

Board of Management Students, Staff & Equalities Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 18 May 2022
Paper No.	SSEC3-C
Agenda Item	5.1
Subject of Paper	Student Experience Annual Review 2021/22
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Gillian Plunkett Student Experience Director
Date of production	9 May 2022
Action	For Discussion and Decision

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Students, Staff and Equalities Committee (SSEC) is asked to discuss the Student Experience Annual Review of AY2021/22 and comment on service priorities, aims and objectives.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of the Annual Review is to provide members of the SSEC with a high-level overview of service priorities and developments in AY2021/22.

3. Consultation

N/A

4. Key Insights

4.1 Student support services reside within the Student Experience Directorate and offer a wide range of support for learning and student life. Creating an inclusive environment that anticipates and supports student need through excellent advice, guidance and support is fundamental to the College's **Strategic Priority 2 - To enable individuals to excel and realise their full potential.**

4.2 The College Student Academic Experience Strategy puts students at the heart of our learning and support services. We aspire to engender a passion for learning among our students and we are committed to raising standards through a culture of continuous improvement to achieve the highest level of student performance, student engagement and student satisfaction.

4.3 Evaluating our performance is an important factor in meeting our Student Academic Experience Strategy objectives, our Public Sector Equality Duty and in meeting our Regional Outcome Agreement objectives in relation to widening participation.

5. Impact and Implications

5.1 Student support services work together with learning and teaching to support the College KPIs in retention and success. Failure to provide support could impact on the College's performance in relation to KPIs.

