

<b>REPORT FROM THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</b>
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The Professional Development Committee met on Tuesday 4th<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at RGU. Below is a summary of the business discussed.

**Key Points**

**SUS Conference 09:** PDC agreed the conference programme and bookings are now available online with a closing date of Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May to allow accommodation to be planned. Bookings will be taken after this but people will have to make their own accommodation arrangements.

We have secured a headline sponsor for conference which is Powerplate and in total we now have £7000 agreed for sponsorship.

**SUS Strategy - PDC Action Plan:**

- SDO Forum is organised and will take place at St Andrews
- Operations forum took place on 28<sup>th</sup> April at Strathclyde University and was well received by the 16 people who attended.

**SUS National Campaign on Student inactivity and the benefits of sport and exercise**

Jacqui, Dave and Catriona meet with Talat Yaqoob of NUS Scotland to look at us working together to introduce a project around improving student mental health through sport and exercise. This is a very exiting proposal which would provide training for presidents and staff helping them to understand mental health issues. In addition we will be working towards establishing a award for sports unions, student associations and sports departments who work together to promote mental health issues. A draft copy of the proposal is attached.

**SUS Executive is asked to consider the following:**

Item
None at Present

May 2010

## The Healthy Body, Healthy Mind Award

### **Suggested distribution**

Scottish University  
Sports (SUS)

### **Action**

Consideration and  
agreement on next  
steps, if any.

### **Executive Summary**

Consideration of  
potential joint work  
on mental health  
and sports clubs

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### **Background**

1. It has been widely recognised that mental ill health in the student population is on the increase. Pressures of academic life, financial hardship and employment prospects can take their toll on a student wellbeing and psychological strength. It is for this reason that NUS Scotland, with the support of the Scottish Government, introduced the Think Positive project, aiming to create a mentally healthy student population.
2. However it is equally recognised that sport and exercise can act as an important element in maintaining good mental wellbeing, preventing the onset of mild and moderate mental ill health and aid in the recovering from mental illness.
3. The use of exercise to better mental health has been recently used by the Scottish Association of Mental Health (SAMH) in their 'Get Active' campaign. The purpose of which is to get all individuals in Scotland participating in some form of exercise from competitive sports to simply walking more as a way to improve their mental wellbeing. This ethos can be directly transferred into a university or college setting.
4. 1 in 4 students suffer from mental ill health, that's over 160,000 students right now. For these students, participating in sporting activities would be hugely beneficial to their daily lives.
5. Sport and exercise has frequently been used in highlighting preventative measures in men's mental health. Young men are increasing suffering from anxiety and depression and in fact in 2008, the suicide rate of men in Scotland was three times that of women. Considering sports unions often have the perception of being male dominated and are therefore more likely to garner the

attention of male students. working on mental health and exercise could be a life saving initiative.

6. Sports unions often have a strong base of both participative activities and competitive groups, at an individual and team level. Using this base, sports unions and students' associations could take the lead on enhancing student health and wellbeing.
7. This proposal outlines a way in which sports unions can become pivotal in the use of sport and exercise as a tool in creating a mentally flourishing student campus. It is hoped that through this initial joint project, sports unions and their students associations will foster a closer working relationship and sports can become an integral part of students associations' work.

#### Health Body Healthy Mind Award

8. The purpose of creating an awards scheme is to encourage sports clubs and students' associations to work together and become involved in activities relating to mental health on a longer term basis, rather than creating a one off event.
9. By doing so we are more likely to create a culture of change, both in behaviours and attitudes, as well as collecting and distributing best practice. It is hoped that through this awards scheme sports unions' are able to become more involved in student health issues and can gain more from their membership.
10. The awards would be based on a criteria similarly used in the 'Healthy Working Lives' initiative by the Scottish Government. There would be a bronze, silver, gold award to be achieved.
11. Each awards level requires the sports union and students' association to publicise the work they are doing, allow them to organise mental health related activities and look deeper into their union at their own strategy and action plans.
12. The sports unions and students' associations' activities could be reviewed by NUS Scotland and SUS to see if they have met the criteria. The award would then be presented to the sports union and students' association executive. It is hoped that the award would not only be a plaque or prize but also include some form of sponsorship from relevant organisations to assist sports unions/students' associations enhance their reputation and perhaps aid them financially.
13. An outline of what the award criteria would include can be found in the table below.

## **Outline of how it would work**

### **The Pilot**

14. As this is a new initiative, to ensure it is manageable, the first year of the award will include no more than 5/6 institutions taking part. By doing so we can make sure they are provided with ample support.
15. In its first year the awards will be reviewed and subject to change as institutions provide us with feedback. This first year will also be the basis of a 'toolkit' or guide which will be made available to institutions taking it forward in future years.

