

<h2>Active Students</h2>

Please see below the latest draft of the Active Students paper which has been circulated to selected external partners for comment. These are being collated and the final draft of the paper will reflect new views.

SUS aims to formally submit this to the Scottish Government in the very near future.

SUS Executive is invited to:

Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comment on the enclosed draft of Active Students



ACTIVE STUDENTS PROPOSAL – (Working draft, last updated March 27th)

Introduction

This paper outlines proposals for improving physical activity levels amongst Scotland's ever growing student population. The initiative is presented under the working title *Active Students*, and promises to deliver tangible gains across Scotland's tertiary education sector.

Through creating a new network of specialist staff in our Colleges and Universities *Active Students* aims to support the investment made through the Active Schools programme and in so doing help promote lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity.

It will achieve this by providing regular, tailored, accessible and affordable opportunities for students to take part in activities within their college or university. It will also serve to support pathways for young people as they both enter and exit tertiary education by providing a focus for collaborative working between the sector and the wider community.

The proposal is consistent with current national policy within health, physical activity and sport and has synergies with the emerging aims of the 2014 Legacy plan. It has received in principle support from a number of partners including sportsScotland, the Scottish Sports Association and NHS Health Scotland and is now presented as an item for consideration by the Scottish Government.

Why invest in this area?

Around 60% of school leavers enter the 60+ institutes of tertiary education in Scotland each year, helping to sustain a total student population of approx 600,000 in any given year and over 1,000,000 people within each four year cycle.

Research indicates that commitment to sport can be diluted or lost at transition points in an individual's life. A significant stage is the move into work or further and higher education... The sports ethos needs to be reinforced within the sector and seen as an integral aspect of continuing education. (Reaching Higher, 2007)

The shift from secondary to tertiary education is an important transition, during which adult health-related behaviour patterns become established for life... It is acknowledged that stronger links to FE and HE should be made in the next phase of the strategy's implementation. (5 yr Review -Let's Make Scotland More Active)

Students enter our tertiary education establishments at key life stages where new activities are discovered and adult habits formed. This provides a unique opportunity to consolidate good experiences from school or to re-engage those who have had a less positive experience.

Traditionally the massive potential of the sector, in terms of physical activity and health, has been largely overlooked by national agencies in Scotland. This has contributed to the current spectrum of provision, which ranges from hugely vibrant and comprehensive programmes in some institutions to very embryonic arrangements in others.

The *Active Students* project can help to address this spectrum of provision and begin to guarantee availability of opportunities to a large and significant part of society.

Today the sector is becoming ever more organised, outward facing and professional in its approach to sport and physical activity. Emerging discussions within and between colleagues



from both further and higher education indicate an unprecedented will to make strides forward in this area at both a local and national level.

Tertiary education is therefore increasingly ready, willing and able to contribute to nationwide priorities and should rightly be recognised as a key focal point for any attempts to define pathways and promote lifelong involvement.

Many colleges and universities offer a range of sporting opportunities and this needs to be maintained and developed. The recently formed Scottish Universities Sport (SUS) has a critical role to play both in increasing participation and improving performance. Links between SUS, sports governing bodies and local authorities are essential. (Reaching Higher, 2007)

The statements of principle within national policy documents are yet to be backed by any serious investment. This has resulted in a continuing failure to fully realise the massive potential of colleges and universities in this area.

Active Students presents an excellent opportunity to build upon the good practice which currently exists in the sector and more importantly to lead less developed institutions towards making a fuller contribution.

Active Students can drive a new phase of development in the provision of non-competitive sport and physical activity opportunities across the country on an unprecedented scale.

***Active Students* can make a telling contribution to national targets for a number of reasons:**

- ***Improving health through influencing habits***

By more comprehensively supporting University and College activities, we stand a good chance of influencing a huge percentage of the Scottish population at a critical stage in their lives – at a time when life-long involvement in physical activity can be strongly influenced. We are simultaneously able to influence tomorrow's decision makers and shape their attitudes towards healthy living.

- ***Ability to make a difference***

The Universities and Colleges in Scotland stand ready to make an ever more meaningful contribution. The sector now provides a tailor made vehicle to influence a cultural shift. *Active Students* can help create exciting new programmes within the University sector and provide a much needed focal point for the development of college based activity across the country.

