoming meetings.

## 4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The implementation of robust self-evaluation processes will ensure that governance arrangements are compliant with the Code of Good Governance.

## 5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Ensuring that the College has effective governance arrangements in place enables the College to deliver the Strategic Plan 2017/22, the annual Regional Outcome Agreement, and the Education Scotland '*How Good is Our College?*' Framework.

## 6. RISK

Improving governance arrangements and effective forward planning will mitigate the risk of governance failure.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Compliance with the Code of Good Governance is an SFC condition of grant.

## 8. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Reputational risks associated with poor governance may occur, if appropriate planning is not implemented.

### CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to NOTE the content of the Governance Report.

The Board are asked to CONSIDER the Annex for Virtual and Hybrid Meetings (Para 3.3 refers), and (if appropriate) APPROVE its inclusion in the Standing Orders of the Board of Management.



For the future you want

## STANDING ORDERS OF THE EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

### ANNEX FOR VIRTUAL AND HYBRID MEETINGS

The purpose of this annex to the Standing Orders is to ensure the orderly and effective conduct of virtual and hybrid meetings of the Board of Management (“the Board”) and of Committees of the Board (“Committees”).

#### 1. INTERPRETATION

- 1.1 **Virtual meeting:** a meeting of members of the Board where arrangements have been made in advance to allow participants to attend the meeting by means of a conference telephone, video link or similar means of electronic communication at which all participants can be heard and can hear each other without the need for them to be physically present at the same location. A person participating in a meeting by such means shall be deemed to be attending **virtually**.
- 1.2 **Hybrid meeting:** a meeting of members of the Board at which some participants are attending the meeting in person and others are attending virtually.

#### 2. MEETINGS OF THE BOARD AND COMMITTEES

- 2.1 Where arrangements have been made for a meeting to be held virtually or as a hybrid meeting, the notice calling the meeting shall state that fact and include details of the means by which a person may attend the meeting virtually.
- 2.2 To attend any virtual or hybrid meeting, a Member must be able at that time to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance.
- 2.3 A person attending a meeting virtually shall have the same rights to receive notice, speak, vote and otherwise participate in the meeting as they would have if attending the meeting in person.
- 2.4 The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of all persons present at the meeting without distinction between those who attended in person and those who attended virtually.

#### 3. QUORUM AND VOTING RIGHTS

- 3.1 No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum is present. A person shall be deemed to be present by attending either in person or virtually where arrangements for virtual attendance have been made.

- 3.2 A person entitled to vote upon the business at a meeting may do so either in person or virtually where arrangements for virtual attendance have been made.
- 3.3 In any debate, the Chair of the Meeting will invite all Members in attendance whether they wish to say anything as part of the debate. If a Member wishes to speak then this is the point at which they will so speak.
- 3.4 Each vote will be a roll call vote or by a show of hands, while the minutes will record the decision of the meeting.
- 3.5 Where a vote is to be taken by means of a secret ballot, any arrangements for a meeting to be held virtually or as a hybrid meeting shall include a means for those attending virtually to cast their vote secretly.

#### **4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 4.1 Any Member with a Disclosable Interest in any particular matter must disconnect from the Meeting for that particular item. The Meeting will, if required, pause for up to five minutes for the said Member to reconnect once the matter has been dealt with.

#### **5. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 5.1 When confidential, or 'closed' matters, are under consideration. Members attending virtually should ensure that there are no members of the public at remote locations able to hear or see the proceedings during such meetings.
- 5.2 No virtual or hybrid meeting of the Board or its committees shall be digitally recorded unless a proposal, justifying the purpose of the recording, is unanimously agreed by all Members in attendance.

#### **6. CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

- 6.1 Members attending virtually should connect to the Meeting shortly before the allotted commencement time and check that their connection is operational<sup>1</sup>.
- 6.2 Members attending virtually should ensure that their microphone is muted other than when they are entitled to speak.
- 6.3 If applicable, Members attending virtually should ensure that their online chat function and notification functions (e.g. raised hand etc) are operational.
- 6.4 Members attending virtually who experience connectivity and/or accessibility issues should ensure that the Chair is notified at the start of the meeting, or at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.5 If a Members in attendance wishes to speak, and is unable to access the chat or notification functions, they should verbally advise the Chair that they wish to do so.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Board of Management are advised to log-in to Microsoft Teams using an Edinburgh College account, to ensure that both functionality and confidentiality are maintained.