Student Experience Annual Report 2021/22

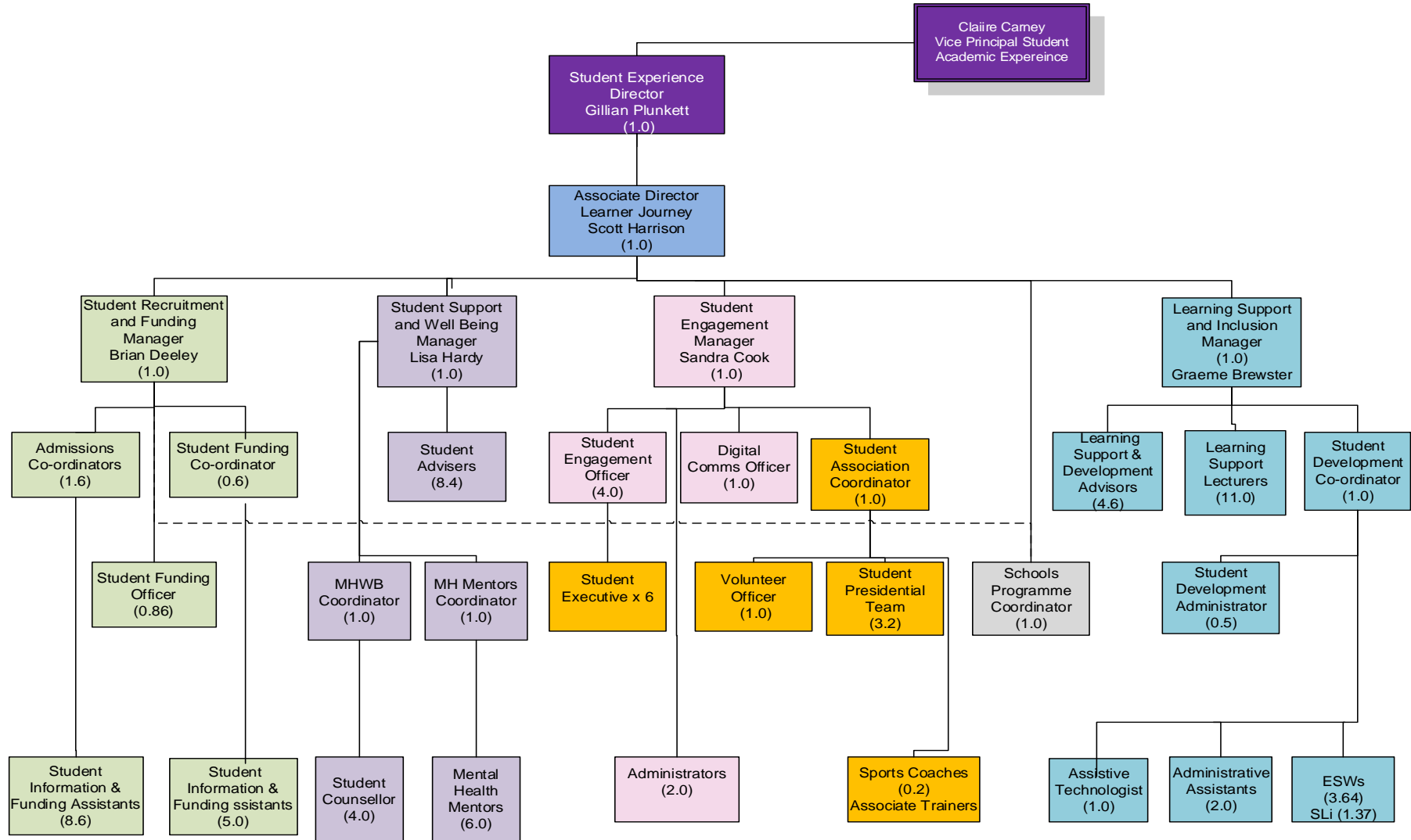




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Student Experience Directorate Chart



Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read our Student Experience Annual Report for AY2021/22. This year's report continues to be based on our professional experience and practice within the Directorate, with links provided to additional information and reading if required.

It has been another incredibly busy year for student support services with a mix of online and face to face delivery continuing, and what we thought might be some challenging months ahead is now spinning into years. Throughout this report I have highlighted the shift in patterns and trends among our student community as they get to grips with a new educational landscape. We understand that more change has yet to come, and we will continue to reflect and reimagine the student journey to meet the new and emerging needs of our students.

Thank you to the Board of Management for their wholehearted support during this last year and to the Student Experience Directorate staff for their professionalism and energy.

Meet the Student Experience Directorate Senior Team



Key Objectives, Achievements and Challenges

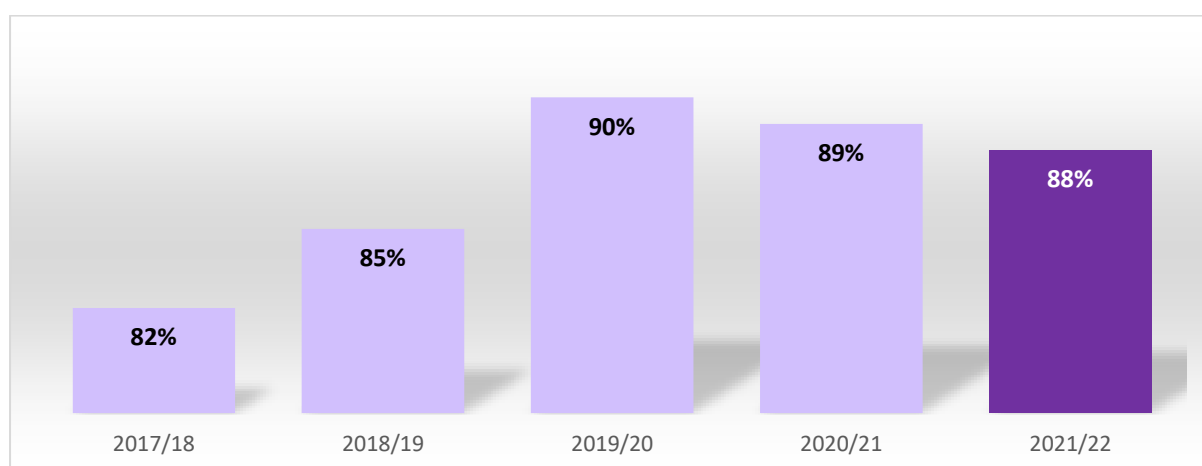
Key Objectives	Key Achievements	Key Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve student recruitment targets. • Build student affiliation, support student transition and early retention. • Support students, their welfare, learning support needs, mental health and well-being. • Improve student digital access. • Continuously review and improve services through evidence-based practice. • Champion the student voice. • Measure and improve Student Satisfaction. • Support and develop our staff and places of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student support satisfaction rates of 80+%. • We continue to raise awareness of issues important to students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mental Health and Well Being. ○ Sustainability. ○ Connecting • Award winners for new digital services - Get (Online) Ready for College Initiative. • Improving communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Exp. News – Edition 1. ○ Student Exp. News – Edition 2. • Delivery - Workshops for staff and students continue to be popular. • Gaining sponsorship - £15,000 from the John Mather Trust. • Services – Shortlisted Herald Higher Ed Awards, BSL Action Plan, Get Ready (Again), Gender Based Violence Initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student engagement continues to be a challenge, whether in attendance or engagement with activities including student feedback. Students report ongoing digital fatigue. • Communication. Students are concerned about the volume and confusion over communication channels. • Digital poverty and inequality - access, skills and finance. • Complexity of student need - psychological and financial needs are anticipated to increase together with potential learning skills gaps.