- ***Setting new expectations***

The ever-increasing student population in Scotland represents a captive audience largely comprised of enthusiastic and responsive young people. *Active Students* would allow institutions to reach a greater portion of this population and provide a diverse range of programmes in order to ensure that more students are more active more often.

- ***Providing a degree of certainty***

Recent years have seen an investment of £12 million p/a into developing activities for Primary and Secondary age children, with the aim of effecting positive cultural and behavioural change. It seems short-sighted if we fail to underpin this cultural change at the point when our young people move to the next step in the pathway. *Active Students* can consolidate provision for school leavers and create strong entry and exit points from and to surrounding communities.



- ***Helping to meet excess demand***

Many tertiary education institutions are unable to meet the demand from the student body for recreational and non-competitive sports related activities. This is due to limited staff resources and limited engagement with local facility partners. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are thousands of students who show initial interest in sport but who slip outside of the traditional club-focused structures wherein capacity is limited.

Active Students would address this situation swiftly and allow for tertiary education to better serve the 'captive audience' of enthusiastic students on their doorsteps by providing tailored activity opportunities irrespective of ability and in flexible and affordable formats.

What difference could *Active Students* make?

An injection of new resources into physical activity and sport in tertiary education would provide:

- An immediate growth in regular playing numbers in sport
- A curtailment in the current post-school activity drop off rate
- More robust entry and exit points to sustain activity levels between school and working life
- Stronger links between tertiary education and other partners
- Improved capacity to deal with high demand for sport and physical activity services

***Active Students* – a closer look**

The following is an outline of the functions, aims and main tasks of the proposed *Active Students* Coordinator role and a suggested management and finance framework for the scheme's deployment.

The case presented is unashamedly ambitious. There is a strong belief that serious investment is required if we are to achieve the culture change that is necessary to meet national objectives. It is deemed particularly important to drive progress within colleges and less developed universities as that is where the most significant progress can be made.

There are clearly options for phased approaches or appointments based around emerging regional structures which can be considered. However, what has been explored here is the preferred option and the mechanism which the sector feels can have the most significant impact.

Remit¹

It is expected that the exact nature of the work undertaken in different locations across the country will differ – in order to complement the spectrum of existing structures and activity footprints in the various institutions.

The scheme will be aimed towards the national objectives but implemented through locally tailored programmes. It is expected that the initial focus of *Active Students* may differ between well-developed institutions and those with a nascent programme of activities.

¹ A detailed draft job description for the *Active Students* Coordinator role is included as an appendix to this paper.



That said, the main tasks of the *Active Students* staff would come under the following headings:

Delivery

- Creating, developing and administering a suite of Intra-Mural and other recreational activities
- Providing support to relevant college and university departments on matters relating to participation, open access, equality & diversity

Pathways

- Building sustainable and manageable frameworks for the organisation of sport and physical activity within universities and colleges
- Working with other agencies to help stem drop-off in activity levels post-school and also upon graduation
- Developing meaningful partnerships with other agencies in the area, including local authorities, sports councils, schools and sports clubs

Advocacy

- Promoting physical activity, recreation and healthy lifestyles to all members of the local (student) community

Measurement

- Generating accurate participation data and other evidence to quantify programme impact

Deployment, Management and Finance

It is proposed that a network of staff is created within Scotland's universities and colleges, whereby any institution with more than 5,000 students would host an *Active Students* Coordinator and smaller institutions would access services from the lead institution nearest to them. This would result in a total deployment of 50 coordinators, managed and supported by a National Programme Director and Administrator.

It is intended that the network would be employed under the banner of Scottish Universities Sport, as the recognised lead agency in the provision of sport and physical activity to tertiary education. The SUS network would oversee the work of these staff and would house the Programme Director and Administrator posts within the central office base. The Programme Director would in turn lead the work of the locally deployed co-ordinators and manage the strategic aspects of the programme, with local line-management for these posts (housekeeping, IT support etc) being provided by existing university or college departments.