## Board and Committee Meeting Year Planner 2021/2022

2021/22	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
<b>August</b>	2 TSH	3 TSH	4 TSH	5 TSH	6 TSH	9 TSH	10 TSH	11 TSH	12 TSH	13 TSH	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25 BDE 14:00	26	27	30	31 P&R 15:00				
<b>September</b>			1	2	3	6	7 CD 15:00	8	9	10 AC 14:00	13	14	15	16	17	20 CC	21	22	23	24	27	28	29 BoM 14:00	30		
<b>October</b>					1	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13 A&RA 15:00	14	15	18 TSH	19 TSH	20 TSH	21 TSH	22 TSH	25	26 BSD 09:30	27	28	29	
<b>November</b>	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11		15	16 P&R 15:00	17	18	19 AC 14:00	22	23 CD 15:00	24 A&RA 15:00	25	26	29	30				
<b>December</b>			1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10	13	14 BoM 14:00	15	16	17	20	21	22	23 CC	24 CC	27 CC	28 CC	29 CC	30 CC	31 CC	
<b>January</b>	3 CC	4 CC	5 CC	6 CC	7 CC	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24	25	26	27	28	31					
<b>February</b>		1	2	3	4	7	8	9 BDE 14:00	10	11	14 TSH	15 TSH	16 TSH	17 TSH	18 TSH	21	22 P&R 15:00	23 A&RA 15:00	24	25	28					
<b>March</b>		1 CD 15:00	2	3	4 AC 14:00	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22 BoM 14:00	23	24	25	28	29	30	31		
<b>April</b>					1	4	5	6	7	8	11 TSH	12 TSH	13 TSH	14 TSH	15 CC	18 CC	19 TSH	20 TSH	21 TSH	22 TSH	25	26 BSD 09:30	27	28	29	
<b>May</b>	2 CC	3	4	5	6	9	10	11	12	13	16	17 P&R 15:00	18	19	20 AC 14:00	23	24 CD 15:00	25 A&RA 15:00	26	27	30	31 REM 15:30				
<b>June</b>			1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10	13	14 BoM 14:00	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31	

**KEY :** Board; Audit & Risk Assurance; Academic Council; Corporate Development; Policy & Resources;  
 Remuneration; Board Strategy Day; Board Development Event (optional)  
 CC = College Closed; TSH = Teaching Staff Holiday; ASD = All Staff Day

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
15 JUNE 2021  
PAPER N**



For the future you want

<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Ann Landels		
Author/Contact	Ann Landels / Marcus Walker	Department / Unit	Board of Management
Date Created	07.06.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None.		
Disclosable under FOISA	No.		

**BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY 2021 REPORT**

**1. PURPOSE**

To provide the Board with an opportunity to consider feedback from the 2021 Self-Evaluation Survey, and any further actions required in response.

**2. BACKGROUND**

The Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges states that boards must keep their effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. One element of the Board self-evaluation process is for members to complete a survey reflecting on the practice of the Edinburgh College Board of Management in the academic year 2020/21

To allow comparison with self-evaluation data from the previous two years the same questionnaire was circulated.

**3. DETAIL**

**3.1 Questionnaire**

In late May 2021, an evaluation questionnaire comprising of 34 statements, over six sections directly related to areas of the Code of Good Governance, was circulated to the Board. Responses to the questionnaire illustrated that Board members were broadly content with governance arrangements at the College, indicating broad 'agreement' with all 34 of the statements put forward (against a six-level Likert scale).

Nine Board Members (from a possible total of 16) took part in the 2020/21 evaluation.

### 3.2 Comparison with Previous Surveys

In the 2020 Survey, feedback indicated that members were broadly content ('agree / strongly agree') with performance across all survey questions. However, the following three statements received the lowest scoring across all surveyed questions:

- The Board regularly reviews performance against its strategic aims;
- The Board undertakes regular strategic reviews / scenario planning;
- The Board sets challenging student success targets.

In the 2021 Survey, feedback again indicated that members were broadly content with performance across all survey questions. However, the above two statements relating to '*Leadership and Strategy*' remained some of the lowest scored across all surveyed questions (- albeit scoring slightly higher than in the previous year).

Statements relating to '*Learning and Teaching / Students Support*' generally received the most mixed responses, with the following questions received the most 'neither agree / nor disagree' responses of those surveyed:

- Learning and Teaching Performance is overseen effectively;
- The Board sets challenging student success targets.

Statements relating to '*Accountability*' continued to score highly, however, unlikely previous years Board members did not unanimously 'agree / strongly agree' with the following statement:

- The Board publishes high quality Annual Report.

### 3.3 Response to Specific Points

Updates in relation to the points highlighted in 3.2 are provided below:

- '***Leadership and Strategy***'. At each meeting of the Board in 2020/21, members have received a Quarterly Strategic KPI Dashboard which outlines performance agreed indicators.