Student Recruitment and Funding

Admissions

Just as the Nation entered its third lockdown In January 2021, recruitment for August 2021 commenced with face to face interviews and pre - entry events again moved online. Despite this set back, students awarded us an 88% satisfaction rate (Table 1) in our 2021 annual survey of applicants (successful & unsuccessful applicants).

Table 1: Overall Satisfaction – Recruitment and Admissions



AY2021/22 response rate 13%, down 8% on the previous year.

In addition, in AY2021/22 students continue to be mainly satisfied with the Student Experience Directorate services, with satisfaction rates at 80%+. See Table 2.

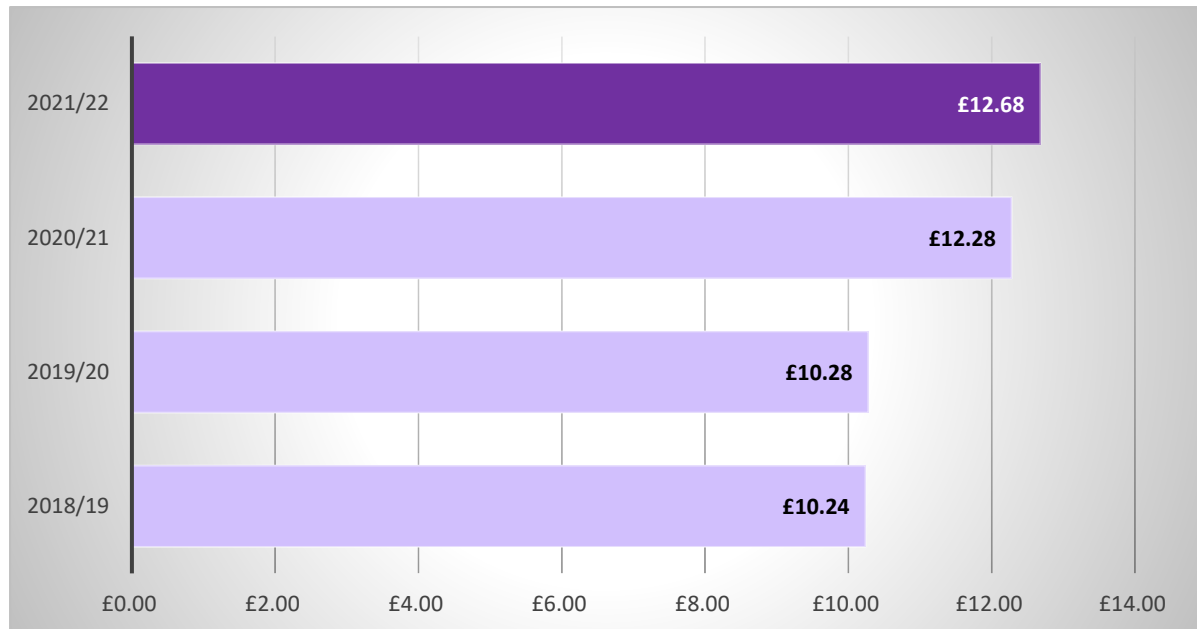
Table 2: College Student Experience Survey October 2019 - 2021

