

Strathclyde Strategic Alliance Framework

2024 - 2025



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Introduction

During the challenges faced by society in recent years, the interactions between the Student Executive and University Executive Team have proven to be vital to ensuring the University of Strathclyde continues to provide a world-class student experience that reflects the current values of both Strath Union and the University.

Two years ago, the sabbatical officers of Strath Union and the Principal and his Executive Team worked together to create a new Strategic Alliance agreement which, for the first time, stated our shared intention of working in partnership and identified opportunities for collaborative work to achieve impact and value for our student body.

The first Strategic Alliance built on the Strath Union strategic plan and the University's strategy Vision 2025. It sat alongside the pre-existing Partnership Agreement, which focusses on operational and structural detail, to give additional direction and focus to our shared endeavours.

In 2023-24, after extensive consultation with staff and students, our community contributed to the launch of the University's next strategy phase, Strathclyde 2030, and we are now celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of the Award of our Charter by her late Majesty in 1964.

The priorities and actions in this third Strategic Alliance Framework, our shared ambitions for 2024-25, highlight the continued intention to work closely together on those strategic goals that are common to both organisations and are evidence of our mutual and continuing commitment to our student body.



Values

Both the University and Students' Union are values-driven organisations. Our values are intrinsic to the work that we do and they epitomise what it is to be a 'Strathclyde'. Whilst the values of the two organisations differ in language, the intent is very much shared around delivering excellence for our students, staff and wider community and we work collaboratively to hold each other accountable for living our respective values and to leveraging these values for the benefit of the entire Strathclyde Community.





University of Strathclyde Values

People-oriented

Committed to our staff and students, providing opportunities and investing in their development.

Bold

Confident and challenging about what we do, and supportive of appropriate and managed risk in our decision-making.

Innovative

Focused on discovering and applying knowledge with impact, and encouraging creative thinking and new ideas.

Collaborative

Working together, internally and externally, with integrity and in an open, respectful way.

Ambitious

For our institution, staff and students as well as supporting the ambitions of our partners.



Strath Union Values

Speak Up

We confidently share our own voice and empower others to speak their truth.

Seize the Opportunity

We intentionally experiment and try new things to be the best at what we do.

Join Forces

We bring a can-do attitude and take shared responsibility to deliver greater impact together.

Back each other

We stand for diversity and inclusion and support each other to bring our full selves.

Governance

The current Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) is the responsibility of the Student Experience Committee (SEC), which is co-chaired by the Strath Union President and reports to the University's Education Strategy Committee (ESC).

The Strathclyde Strategic Alliance (SSA) reports directly to the two Executives (University ET and Strath Union Student Exec) with regular updates between the Student President and the Principal.

Executive Reporting on the SSA takes place at least once per semester at an Executive-to-Executive meeting. This document will be reviewed annually with a change in the Executive in the Students' Union to reflect changing priorities and agreed in the first Executive-Executive meeting of the academic year (typically September).