Over the course of 2020/21, the Board has been considering its strategic framework which a view to a new strategic plan being approved in early 2021/22. Once approved, it is proposed that a timetable for strategic reviews and scenario planning is considered by the Board.

- '***Learning and Teaching / Students Support***'. Student success targets outlined in the Regional Outcome Agreement are monitored regularly through the Academic Council. The Board, through its Academic Council, has previously noted that the challenges and priorities of the College to improve in the areas of retention and attainment. Progress against a short-term action plan has been reviewed by the Academic Council to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support improvements in student attainment.

- ***'The Board publishes high quality Annual Report'***. The Chief Operating Officer and Head of Finance continued to develop the Annual Report and Financial Statements document on an annual basis. At the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee on 26 May 2021, members specifically agreed that the presentation and narrative of the document should continue to be developed.

### **3.4 Qualitative Feedback**

Whilst Board members positively 'agreed' with all 34 statements put forward in the 2021 questionnaire, there were however a number of constructive comments that will be considered further by the Interim Chair and the Board Secretary.

Such comments provided by members included:

- ***Leadership & Strategy***
  - *"Whilst the strategic priorities have been set out in the strategic plan (soon to be refreshed), the progress against the strategic plan is only made by reference to a multiplicity of reports. It would be worthwhile to have a formal annual review of progress against the priorities within the strategic plan."*
  - *"Reviewing the strategy at Board level at regular intervals, to assess what changes might be needed, would be welcome."*
- ***Quality of the Student Experience***
  - *"My experience to date is that the Academic Council, understandably due to membership, can get into what are clearly operational matters and decisions. The strategic plan refresh provides a timely hook to use in developing and evolving this committee further. aware of students' views should be embedded in every aspect of the Board's work."*
  - *"It is difficult to assess the position of learning and teaching, even though the Academic Council. Perhaps the Board should hear from Education Scotland or others who are evaluating the quality of learning and teaching."*
- ***Remuneration, Sustainability, Staff Governance***
  - *"Board members are not given HR reports and little information is given in the Policy & Resources Committee minutes. Staff morale is always a concern and the Board has a duty of case to ensure it is fully supporting staff."*
- ***Accountability***
  - *"Now that minutes of Committees are shown in the 'for information' section of the Board Agenda, it would be worthwhile having an annual report from each Committee (introduced by the Committee Chair) timetabled throughout the year."*
  - *"The Financial annual report continues to evolve with an emphasis on being clearer – as per discussions at the Audit Committee."*

- **Relationship and Collaboration**

- *“The board in my experience has always been proactive in engaging with stakeholders and local councils, due to the large number of outside groups that the college does engage with however, I feel we can’t meet them all, perhaps the board could encourage more staff engagement as part of this to ensure we represent as much of the community, industry (large and small) as possible.”*

### **3.5 One-to-One Meetings with Interim Chair**

In addition to the evaluation questionnaire, the Interim Chair held individual conversations with 12 of the 15 Board members during May and June 2021. 1 member submitted a written report and 2 members were unavailable. Of those 12 members 3 are nearing the end of their terms of office and 4 had joined the Board during 2020/21. The change in membership made this a different experience from 2019/20 in terms of assessing both individual performance and reflections on the experience of being a Board member. The 10 Board members who are remaining on the Board for the whole of 2021/22 agreed personal objectives for the coming year.

With the Board having continued to meet virtually throughout the year there was a specific discussion on how this had impacted on the involvement of members in Board matters and the effect this has had on effective governance. Overall it was felt that things had gone well but there had inevitable been pluses and minuses. Virtual meetings have been most successful for smaller, shorter meetings, the additional Chairs’ group meetings and the optional Q&A sessions with the Principal and Interim Chair. The view was that these had supported greater participation and should be continued. However, there was a unanimous view that for larger groups, including the full Board and Academic Council in person meetings were preferred. Board members also reported that virtual meetings meant that there were few opportunities to have informal, ad hoc conversations with each other and with members of College staff. Newer Board members also missed the opportunity to be in campus and meet with staff and students. Comments were also made on the limitation of Teams as a platform for larger virtual meetings.

### **3.6 Conclusions / Next Steps**

The feedback provided by the Board will be considered further by the Interim Chair and the Board Secretary, and cross referenced with the 2019 Board Effectiveness Report and the subsequent recommendations highlighted within the Board Improvement Plan. A further update on the implementation of points raised through Board members’ feedback shall be included in the Board Improvement Plan Report provided to the Board at its next scheduled meeting on 29 September 2021.