Student Satisfaction	2019	2020	2021	+/-
Before applying I was able to access sufficient information about the college and its courses.	89%	93%	92%	+3%
The online application and enrolment process were straightforward.	88%	92%	93%	+5%
Before applying I was able to access sufficient information about my funding.	77%	84%	82%	+5%
Induction to my course was engaging and informative.	85%	88%	88%	+3%
I understand how to access support from Student Services if required.	82%	85%	85%	+3%
I am aware of the process for electing Class Reps.	88%	86%	88%	0%
I was able to access a suitable device from the college before starting my course (New for 2021)	N/A	N/A	86%	N/A

Student Support Funding

Table 3 shows that over both COVID years, expenditure on student support increased by more than £2m (20%). This is likely to continue in AY2022/23.

Table 3: Student Support Funds 2019 – 2022



*AY2021/22 in progress.

The pattern of student need for support funding has also changed. For example, between AY2019/20 and AY2020/21:

- Bursary spend has increased by just over £1m with students receiving higher awards as a result of lower parental income, less part time work and an increase in the number of care experienced students.
- Childcare spend has decreased by £150K as a result of more online/home working.
- More concerning is the increase in Hardship Fund spend. This has doubled from £1.5m to £3m due to unforeseen/unplanned expenses related to the cost of data and utility costs now students are more online/at home, and increases in living costs – accommodation, fuel and food costs.

This is a worrying trend for students with the cost of living predicted to increase over the next 5-10 years.

Student Advisor

LOUISE DOWNIE

Fun fact:
I have volunteered at a number of UK music festivals.

Favourite thing about COGC:
No day is the same!

I have been a student advisor and named contact for care experienced students in the college for almost 3 years. Prior to this I have worked in different jobs in the third sector including alcohol and drug worker, prison throughcare officer and life coach.

Student Support and Well Being

Articulation (University and College Application System – UCAS)

The UCAS deadline for entry to University in AY2022/23 completed in January 2022.

Table 4 shows the number of students, mainly final Year 2 students (HND), applying to University through UCAS and, similar to other areas in the college, we note disruption to normal trends with a 10% increase in UCAS applications in AY2020/21 compared to the previous year, followed by a 24% drop this year.

The drop-in numbers applying can be attributed to a decrease in our Year 2 student numbers, some of whom withdrew in AY2020/21 while in Year 1, while others chose not to continue with their Year 2 studies in AY2021/22.

Over the last two years the top three reasons given by students who withdraw are mental health, online learning (digital fatigue) and 'course not what expected'.

Students who withdraw from their course early are contacted and offered a Careers Guidance Interview to help with future plans or to re-engage with studies.

Table 4: City of Glasgow College Applicants to University

Status	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
UCAS Applications Submitted	1,737	1,681	1,854	1,394
Numbers Successfully Articulating	1,302	1,353	1,344	Not Yet Available
% Success Rate	75%	80%	72%	N/A

Student Mental Health and Well Being

The Students, Staff and Equalities Committee received a detailed report on [Student Mental Health and Well Being](#) in February 2022 (Log in to Admincontrol to view) highlighting how additional mental health monies allocated by the Scottish Government would be spent to support the mental health and well-being of students in AY2021/22. These funds were used to diversify services beyond counselling, as evidence shows that counselling is not always the most appropriate response to student issues and situations.

In summary the additional mental health monies have supported:

- Seven additional staff directly supporting mental health and well-being – one mental health coordinator and six mental health mentors;
- Rape Crisis on campus;
- Gender based violence training (Shortlisted for a Herald HE Award);
- Development of primary research on City student mental health and the college environment, in collaboration with Edinburgh University;
- Work on Building Student Resilience Toolkit to help embed mental health and well-being in the curriculum;
- A Volunteering Officer for CitySA to develop a volunteering hub.
- A small revenue budget to support CitySA volunteering hub.