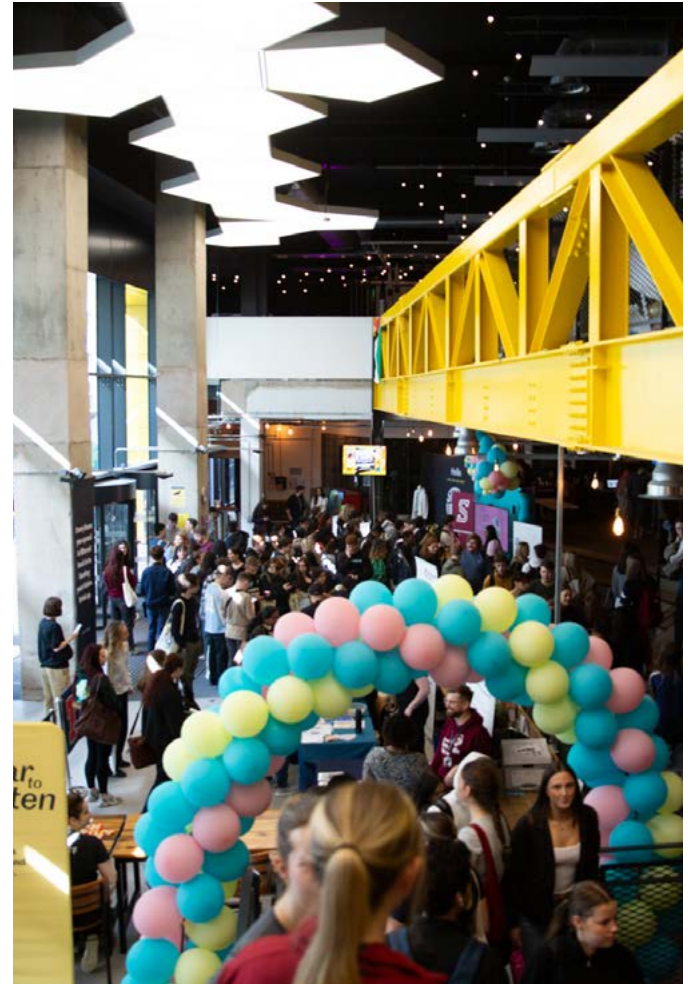
Goals of the Alliance



Through our collaboration we seek to deliver a world-class student experience, working together to deliver relevant University strategic objectives and aspiring to be recognised as the leading UK Students' Union offering an experience only obtainable at Strathclyde. Such an experience should be fully accessible for all students and reflect the needs, wants and desires of an ever-changing and evolving student body. Furthermore, we seek to empower the thriving and diverse community of Strathclyde students and to prepare and equip them for life at our University and beyond.

Key Themes & Deliverables

for 2024 - 2025



Wellbeing

- Improve quality of life for all at Strathclyde.
- Supporting students with information and services that encourage peer support, self-directed support and greater agency so that all students are thriving at Strathclyde.



VISION

Improve the feedback loop for personal circumstances:

Provide students with support after submitting personal circumstances to improve early intervention measures and ongoing support.



Cost of living:

Ensure that Strathclyde is tackling student hunger caused by cost-of-living challenges.



Holistic student support and fee administration review:

Develop a comprehensive approach to student support, with a focus on addressing student debt. Additionally, review the Fee Policy and explore options for greater flexibility in managing student debt.



DELIVERABLES

- Determine how the feedback loop should be closed
- Have an agreed and approved new system to ensure immediate support when students disclose personal circumstances

- Support the evolution of the Strath Pantry by helping to locate an adequate space that will be maintained by the designated Union Staff and student volunteers. Provide the necessary food hygiene certificates and hygiene materials required for handling food
- Establish available sources of food for distribution in the Pantry

- Review the feasibility of monthly fee instalments at Strathclyde. Present the results of this and a recommended flexible payment plan to Fee Strategy Group
- Agreement of closer working between the University's finance team and Strath Union's Advice Hub (such as methods of communication, flexibility for missed payments under special circumstances allowable by the finance team when referred from Strath Union)
- Conduct or review the equality impact assessment for flexible and part-time fees compared to full-time students. Determine approach to reduce disadvantage to widening access students of requiring flexible study options

VISION

Sport for everyone:

Ensure continued success and development of sport through partnerships, long term sustainable investment, and expand upon the range of opportunities currently offered.



DELIVERABLES

- Provide more opportunities to get involved in sport and physical activity through agreement on an ongoing funding model
- Expand the sporting pathway at the University by building on the Sports Union's current offerings

Sports leadership and development:

Sport is a route into higher education through access to sport and physical activity at pre-tertiary level.



- Create opportunities for Strathclyde students to coach and share their sport in schools
- Develop a sustainable sport and physical activity outreach program for students to get into sports development and leadership that provides a gateway and community to widening access students to get into university

Inclusion, Diversity, Equality, Accessibility (IDEA)

- Empower students from diverse backgrounds to pursue leadership roles and equip them with knowledge, skills and experiences. Deepen students' knowledge on equality, diversity and inclusion and encourage them to take inclusion into account in their decision making.
- Actively improve accessibility across the campus and in education, ensure students are not excluded from their learning due to any of their protected characteristics, caring responsibilities, mental health and any experience of trauma.



Inclusion, Diversity, Equality, Accessibility

> Key Themes & Deliverables for 2024 - 2025

VISION

Diversity in staff community:

Ensuring culturally competent support for BPoC (Black Person and Person of Colour) students by appointing staff with shared lived experiences in positions that support BPoC, and international students.