## **4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s Colleges states that boards must keep their effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process.

## **5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

The Board of Management is responsible for the strategic direction of Edinburgh College.

## **6. RISK**

A key role of the Board of Management is scrutiny and risk assessment, review and mitigation.



**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Board of Management is responsible for the overall budget and financial performance of the College.

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

No direct legal implications arising from the evaluation.

**9. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

No direct workforce implications arising from the evaluation.

**10. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

Self-evaluation is required to maintain an effective Board and ensure that robust governance arrangements are in place. A governance failure, which may result from inadequate self-evaluation processes, could have significant reputational implications for the College.

**11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

No direct equalities implications arising from the evaluation.

**CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to DISCUSS and NOTE the paper.

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
15 JUNE 2021  
PAPER O**



For the future you want

<b>FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Nigel Paul		
Author/Contact	Nigel Paul	Department / Unit	Board of Management
Date Created	02.06.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None.		
Disclosable under FOISA	No.		

**ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE CHAIR OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2020/21**

**1. PURPOSE**

The report presents the results of the annual evaluation of the Chair of the Edinburgh College Board of Management for 2020/21. The evaluation was undertaken by the Interim Vice Chair, Nigel Paul.

**2. BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Purpose**

The Code of Governance for Scotland's Colleges came into effect in December 2014. Compliance with the Code is a condition of grant and colleges must include a statement in their annual report to confirm that the principles of the Code have been applied.

The Code requires the Board to agree a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the Chair, which should normally be led by the Vice Chair / Senior Independent Member.

In 2020/21, an evaluation of the Interim Chair, Ann Landels was undertaken by the Interim Vice Chair and a report was presented to the Board on 15 June 2020.

**2.2 Methodology**

A scaled questionnaire containing 16 questions, including opportunities for members of the Board to provide qualitative feedback, was circulated to the Board on 17 May 2021.

The questionnaire reflected the Code's principles on the effectiveness of Board Chairs i.e. that they should:

- Ensure the effectiveness of all aspects of the Board's role
- Ensure adequate time is available for discussion of all agenda items, particularly strategic issues
- Promote a culture openness and debate by encouraging the effective contribution of all Board Members
- Foster constructive relations between Board Members

Other questions explored the facilitation of effective governance in more depth, whether national and regional perspectives were being brought to the Board, and the fostering of constructive challenge of the Principal and Executives, to more fully reflect the Code. 10 members of the Board (from a possible total of 15 members) completed the questionnaire. Opportunity was also provided for board members to discuss their views with the Interim Vice Chair, however none felt it necessary to take up this opportunity.

The Interim Vice Chair liaised with the Interim Chair to discuss feedback before providing this report to the Board. Members should also note that the formal 2020/21 Chair's Performance Review by Scottish Ministers has been postponed due to the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, however the results of the College's evaluation will be submitted to the Scottish Government for its consideration.

### **3. DETAIL**

#### **3.1 Overview**

Overall, Board Members believe that the Interim Chair has been *an 'effective leader of the Board, ably demonstrating the skills and experience necessary'*, with 90% of respondents indicating that they 'strongly agree /agree' with this statement.

Responses to the questionnaire illustrated that Board members were broadly content with the performance of the Interim Chair, indicating broad 'agreement' with all 16 of the statements put forward (against four-level Likert scale).

It was recognised that throughout the academic year 2020/21 all Board related meetings had been held online, due to social distancing restrictions in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Unlike the previous year's evaluation, where feedback focused on the immediate aftermath of the Pandemic (e.g. effective communications with the Board and the Executive Team), the 2020/21 provided more detailed feedback on the performance of the Interim Chair in preparation for, and during, meetings of the Board.

Whilst respondents indicated that they 'strongly agree / agree' with statements relating to the effective coordination and chairing of meetings, the Interim Chair received some constructive suggestion which shall be considered for the remaining period of her tenure.

Other areas of feedback highlighted by members of the Board recognised the Interim Chair as doing *'an excellent job of representing the College at outside events'*, in spite of all meetings and events taking place virtually.

#### **3.2 Summary of Evaluation**

The Board consider the evaluation of the Chair to have been a beneficial exercise. Their conclusion was that the Interim Chair of the Edinburgh College Board of Management had broadly operated effectively during an unprecedentedly challenging period.

#### **4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The benefit of having a skilled and effective Chair accords well with the principles of good governance and is regarded as essential to the performance of the Board of Management and Edinburgh College overall.

#### **5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

The Board of Management is responsible for the strategic direction of Edinburgh College.