Unfortunately, the Scottish Funding Council have confirmed that this additional support will not be continued into AY2022/23 despite findings from current research suggesting that the mental health and well-being of young people continues to be of significant concern. This together with the continuing issues of children and adolescent services, and community services, being over stretched with long waiting times could place additional burden on college services next year.

The recent experience of support service practitioners at the college is that students are presenting with more complex needs than pre COVID, with possibly missed learning and developmental opportunities impacting on motivation, personal and social skills.

Student Counsellor

RICHARD BENJAMIN

Fun fact:
I am the only "Richard Benjamin" in Scotland

Favourite thing about COGC:
The opportunity to help students feel better about themselves and get the best from their education.

I worked in campaigning and education to improve the experiences of children and young people in Scotland. I am passionate about helping students overcome difficulties.

See [Further Reading and Information](#) for Richard's podcast.

Counselling Services

This year students have been offered face-to-face, telephone and online counselling options to suit their needs. Students who contact the service direct, or who are referred, receive an initial 30-45-minute well-being telephone assessment with a Student Counsellor. This assessment is used to find out more about the student, their presenting issues, assess risk of harm and to decide on an appropriate outcome e.g. short-term counselling (internal) or referral to specialist agency (we engage [Crossreach](#) in addition to NHS services).

Table 5 provides well-being assessment outcomes over a 3-year period and shows that in AY 2021/22:

- Total students referred for counselling has increased by 114%; -
- Students referred for counselling – internal has increased by 106%;
- Students referred for counselling – external has increased by 259%;
- ‘No response’ rate and ‘Did Not Attend’ rate have both reduced this year through increased communication/reminders of appointments to students.

The figures for AY 2021/22 show a significant increase in counselling referrals, particularly in relation to external referrals, which is both indicative of the complexity of student need for example; students who are self-harming would be referred for psychotherapy; and long waiting times for NHS mental health services.

Table 5: Well Being Assessment Outcomes 2020 – 2022 (April 2022)

Referral Outcomes (after assessment)	2019/20	As % of Total Students	2020/21	As % of Total Students	2021/22	As % of Total Students
Counselling Internal	113	38%	94	43%	194	41%
Counselling External	20	7%	27	12%	97	20%
Mental Health Coordinator *	6	2%	5	2%	9	2%
Did Not Attend	67	23%	33	15%	83	18%
No Response	89	30%	62	28%	91	19%
Total Students	295		221		474	

*to Nov 2021

Learning Support

Our Learning Support Team provides essential study and skills development support to students with a disability or learning support need. This is delivered through assessment of need and the creation of a Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP).

Table 6 shows that over the last 5 years there has been a 21% increase in the number of PLSPs. Growth is noted in AY2017/18 (9%) after the national ELS review removed the need for students to present as requiring 'extended' learning support, introducing the more generic 'needs led' support, and in AY2020/21 (7%) most likely resulting from delivery of blended and/or online learning.