### **Timeline**

16. The awards will be formally launched at Scottish University Sport's annual conference in June. This is when sports officers will be asked to put their university/college forward to be part of the award.
17. Institutions will have the opportunity to start working on the awards after an initial interview and tour of the work they currently do, hopefully taking place in August or September 2010.
18. Sports officers and students associations will have until April 2011 to work towards the bronze criteria. At which stage a full review report should be sent to NUS Scotland.
19. In early May 2011 the judging panel will meet to determine which institutions have met the criteria and which has surpassed.
20. In June 2011 qualifying institutions will receive their awards.
21. In July 2011 the new cycle of institutions begins

### **The Judging Panel**

22. The judging panel will include members from NUS Scotland, Scottish University Sport, Scottish Association for Mental Health and a representative from Healthy Working Lives.
23. The Panel will meet in May 2011, but will be sent evaluation reports from institutions in advance.

### **The evaluation reports by sports executives and students associations**

24. The report needs to clearly include all activities which have taken place toward meeting the criteria and any relevant activities which go beyond or compliment the award criteria
25. The report must be written by both the students association representative and sports union representative, in those institutions where they are separate organisations
26. The report must include feedback from students and photo examples

27. The report must be received by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011

### **The Award**

28. The award will be presented to the team involved at their institution

29. The award will include a plaque to be displayed in the institution

30. The award presentation will include photo opportunities with representative from SUS and NUS Scotland.

## Potential Criteria for a 'Healthy Body, Healthy Mind' Award

Bronze	Silver	Gold
<p><u>Making the award known:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity in place for award and aims/criteria of award made known to student body</li> <li>• Setting up of group/committee to take forward award criteria (must include students)</li> </ul> <p><u>Making the issue known:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental wellbeing resources made available for all</li> <li>• Mental wellbeing as part of induction to sports union</li> <li>• Promotion of Think Positive through sports union members</li> <li>• Promoting exercise as self care to good mental health</li> </ul> <p><u>Practical changes in sports union work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports Union and Students Association working together on student based events</li> <li>• Noticeable work in increasing participation from non-traditional groups</li> <li>• Creating link with university/college support services to signpost students to support services</li> <li>• Creating links with external support services</li> </ul> <p><u>Evaluation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of measures to critically evaluate the above and measure impact</li> <li>• Creation of measures to gain student input and feedback on activities.</li> <li>• Provide a report review of impact made on campus through activities</li> </ul>	<p><u>Making the award known:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity to make award known to student body</li> <li>• Clear indication as to what is being done to get silver award</li> </ul> <p><u>Making the issue known:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports union to take forward campaign and activities on one of the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stress and exercise</li> <li>▪ Depression and exercise</li> <li>▪ Self esteem and team sports</li> <li>▪ Men and mental health</li> <li>▪ Or a mental health issue related to their specific campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Long term plan of action on how the sports union plan to take forward mental health and wellbeing through sports activities</li> </ul> <p><u>Practical changes to sports union work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring a thorough equality and diversity policy is in place</li> <li>• Ensuring staff and officers are aware of the process by which students are signposted to support services and in any induction to the role, are made aware of the importance of publicising sport as a mechanism of self care.</li> <li>• Ensuring there is a joint strategy of work between the sports union and students association to allow all students to be involved in wellbeing activities</li> <li>• Student officers and staff trained in SMHFA.</li> <li>• Encouraging daily, non competitive, exercise (e.g. walking groups/ Cycling provision on campus)</li> </ul> <p><u>Evaluation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a report review of impact made on campus through activities</li> <li>• Make use of measures in place (from bronze award) to gain feedback and show changes have been made</li> </ul>	<p><u>Making the award known:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity to make award known to student body</li> <li>• Clear indication as to what is being done to get gold award</li> </ul> <p><u>Making the issue known:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports union to take forward campaign and activities on one of the following issues (which has not been previously chosen): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stress and exercise</li> <li>▪ Depression and exercise</li> <li>▪ Self esteem and team sports</li> <li>▪ Men and mental health</li> <li>▪ Or a mental health issue related to their specific campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Clear strategy to take forward student wellbeing and inclusion through a long term plan after award status, in conjunction with campus sport staff and student services in university/college</li> </ul> <p><u>Practical changes to sports union work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of mental health and wellbeing activities in sports officer job description</li> <li>• Inclusion of participative as well as competitive events in sports calendar</li> <li>• Plan in place to ensure staff are fully informed of and have practical guidance as to how to support students with mental ill health</li> <li>• Trained instructor in SMHFA in sports department</li> <li>• Student steering group in place to take forward future wellbeing activities after award completion</li> </ul> <p><u>Evaluation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a report review of impact made on campus through activities (full report over bronze-gold achievements)</li> <li>• Make use of measures in place (bronze award) to gain feedback and show changes have been made</li> </ul>