#### **6. RISK**

A key role of the Board of Management is scrutiny and risk assessment, review and mitigation.

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Board of Management is responsible for the overall budget and financial performance of the College.

#### **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

No direct legal implications arising from the evaluation.

#### **9. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

No direct workforce implications arising from the evaluation.

#### **10. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

A strong, effective and well-respected Chair (and Board of Management) is a reputational asset for the College.

#### **11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

No direct equalities implications arising from the evaluation.

#### **CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to DISCUSS and NOTE the paper.

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
15 JUNE 2021  
PAPER X**



For the future you want

<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Chair		
Author/Contact	Marcus Walker	Department / Unit	Governance
Date Created	04.06.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached			
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT - AGENDA PLANNER 2021/22**

**1. PURPOSE**

To provide the Board with an opportunity to review upcoming items of business.

**2. BACKGROUND**

It is important that the Board and its committees follow an appropriate plan of work in order to ensure they effectively cover all areas of their remit throughout the year and make the most efficient use of their time.

**3. DETAIL**

Below are proposed agenda items for the next three meetings of the Board of Management, excluding Minutes of the Previous Meeting, Matters Arising and Any Other Competent Business:

**3.1 29 SEPTMEBER 2021**

- EDINBURGH COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT TRUST ANNUAL UPDATE
- STRATEGIC DISCUSSION: TBC
- EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT
  - ECSA Quarterly Report
  - ECSA Annual Priority Objectives 2021/22
- COMMITTEE BUSINESS
  - POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 31.08.21
    - Recruitment & Retention Dashboard
    - Management Accounts to July 2021
  - AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

- Summary Top Risk Register
- ACADEMIC COUNCIL
  - Minutes 10.09.21
- CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
  - Minutes 07.09.21
- PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT
- GOVERNANCE REPORT
- NATIONAL REPORT
- HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21
- FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

### **3.2 14 DECEMBER 2021**

- BOARD DEVELOPMENT DAY 26.10.21 REPORT
- STRATEGIC DISCUSSION: TBC
- DRAFT REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2022/23
- EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT
- COMMITTEE BUSINESS
  - AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 13.10.21 & 24.11.21
    - Annual Report & Financial Statements for Period to July 2021
    - Summary Top Risk Register
  - POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 16.11.21
    - Recruitment & Retention Dashboard
    - Management Accounts to October 2021
  - ACADEMIC COUNCIL
    - Minutes 19.11.21
  - CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 23.11.21
  - NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE
    - Minutes (TBC)
- PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT
- GOVERNANCE REPORT

- NATIONAL REPORT
- RIDDOR REPORT

### **3.3 22 MARCH 2022**

- STRATEGIC DISCUSSION: TBC
- REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2022/23
- EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT
- COMMITTEE BUSINESS
  - POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 22.02.22
    - Recruitment & Retention Dashboard
    - Management Accounts to January 2022
  - AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 23.02.22
    - Summary Top Risk Register
  - ACADEMIC COUNCIL
    - Minutes 04.03.22
  - CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
    - Minutes 01.03.22
- PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT
- GOVERNANCE REPORT
- NATIONAL REPORT
- RIDDOR REPORT

#### **4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Effective agenda planning will allow the Board to monitor all aspects of business within its remit in a timely manner.

#### **CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to NOTE upcoming items of business.

<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>			
Meeting	Board of Management 15.06.21		
Presented by	Alan Williamson		
Author/Contact	Andy Bamberry	Department / Unit	Estates Services
Date Created	25.05.21	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None.		
Disclosable under FOISA	Yes.		

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY - RIDDOR REPORT**

### **1. PURPOSE**

This report provides a summary of RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) reportable accidents and incidents within Edinburgh College for the reporting period of Quarter 3, 2020/21.

### **2. RIDDOR INCIDENTS**

Over the reporting period there were **0** RIDDOR reportable incidents.

#### **Details.**

N/A

### **3. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

To reduce the possibility of injury or ill health to a level as low as is reasonably practicable, in order to maintain Edinburgh College operations at an effective level.

### **4. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

In line with strategic planning and monitoring for health and safety.

### **5. RISK**

To provide a periodic review of health and safety across the college.

### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

If health and safety is not controlled adequately there is potential of criminal charges and civil claims to the college. Both of which could incur financial penalties.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Failure to control the health and safety management system may have legal implications.

### **8. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

To maintain a safe learning and working environment for students, staff and visitors to the college.



**9. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

To manage any possible negative reputational damage to Edinburgh College.

**10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are asked to NOTE the information provided.