Table 6: Student Personal Learning Support Plans 2018-2022

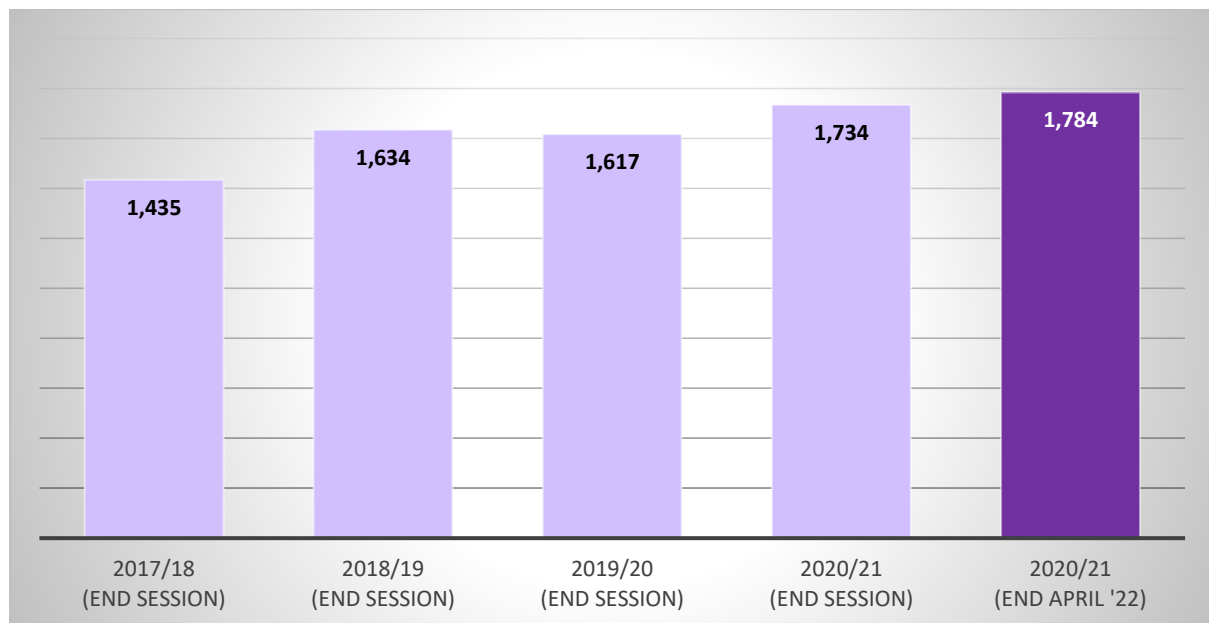
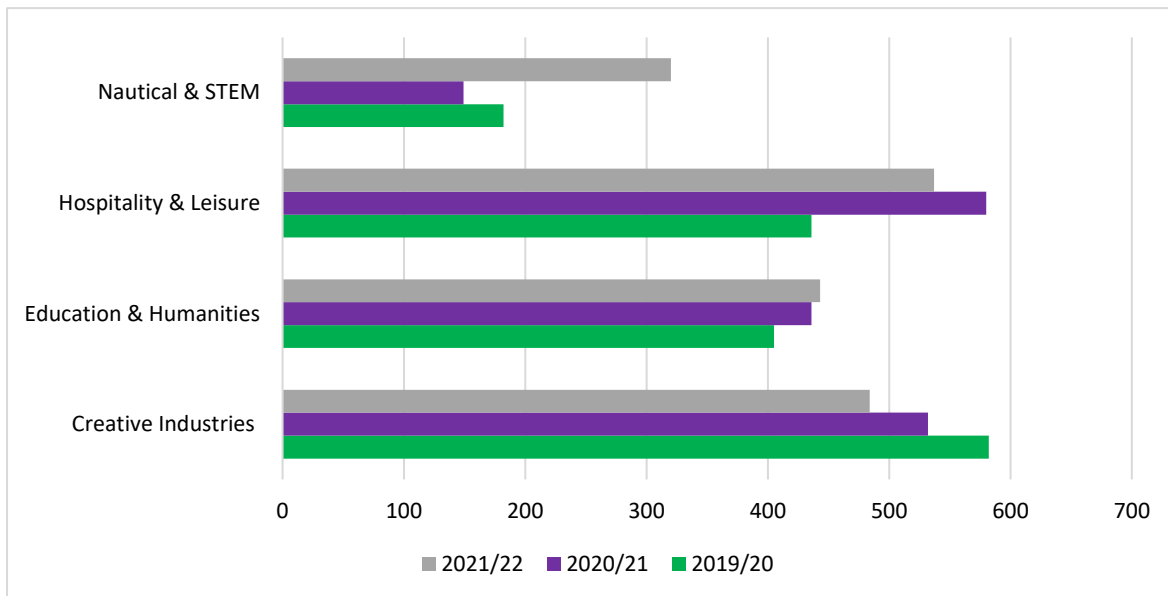


Table 7 compares PLSPs by Faculty over the last 3 years and, apart from Creative Industries, shows a significant increase in the number of students requiring a PLSP across the College compared to pre COVID years.