It is expected that each host institution would provide in-kind office accommodation, to be provided in line with agreed specifications and criteria. Staff would be deployed as soon as the local partners had shown readiness for the appointment, with the following in place:

- Office space identified
- In house line management support available
- Institutional sign-up at senior management level
- Local Authority sign-up/ partnership agreement completed

The majority of the real costs for *Active Students* would be met by distinct funding directly from the Scottish Government in respect of salary commitments and basic operating and programme costs.



Also Included in the project are costs associated with 'set-up', as it is expected that this work would not be possible within the current resources of SUS. Financial projections based on the above are illustrated below:

Project management – pre-launch	£30k basic salary + on costs	£40k
	Project expenses	<u>£20k</u>
		£60k
Active Students Programme Director	£30k basic salary + on costs	£40k
	Programme costs	<u>£25k</u>
		£65k
Active Students Programme Administrator	£18k basic salary + on costs	<u>£25k</u>
		£25k
Active Students Co-ordinator	£26k basic salary + on costs	£32k
	Programme costs	£13k
		<u>£45k</u>
	50 appointments	£2,250,000
	Year 1 total ²	<u>£2,400,000</u>

Conclusion

Active Students is presented as a revolutionary, expedient and affordable means of improving the health and activity levels of Scotland's student community. This paper seeks only to introduce the broad concept, describe how such a programme might work, and the likely cost implications.

Further and more detailed discussion and consultation will follow, but it is hoped the outline presented here will excite and unite partner groups and lay the foundations for some much needed investment in the health and well-being of Scotland's student population.

² This figure is expected to rise by approximately 3.5% per annum in light of cost of living increases. The figure above reflects the initial 12 month costs.



ACTIVE STUDENTS PROJECT TIMELINE

ITEM	DATE																	
	Mar 09	Apr 09	May 09	Jun 09	Jul 09	Aug 09	Sep 09	Oct 09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan 10	Feb 10	Mar 10	Apr 10	May 10	Jun 10	Jul 10	Aug 10
1. Initial submission to Scottish Government	[Blue bar from Mar 09 to Apr 09]																	
2. Consultation Phase	[Blue bar from Apr 09 to May 09]																	
3. Final business case submitted	[Blue bar from Jun 09 to Jul 09]																	
4. Funding confirmed	[Blue bar from Aug 09 to Sep 09]																	
5. Institution sign-up	[Blue bar from Oct 09 to Dec 09]																	
6. Local partner sign-up	[Blue bar from Oct 09 to Dec 09]																	
7. National manager recruitment	[Blue bar from Jan 10 to Feb 10]																	
8. National manager appointment	[Blue bar from Mar 10 to Apr 10]																	
9. Coordinator recruitment	[Blue bar from Mar 10 to May 10]																	
10. Coordinator appointments	[Blue bar from Jun 10 to Jul 10]																	
11. Staff Induction and programme roll-out	[Blue bar from Sep 10 to Sep 10]																	



Job Description Template

1. Job Details

Job title:	<i>Active Students</i> Co-ordinator
Host Location:	Local University or College Sports Department
Line manager:	<i>Active Students</i> Programme Director (for work programme) Local department Head (for HR related services)
Status:	Full-time
Salary:	£25,623 - £32,458 (projected 2009-10 salary scale)

2. Job Purpose

To plan, promote and help deliver the *Active Students* programme to increase levels of physical activity and sporting involvement amongst Scotland's student population

3. Main Responsibilities

	Approx. % time
1. <i>Active Student</i> Programmes ~ Define, develop, implement and drive a range of regular physical activity and/or recreational sporting opportunities, tailored to local circumstances.	50%
2. <i>Advocacy/Promotion/Innovation</i> ~ Work with local agencies to promote and celebrate the worth of healthy lifestyles, recreational sport and physical activity amongst 17-24 year olds.	20%
3. <i>Creating Pathways</i> ~ Take responsibility for creating/upholding/promoting entry and exit routes for students into the host Institution and beyond to local clubs/organisations.	20%
4. <i>Administration</i> ~ Develop and uphold administrative/financial procedures to underpin operation of the 'Active Student' offer, and maintain monitoring information to support annual review.	10%

4. Planning and Organising

- Prepare a comprehensive plan (actions, targets, responsibilities; resources) which will increase participation levels amongst students in your institution.
- Develop, alongside local partners, clear routes into and exit routes from *Active Students* programmes.
- Produce reports and analysis on all aspects of the *Active Students* programme.

