

PARTNERED

Borders College Student Partnership Agreement 2024-2025



BORDERS



COLLEGE



Borders College Students' Association

Section A - The Agreement

Introduction

Borders College and Borders College Students' Association (BCSA) will work together to promote their common values and to achieve their shared priorities for the academic year 2024-2025.

This agreement demonstrates the relationship that exists between the College and BCSA, and the continued work to develop a strong and effective Students' Association, as presented in the 'Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Associations' (Developing College Students' Associations, 2021).

Partnership

The idea of 'partnership' expresses a joint working relationship based on shared respect between staff and students. The College and BCSA hold each other in high regard, valuing the perspectives, efforts, and decisions of each group. This partnership allows for the Students' Association and College to navigate different opinions and viewpoints without affecting the effectiveness of this relationship.

Our partnership working is based on the values of:

- Openness
- Trust and honesty
- Shared goals and values
- Effective communication between partners

The Role of BCSA

BCSA is the primary champion of the student voice. By sharing student voices and representing their views, BCSA works with the College to improve the student experience.

BCSA is made up of:

- Its members: all students enrolled at Borders College.
- An Executive Team of elected Student Officers.
- Unelected Student Officers
- The Student Experience Committee; chaired by the Student President, and including student and staff representatives.

BCSA's strategic visions is:

'For Borders College students to be heard by the College, successfully supported throughout their time studying here, and armed with the tools needed to succeed as global citizens'.

Borders College Students' Association Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

The Role of Borders College

Borders College strategic ambition is:

'[Borders College] will provide innovative, life-changing learning opportunities that prepare our students for global citizenship'.

Borders College Strategic Ambition 2020-2025.

Borders College supports BCSA to represent students' views and ensure that students have a say in decision making processes. The College commits to supporting the Students' Association in the following ways:

- Making sure the student experience is central to all Regional Board decisions.
- Working with the Students' Association to understand the quality of the student experience.
- Getting feedback from students before important decisions are made.
- Giving BCSA the support needed to become strong, autonomous and adequately resourced.
- Helping BCSA to run in a fair and democratic way which fulfils its responsibilities.
- Making sure partnership procedures between the College and BCSA are put in place in order to achieve change for students.

Working Together

The College and BCSA are committed to working in partnership to promote opportunities for students to drive change and shape decisions made at Borders College. Students can shape and influence change through many ways at College, some of these include:

- Giving honest, constructive feedback by taking part in surveys, focus groups, and other informal discussions.
- Speaking to Course Tutors or Head of Sector (HOS) directly.
- Sharing views with Class Reps.
- Standing to be a Student Officer or Class Rep.

Section B - Looking back at 2023/24

The Student Partnership Agreement 2023/24 identified 3 priorities for the session:

- Support for Student Wellbeing
- Developing a Stronger Community
- Promote and Expand the Respect Campaign

Our partnerships undertook work to improve and shape the student experience of these three priority areas. Some of this work included:

Priorities	Actions	Highlights
Support for Student Wellbeing	Create a Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA) that is relevant to current needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students, staff and BCSA worked together to design our current SMHA for 2024/25-2025/26.
	Provide students with a range of support through different activities and initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCSA shared 30 winter wellbeing packages with students in need of support. • Weekly Therapet sessions available to students. • Campus Pantry supported 30 students to access free food. • Students can access food parcels on campuses. • 5-a-side and other sport sessions available to students.
	Improve communication around the support that is available to students to increase awareness and understanding of what help there is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At key points in the year Students received communications about support that is available at college. • Worked in partnership to promote the counselling service to students. • Big Student Survey 2023/24 found that 93% of students were aware of the services provided by the Student Support Team. • Student Support Officers visited classes throughout the year to remind students of the support available.
Developing a Stronger Community	Ensure students from all campuses feel valued, included, and equal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for session 2023/24 found that 89.5% of students (a 2.5% increase from the previous session) believe that all students are treated equally and fairly at Borders College. • Regular visits to Tweedbank and Newtown Campuses. • Regular events hosted at all campus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The Safety Fair ◦ Cup of Kindness Events ◦ Pride Festival ◦ Big Well Done Event
	Support the creation of student led groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Horticulture Group • Dungeons & Dragons Group • Board Games Group

Priorities	Actions	Highlights
Promote and Expand the Respect Campaign	Raise Awareness of the new Positive Behaviour Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students informed of their rights and responsibilities at Welcome Sessions at the beginning of term, these were repeated for January start courses. Big Student Survey 2023/24 found that 82% of students were aware of their rights and responsibilities as Borders College students this included knowing how to make a complaint, the Positive Behavior Policy, and sharing their voice. Worked with 48 students to understand what respect meant to them.
	Launch and promote the new Report for Support system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched August 2024. Promoted through Welcome Sessions to all students.
	Improve communication with students on the support available if they are experiencing a negative situation at College and ensure they know who they can talk to and report an incident to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced a Counselling Campaign to promote the service to students. 91% of students in September 2024 shared with BCSA that they would feel confident asking for help at college and that they knew who they would seek support from. Drop-in sessions offered to students for them to share their feedback and signpost them to the correct support.

BCSA and Borders College have agreed to continue with the same 3 priority areas for our partnership working for session 2024/25 with updates made to the actions. We believe this will allow more work to be undertaken to positively impact the student experience and provide more opportunity for students to influence change in these areas.

Section C - Priorities for 2024/25

Introduction

This Partnership Agreement has been created from the feedback and views shared by Borders College students and outlines three key priority areas important to the BCSA and College. The College and BCSA are agreeing to work together on these areas in 2024-2025 as outlined below:

Support for Student Wellbeing

BCSA surveyed students in 2023/24 and 75% of students agreed that the college is supportive of mental health issues. Discussing wellbeing and mental health concerns is a growing occurrence for BCSA as students work to balance their personal lives and student lives. BCSA's Stress Survey in May 2024 showed that students were most stressed about the cost-of-living crisis, assignments, and their mental health. Over the next year BCSA and the College will work in partnership to:

- Monitor and implement the work outlined in the Student Mental Health Agreement.
- Develop sustainable support activities and initiatives.
- Promote support initiatives available to students which help alleviate impacts from the cost-of-living crisis.

Develop a Stronger Community

BCSA's Big Student Survey in 2023/24 found that 27% of students felt neutral when asked if they felt their feedback is valued by the college and will be used to make positive changes. For students to become successful global citizens it is important for them to feel valued as members of the college community. Borders College and BCSA will work to;

- Support students to participate in clubs and groups at college.
- Work with Class Reps and other students to support communication between students and staff to improve and shape the student experience.

Promote Respect

To support the development of a stronger Borders College community we recognise the importance of upholding respect. This is a shared responsibility between all members of the College community. The Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey for session 2023/24 found that 89.5% of students (a 2.5% increase from the previous session) believe that all students are treated equally and fairly at Borders College. We will continue our respect campaign and

reinforce our shared commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion by working together to;

- Promote the Report for Support system and encourage students to access this when experiencing or witnessing bullying, discrimination or harassment, hate crime, racism, and gender-based violence.
- Create events and activities which highlight the importance of respect within our college community.
- Raise awareness of the importance of equality and diversity at Borders College.

Signed



Chris Alder
Student President



Pete Smith
Principal