This increase can, in part, be attributed to an increased number of students requiring support during remote learning and teaching, particularly around digital literacy skills.

Table 7: PLSPs by Faculty 2020 – 2022 (April 2022)



Under the Reasonable Adjustments Duty of the Equality Act 2010, the College must anticipate and prepare for what disabled students might need to remove or minimise barriers to learning.

To do this we record disability by type and Table 8 provides detail by Faculty and shows the percentage change in disability type in AY2021/22 compared to the previous year.

- Faculty of Hospitality and Leisure has the highest number of PLSPs at 537 which is down 7% compared to the previous year;
- Faculty of Nautical and STEM have the highest increase in PLSPs at 115%;
- Faculty of Creative Industries has reduced PLSPs by 10% compared to last year, while Education and Humanities has remained static;
- ‘Needs led’ has the highest number of PLSPs at 575 similar to last year. ‘Needs led’ refers to those students not registered as having a disability at application/enrolment but their lecturer has referred them for support in year;
- ‘Needs Led’ has overtaken the ‘Specific Learning Difficulty’ category in recent years which is challenging to manage as referrals are an unknown quantity in terms of number and need. This category is most likely to include care experienced students, carers and estranged students.

Table 8: Disability Type by Faculty 2020 – 2022 (April 2022)

Disability Type	Creative Industries	Education & Humanities	Hospitality Leisure	Nautical & STEM	Disability Type Total	% change compared to 2020/21
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD	102	93	148	101	444	+8%
A social/ communication impairment such as Asperger’s Syndrome/other autistic spectrum condition	57	35	32	24	148	+17%
A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy.	7	10	14	10	41	-16%
A mental health condition such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	42	35	30	18	125	-2%
A physical impairment or mobility issue such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	5	7	6	3	21	+50%
D/deaf or hearing impairment	4	7	8	5	24	-8%
Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	3	3	0	0	6	-45%
A disability impairment or medical condition that is not listed above	10	10	12	9	41	-7%
A specific learning disability such as downs syndrome.	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
Multiple Disabilities	130	74	108	47	359	+13%
Needs Led	124	169	179	103	575	+1%
Faculty and College Total	484	443	537	320	1,784	+5%

Student Engagement

The Student Engagement Team support the activities of CitySA and work across the college to involve and engage students in learning and teaching and a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

In AY2021/22 the Team prioritised student groups struggling to adapt to blended learning and most at risk of losing touch with our services. The team have continued to work in partnership to facilitate Student Focus Groups, deliver Student Engagement Workshops, create innovative opportunities for students to get involved in college life and have developed a greater digital presence across the college. The blended learning model has encouraged the team to develop new and creative ways of engaging students that have been both challenging and exciting.

Student Engagement in Partnership with the Students' Association Highlights 2021/2022

June 2021, we held the second [Students' Association Virtual Summit](#). Everyone got the chance to dress up and celebrate the achievements of our students and staff with a fantastic Awards Ceremony and handover of the Students' Association responsibilities to the new Presidential Team Elect.

July, we welcomed our new [Presidential Team](#) who undertook a tailored, in-depth induction and training programme from the Knowledge Hub.

August was busy and exciting as we launched the COP 26 Campaign and the [A Better Tomorrow Competition](#) supported by teaching colleagues. Our [Student Engagement Workshops](#) also commenced and to date there have been 151 workshops delivered with 2,565 students participating.

