



Edinburgh College

Students'
Association

Strategic Plan

2017-2020

Powered by Students
Driven by Values
Committed to Better

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The Association is made up of the thousands of students from Edinburgh College, across every campus, every course and at every level within the institution. The constant cycle of new members is what powers us as an organisation and your engagement in your student experience is what keeps it going.

Driven by values

Our Values underpin everything we do and why we do it:

Committed to Students - we will never let anything distract us from the fact that students always come first for us. Independent from the College, we are led by students, for students, making sure you have a fun, successful and truly 'ECSA-llent' student experience.

Supportive - we strive to be welcoming to all students and always there when you need support. Our friendly staff and helpful nature is what makes us approachable and open to all.

Ambitious - Students come to College with one eye on building a better future and we are determined to help you do just that. Our approach to maximising your opportunities requires us to be dynamic and innovative, constantly striving to do more for each and every student.

Trusted - we work hard every day to ensure that we are effective in pursuit of our objectives, running a professional organisation and gaining respect of key stakeholders across the College and beyond.

Respectful - Our membership is wonderfully diverse. We will always celebrate that diversity and challenge any form of inequality on campus, or beyond, because everyone deserves to be treated with respect

Committed to better

Our Association Vision is to create a positive, supportive community which enables every student to achieve their potential

Association building blocks

Our approach to realising our vision is to concentrate our actions around 4 main pillars, supported by 4 key strategic foundations

Strategic Foundations

These are the areas of support we have identified to ensure we have an organisation fit for purpose and sustainable in order to continually meet the needs of our members and the ambitions of ECSA.

People Strategy

We will make sure we have the right people in place to support our strategic aims and continue to invest in our Elected Officers, staff & volunteers

Finance Strategy

We will cost out our annual objectives, manage diligently, & plan to ensure adequate funding is in place for the lifetime of the plan

Partnerships

We will continue to develop new, effective internal & external partnerships to help us continue to grow and enable every student to achieve their potential

Communications Strategy

We will continually develop our methods of, approaches to, & reactions to communications; genuine 2-way dialogue with our members and our key partners

Pillars of Action

These are the broad priority areas of activity which the Association will focus on over the lifetime of the plan. Every year, key specific priority objectives and performance indicators will be developed in line with these pillars of activity, but we will use the same criteria each year in order to track progress year on year.

Education

We work to make sure that the student voice is consulted and listened to, ensuring that you have the best possible learning experience whilst at college

Activities

Help students to make the most of their time at Edinburgh College, supporting their personal & social development through opportunities to volunteer & participate in Clubs & Societies

Support

Provide students with professional, confidential, and effective advice & support, ensuring they stay on course, and equipping more students with the tools to help themselves & their peers

Equality

We value & celebrate diversity and will work to ensure Edinburgh College is a welcome & safe place for all. We will always challenge inequality at College and in society, ensuring students are treated equally, regardless of Gender, Sexuality, Disability, Nationality, Religion, Social status, or any other characteristic

What we're going to do

We will work to make sure the student voice is consulted & listened to, ensuring that you have the best possible learning experience studying at Edinburgh College.

How we're going to do it

1. Recruiting & supporting Class Reps

ECSA will enable students to become confident & effective representatives of their peers, supporting and continually improving training & development for all involved. We will ensure that every class has an identified class representative and that every representative has the adequate resource and support to make a positive impact on the lives of students around them.

2. Developing the network

We will use the technology available to help the Class Representative network to share experiences and raise issues in a timely manner, at a curriculum area, campus, and college-wide level. Every campus will host regular Class Representative Conferences throughout the academic year, with written feedback being taken forward to the College for action within the current academic session.

3. Training & development

We will develop systems and opportunities for Class Representatives to access training, developing their personal and group skills throughout their time in post. We will ensure that students are trained by their peers and supported by external partner organisations such as sparqs and NUS Scotland, and that all training is available to students, regardless of where they are based or what mode of study they participate in.

4. Enhancement through partnership

ECSA will work with the College to ensure that the student voice is heard at all levels of the institution and that the student learning experience is central to the development of the curriculum & teaching practices. We will ensure that students and academic staff have regular opportunities to reflect on, discuss, and agree on how best to improve this experience, working as equal partners, pursuing shared goals.

5. Rewarding excellent teaching

Furthermore, we will constantly look to throw a light on areas of good and excellent practice by staff and students across the institution. Focussing on teaching, learning, and supporting students throughout their studies, we will host annual student-led awards to reward & celebrate those who are setting the highest standards for their peers in improving the student experience and cultivating the partnership between teacher & learner.

We'll measure success by the number of

1. Registered Class Reps
2. Class Reps engaging in Events
3. Class Reps completing training
4. Class Reps attending College Meetings
5. Nominations received for ECSA-Illence Awards

What we're going to do

Help students to make the most of their time at Edinburgh College, supporting their personal & social development through opportunities to volunteer & participate in Clubs & Societies

How we're going to do it

1. Building societies

ECSA will develop a framework for students to establish and run societies, sharing common interests and developing new social networks. We will ensure that these societies have the support and facilities available to remain sustainable and encourage others to participate in new experiences whilst at College.

2. Recreational sport

We will develop genuine, regular opportunities for any student to participate in recreational sport & physical activity across all 4 main campuses as well as students based at Forthside campus. ECSA will produce a programme of informal sessions to give students a taste of potential activities and engage students in developing their own groups, self-organising and participating on their own terms.