Celebrate diverse student culture:

All our student groups feel welcomed and recognised. Take ownership of the diverse student groups recruited by the University by recognising and supporting the celebration of key cultural and religious events.



DELIVERABLES

- Recruit and elevate BPoC professionals into key roles, such as counsellors and leadership positions, to foster a welcoming and supportive environment for all students
- Establish international ambassadors from diverse cultural backgrounds to recruit and support students, while also developing mentorship programs that encourage BPoC student participation in staff and ambassador roles

- Ensure that academic schedules respect major religious observances, where possible, such as avoiding exams during Ramadan or on Eid, or at least allow flexibility and consideration for practicing students (allowing 15 - 20 mins break for Friday prayers)
- Accept fasting as reasonable personal circumstances to request extension

Sustainability

- Instill a sense of duty to contribute to a sustainable future, both for present and future generations. This commitment extends beyond campus, shaping lifelong learners who champion sustainability in their personal and professional lives.
- Empower students through an environmentally sustainable university experience, fostering wellbeing, knowledge and leadership for a greener future with a focus on sustainably effective policies and procedures that have the students' futures in mind.



VISION

Ethical investment:

Strathclyde implements a Sustainable Ethical Investment Policy.



Education for sustainable development:

All students at Strathclyde develop an understanding of sustainability through their course and the impact they can have that is specific to their industry through their degree.



DELIVERABLES

- A University Sustainable Ethical Investment Policy is finalised and adopted within the academic year. The policy to be proposed focuses on responsible investing in companies whose aims align with the University's Social and Environmental Sustainability Strategy. The policy should include expectations for the positive and active use of investment in support of the transition to a low carbon economy, consistent with the need to be prudent in seeking an appropriate financial return
- The policy has a clear reporting and review cycle, with reporting being made available in formats accessible to all members of the Strathclyde community

- Work to integrate ESD is continued, with student engagement at all levels as part of the curriculum review
- Students get both introductory sustainability education as well as degree specific education integrated into their modules
- Active citizenship is encouraged, such as the implementation of the sustainability passport

Student Community

- No student has to face homelessness during their stay at Strathclyde University as this impacts their mental health and academic performance.
- The University and Union acknowledge students' struggle while studying in these times and should continue initiatives that have supported students in the past whilst pioneering new initiatives.
- Students and staff work in partnership to improve the student experience at Strathclyde and move from excellent to outstanding.



VISION

Introduce Buddy System to support first-year students:

Every first-year student is offered to be paired with a buddy, to strengthen the existing student community and address rising rates of loneliness in students.



Space for sport outside Strathclyde Sport:

More available spaces to support student activities.



Entrepreneurship for all:

Ensure that all students have access to opportunities that develop entrepreneurial skills and effectively prepare them for the workforce.



DELIVERABLES

- Establish a sustainable Buddy System, with collaboration from Faculties, to ensure effective recruitment and training of 'buddies'
- Provide ongoing support and resources to 'buddies', to ensure a positive experience for both mentors and first-year students
- Track and evaluate the system's impact on student engagement and wellbeing, to inform future improvements

- Utilise the University space outwith Strathclyde Sport more effectively and outsource to external venues to facilitate sport and physical activity for more students
- Engage with the local community to create a mutually beneficial partnership to allow for access to space and facilities without financially impacting those who need it

- Strath Union and Strath Inspire will work in collaboration to develop and promote entrepreneurial learning opportunities that are easily accessible across campus and through Strath Union
- Strath Union will contribute to the University's Entrepreneurship 2030 Strategy, ensuring student engagement is embedded into the approach

These objectives will be enabled by:

- Adhering to the values and commitments set out in the Student Partnership Agreement, the M.O.U. with Strathclyde Sport, the Student Mental Health Agreement, and the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Agreement.
- Effective and purposeful resource-sharing and communication between Strath Union and the University of Strathclyde.
- Shared communication strategy around how we inform the student and staff bodies about our shared work.



Strathclyde Strategic Alliance 2024 - 2025

SIGNED:

Professor Sir Jim McDonald,
Principal & Vice-Chancellor, University of Strathclyde

Eva Curran,
Strathclyde Students' Union President 2023 - 2025

DATE:

3RD OCT. 2024