September was focused on our class rep elections. As well as the launch our [Sport Clubs](#) and [Societies](#) and the launch of our new and exciting [Student Sport Newsletter](#). The [mobile vaccination unit](#) visited city campus in September offering our students their first or second vaccinations. We launched our exciting [Volunteering Hub](#) and still had time to fit in a [Campus Clean Up](#)

October was a fantastic month, we celebrated [Black History Month](#) in style by facilitating our coffee mornings and raising awareness of intersectionality, women in STEM and sustainability. The Get to Know Your College event was our first on site event in almost two years! Staff and students enjoyed the opportunity to [spend time together](#) and our students signed up to participate in societies while finding out more about college support services. This was happening as well as the October [Campus Clean Ups](#) and our Dr Bike sessions.

In addition, the [2021 Student Parliament Elections](#) took place at the same time as our VP [Diversity and Wellbeing attended COY16](#) and met activists and delegates from over 40 countries to discuss and work collaboratively on the Global Youth Statement. Take a breath!

November promoted the [Essay Mill Campaign](#) which has led to a collaborative conference in partnership with QAA, NUS and City of Glasgow College which was facilitated in February.

November also seen over 80 students and staff participate in our favourite challenge, the Step Count Challenge. Over 10million steps were taken, 5207 miles or 8379 Kilometres and we totalled a CO2 saving of 4,560Kg.

Our Supporting Learning Students have been active within their Association and have been involved as volunteers, they spent a day [volunteering](#) with [R:evolve Recycle](#) and have plans to contribute more in February when they will visit again.

December we launched our [Wellness Campaign](#) and our always successful [Sock it](#), we welcomed our [Volunteer Media Team](#) who are a fantastic addition to the group. Our on-campus Volunteer Day which was a great success with partner charities promoting many volunteering opportunities for students.

We also facilitated 9 [Class Rep Meetings](#) and gathered great feedback. Phew!

January was an exciting month for our Your Voice Counts team, we facilitated the Student Mental Health Agreement Focus Groups, the Passport to canvas groups, we engaged our students in an exciting society online quiz, and had just enough time left to plan and launched the 2022 [Staff Awards](#).

February was busy and fun and we launched our [ESOL Hub](#) on the City SA Website as well as launching the Presidential Elections. We also facilitated an onsite [LGBTQIA2+ event](#) and had a great time engaging students in activities and quizzes to raise awareness of LGBT culture. Our highlight of the month was without a doubt our [Student Volunteer Week newsletter](#) which documents our volunteers' achievements to date.

March has seen a shift in the number of students attending college and a move from online to on campus and we have been enjoying the buzz of our [Dr Bike sessions](#), we launched our popular [Don't Eat Alone Event](#), we successfully donated 110 hot meals and 55 aid packages to the Ukraine appeal, and we launched our exciting [Student Awards](#). Nearly there!

April has not slowed down, we have focused on promotion of the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey while out and about in our campus, we have planned Campus Clean ups, an exciting Stress Awareness Event to encourage the use of our calendar, we have launched our [Creative Pen Pals](#) initiative and our favourite [International Pet Competition](#) is currently live 😊

Further Reading and Information

- [Student Services Montage.](#)
- [Student Services Podcasts.](#)
- [Careers Advice and Guidance Site.](#)
- [British Sign Language Action Plan - BSL \(pagetiger.com\).](#)
- [Open Day Video \(BSL\) - YouTube.](#)
- [Sign Language Week 2022 - Video 2 - YouTube.](#)
- [Corporate Parenting Action Plan.](#)
- [Guide for Care Experience Students.](#)
- [Care Experienced Newsletter.](#)
- [Care Day.](#)
- [Senior Phase Learner Journeys.](#)
- [Richard Benjamin's podcast.](#)
- [Yoga Demo.](#)
- [Deaf Awareness Week.](#)

Students, Staff and Equalities Committee Programme of Work

[Students, Staff and Equalities Committee – 27 October 2021](#)

- Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2021/22.
- Corporate Caring Plans – 2020/21.
- Careers Guidance Plan.

[Students, Staff and Equalities Committee – 2 February 2022](#)

- Student Mental Health and Well Being Update 2021/22.
- Audited Student Funding Support 2020/21.
- Student Recruitment – Full Time January 2022 Start Programmes.





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