3. Creating volunteer opportunities

ECSA will work within our own structures as well as with partners across the College to create new & sustainable volunteering opportunities throughout the campuses for students to enjoy new experiences and build new skills at locations & times to suit their needs. Beyond the campus, we will seek to develop new partnerships with relevant organisations in the local community which share our values and can help give our members reach their potential beyond the classroom

4. Inactive to active

We will use sports & physical activities as a vehicle to engage with more students, particularly targeting those students who are currently inactive to lead more active lifestyles by providing incremental levels of participation through the academic year. Furthermore, we will promote physical activity as a tool to improve mental health, ensuring students and staff understand their links and improving wellbeing as a whole

We'll measure success by the number of

1. Active societies on each campus
2. Sports Clubs on each campus
3. Volunteers, in ECSA, in college, in the Community
4. Students engaging in physical activity each year

What we're going to do

Provide students with professional, confidential, and effective advice & support, ensuring they stay on course, and equipping more students with the tools to help themselves & their peers

How we're going to do it

1. Developing support

We will work closely with partners across the College to ensure that support is in the right place at the right time with a focus on reducing stress & anxiety for students. We will develop partnerships and projects between ECSA & College support staff to continually improve support for students, positively impacting student retention rates.

2. Empowering students

ECSA will cultivate a culture of empowering and supporting students to be better equipped to help themselves by developing opportunities and creating relevant & student-friendly information for common and more complex student challenges. These will be identified, written and communicated by students, for students and supported by ECSA throughout.

3. Data-driven campaigns

We will gather and utilise data on casework to help inform ECSA campaigns throughout the year, making sure students get support through targeted intervention at an early stage and ECSA learns from negative student experiences to develop positive future outcomes. We will ensure that regular reports are produced and shared, to highlight ongoing issues or potential future solutions, ensuring the closing of the feedback loop to all levels of the College; from classroom to senior management.

4. Supporting mental health

We will target challenges students may be facing from mental ill health whilst at College. Specifically, we will encourage students to be open about their mental health, provide support & opportunities to improve mental health, and work with the College to ensure as many people as possible are mental health first aid trained, helping to better identify when students might need extra support and giving staff and students confidence to provide that support.

We'll measure success by the number of

1. Completing students & partnership projects completed
2. Publications & opportunities attended by students
3. Successful impacts of campaigns
4. People mental health first aid trained

What we're going to do

We value & celebrate diversity and will work to ensure Edinburgh College is a welcome & safe place for all. We will always challenge inequality at College and in society, ensuring students are treated equally, regardless of Gender, Sexuality, Disability, Nationality, Religion, Social status, or any other characteristic

How we're going to do it

1. Celebrating Diversity

We will celebrate our diversity by hosting events highlighting specific groups or liberation campaigns and encouraging students who define into those groups to lead future opportunities for students to engage and participate in College life. Furthermore, we will ensure that all of our events are accessible and consider the needs of all of our students when planning and delivering them on campus.

2. Engaging with specific groups & demographics

ECSA will Work with College staff to develop new approaches to engaging specific groups of students including part-time learners, students with additional support needs, international students, and students from a care background, to ensure all students feel part of the Edinburgh College community.

3. Building relationships

We will build relationships with key external organisations to ensure that Edinburgh College is at the heart of the support network for liberation groups and campaigns, securing recognition at a local and national level. We encourage students who do not self-define to liberation groups to engage in these activities to continually promote a better understanding of the challenges and inequalities they face in society.

We'll measure success by the number of

1. Specific events celebrating diversity
2. Active liberation & representation groups
3. External partnerships and accreditations

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Pillars of Action

Pillar	What we're going to do	We're going to do it by	We'll measure success on the No. of
Education	We will work to make sure the student voice is consulted & listened to, ensuring that you have the best possible learning experience studying at Edinburgh College.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruiting & supporting Class Reps 2. Developing the CR network 3. Training & development 4. Enhancement through partnership 5. Rewarding excellent teaching 	Registered Class Reps Class Reps engaging in Events Class Reps completing training Class Reps attending College Meetings Nominations received for ECSA-Illence Awards
Activities	We will help students to make the most of their time at Edinburgh College, supporting their personal & social development through opportunities to volunteer & participate in Clubs & Societies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building societies 2. Developing recreational sport 3. Creating Volunteer Opportunities 4. Encouraging inactive students to become physically active 	Active societies on each campus Sports Clubs on each campus Volunteers, in ECSA, in college, in the Community Students engaging in physical activity each year
Support	We will provide students with professional, confidential, and effective advice & support, ensuring they stay on course, and equipping more students with the tools to help themselves & their peers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing support 2. Empowering students 3. Using data-driven campaigns 4. Supporting positive mental health 	Completing students & partnership projects completed Publications & opportunities attended by students Successful impacts of campaigns People mental health first aid trained
Equality	We will value & celebrate diversity and will work to ensure Edinburgh College is a welcome & safe place for all. We will always challenge inequality at College and in society, ensuring students are treated equally, regardless any characteristic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Celebrating Diversity 2. Engaging with specific groups & demographics of students 3. Building relationships with representatives bodies 	Specific events celebrating diversity Active liberation & representation groups External partnerships and accreditations

Strategic Foundations

People Strategy	Finance Strategy	Partnerships	Communications Strategy
We will make sure we have the right people in place to support our strategic aims and continue to invest in our Elected Officers, staff & volunteers	We will cost out our annual objectives, manage diligently, & plan to ensure adequate funding is in place for the lifetime of the plan	We will continue to develop new, effective internal & external partnerships to help us continue to grow and enable every student to achieve their potential	We will continually develop our methods of, approaches to, & reactions to communications; genuine 2-way dialogue with our members and our key partners

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