5. Problem Solving

- Handling day-to-day problems that arise within the local *Active Students* programme.
- Proposing new procedures and approaches to improve the effectiveness of the *Active Students* programme, locally and nationally.
- Deciding how best to engage with local partners to achieve the greatest impact for the *Active Students* programme.

6. Decision Making

- o Determining actions/operational priorities to achieve the best impact for the local *Active Students* programme.
- o Planning own work schedule (daily, weekly, monthly) to ensure primary responsibilities are carried out to the agreed standard, timescale and budget.
- o Setting annual income and expenditure allocations, and performance targets, for the local *Active Students* programme.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

- o Sports related staff at host institution
- o Student sports clubs/ elected officials
- o Programme participants
- o Local authority sport and education personnel
- o Local schools
- o Local sports councils
- o Local Health Boards
- o Scottish Universities Sport
- o Other *Active Students* staff
- o Sportscotland
- o NGB's

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

- o Educated to degree level (or equivalent) with 2 yrs vocational experience in sport or leisure.
- o Ability to lead small project teams and prioritise workload of self and others, meet tight deadlines and cope with complex issues; aptitude for diplomacy and problem solving.
- o Proven communication, presentational and inter-personal skills.
- o Demonstrable experience of devising, monitoring and reviewing sport/physical activity plans.
- o Preparedness to work independently and respond to unforeseen situations.
- o Outward-facing approach
- o Understanding of organisation/structure of Scottish sport and Tertiary education sector.
- o Empathy with students;
- o Good IT skills (excel, word, email, web-based software)
- o Flexible, approachable, passion for sport/exercise, independent thinker

9. Dimensions

No direct staff management responsibility, though post holder will have close contact with colleagues and staff in local agencies; role will influence the training/development of others; budget responsibility is c £13k; local circumstances will influence/shape working dimensions and programme priorities; role involves significant independent working and networking & mix of policy and practice.

Notes/ areas for further work

- Need to explain how success of programme will be measured
- Other possible funding partners – Sportscotland, Scotland's Colleges, SFC, Big Lottery?
- Notes of support from other bodies (See below). Joint statement?
- Illustrations of perceived impact in terms of throughput/ new participants:

- 20% of college population = 80,000
- 10% increase in active Uni population = 20,000
- 100,000 new regular participants?
- Further info needed about current college provision – separate research project?
- Links to Legacy plans including Commonhealth programme & Community Sports Hubs
- Forward for comment to:
 - Sportscotland
 - Scottish Funding Council
 - NHS Health Scotland
 - British Universities and Colleges Sport
 - Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils
 - Scottish Sports Association
 - Scotland's Colleges
 - Selected others



Executive Summary Sheet – essential information

- The *Active Students* proposal recommends the introduction of new staff into tertiary education, with a view to promoting healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities in physical activity and sport
- A total of 50 appointments are recommended, to cover the majority of colleges and universities across the country
- Through this network of staff *Active Students* represents a genuine opportunity to engage a significant number of Scotland's 600,000 students in regular activity
- The proposal is consistent with key messages in Reaching Higher and Let's Make Scotland More Active, supports existing Active Schools provision and is in line with emerging 2014 Legacy plans
- An initial investment of £2.4 million p/a over a four year period is sought
- The Scottish Government is identified as the primary funding agent, with potential support from the Scottish Funding Council, Sportscotland and others yet to be fully explored
- It is intended that *Active Students* be rolled out at the start of the 2010-11 Academic Year
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Statement of support from partners

We, the undersigned, are pleased to record our support for the *Active Students* proposals, as set out by Scottish Universities Sport.

We recognise that the tertiary education sector is significant both in terms of the sizeable population it represents and in respect of the unique role it can play in bridging school and community provision, thus helping to promote lifelong involvement.

The proposed scheme is seen as being consistent with current policy direction, as described in *Reaching Higher* and *Let's Make Scotland More Active*. Furthermore it can be viewed as addressing a gap in the current provision of sport, physical activity and health in Scotland.

We therefore encourage the Scottish Government to give full and comprehensive consideration to the proposals.

Signed;