



Scottish Student Sport Impact Assessment

by Best and Randak Associates

for

Scottish Student Sport

Scottish Funding Council

sportscotland

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Contents

This report comprises:

- an Introduction;
- Summary;
- the Overarching Theme and Supporting Themes that emerged from the review, supported by case studies and illustrative quotes from surveys, focus groups, interviews and case studies;
- Recommendations that are accompanied by brief rationales; and
- Survey Results and Case Studies in the two appendices.

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Introduction

Scottish Student Sport (SSS) commissioned Best and Randak Associates to prepare an impact assessment report on behalf of the organisation and its main funding partners, **sportscotland** and the Scottish Funding Council.

The overall objective was to undertake an impact assessment that highlights the success or otherwise over the past two years (April 2014 to mid-2016) of SSS's current strategy in meeting its stated aims and the expectations of funding partners.

The detailed aims were to critically assess:

- the progress of SSS against its stated aims and the conditions of investment from funding partners;
- the impact of its regional delivery, in terms of competitions, development, and member support; and
- the profile of SSS and its relationships with other agencies across education and sport;

and to make recommendations to SSS and its partners around future direction and support.

Methodology

Following discussions with SSS, the following methods were used to obtain the information and views needed to meet the objectives of the review:

- 1 A trawl of published and unpublished documents from SSS itself; tertiary education institutions; governing bodies of sport; and other relevant bodies such as BUCS, **sportscotland** and the Scottish Funding Council.
- 2 A substantial questionnaire using SurveyMonkey sent to lists from SSS of sports-related staff in tertiary education, student sports presidents, volunteers and others. This was also placed on a website and extensively promoted at the SSS conference in June (attended by two Best and Randak associates). It comprised roughly half 'tick-box' questions and half open-ended questions for respondents to record their views, resulting in a rich seam of 64 responses with valuable quantitative and qualitative information.
- 3 A short email questionnaire to a limited number of other organisations with links to SSS, resulting in five responses.
- 4 Two focus groups with a total of 16 student sports presidents and sports-related staff in tertiary education institutions.
- 5 One-to-one interviews in person or by phone of 18 key contacts.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Best and Randak Associates, comprising Jon Best, Lawrie Randak, Lynne Hogarth and Anna Duffield.

It has been a pleasure to work with Stew Fowlie, Chief Operating Officer of SSS, and his colleagues who gave us full support and access for the review.

The main questionnaire was a demanding one in terms of the time required to respond to it fully and we are very grateful to all those who responded, including 40 who gave their views on every question.

More time was required of those who contributed to the focus groups and to those who gave us in-depth interviews – all provided us with valuable perspectives on the role and direction of SSS and its milieu.

Thanks also to those who provided the illustrative case study information in Appendix 2, including those who kindly allowed us to demonstrate the impact of student sport on their personal life histories.

We hope that the case studies, quotations and survey analyses below – leading to our discussions of key themes that emerged and the resulting recommendations – have given justice to those who contributed so fully.

Student Sport Context

There were:

- some 460,000 students in Scotland in 2014/15, split roughly equally between universities (232,570¹ in 19 higher education institutions) and colleges (226,920² in 17 further education institutions);
- over 78,000 regular active participants in HE institution facilities³;
- nearly 31,170 students registered in student sports clubs; and
- 584 student sports clubs⁴.

This means that SSS can be regarded as “one of the top ten largest governing bodies of sport in Scotland in terms of individuals registered as members of sports clubs” (**sportscotland** interviewee).

¹ Scottish Funding Council *Higher education students and qualifiers at Scottish institutions 2014-15*. Table A. Edinburgh, SFC, March 2016.

² Colleges Scotland *Keyfacts*. Stirling: Colleges Scotland, June 2016.

³ ‘An audit of sports provision in the university sector in Scotland, 2013 – a report to SSS.’

⁴ Figures on clubs from SSS membership data, March 2016.

Summary

Background

Scottish Student Sport commissioned Best and Randak Associates to prepare an impact assessment report on behalf of the organisation and its main funding partners, **sportscotland** and the Scottish Funding Council. The overall objective was to undertake an impact assessment that highlights the success or otherwise of SSS's current strategy in meeting its stated aims and the expectations of the funding partners. The detailed aims were to critically assess:

- the progress of SSS against its stated aims and the conditions of investment from funding partners;
- the impact of its regional delivery, in terms of competitions, development, and member support; and
- the profile of SSS and its relationships with other agencies;

and to make recommendations around future direction and support.

Our approach was consultative. It included a trawl of published and unpublished documents; a substantial questionnaire achieving 64 detailed responses; a short email questionnaire; two focus groups; and one-to-one interviews with 18 contacts.

Key Themes

The following overarching theme and six supporting themes emerged from the review:

Overarching Theme – Achieving in Action. Members and partners alike recognise and value the reputation of SSS as a progressive and dynamic organisation. Respondents consistently perceived SSS to be delivering with quality and making a significant contribution to the physical activity and sport landscape. It is clear from the evidence that the achievements of SSS to date represent a strong performance against its stated targets, and a proven track record of delivery against partner investment.

1 A National Organisation and Partner. SSS has now established itself as a national organisation, recognised by others and securing investment from the SFC and **sportscotland**, to enhance and further develop its aims for the student sport sector and its contribution to the national picture.

2 Members and Pathways. SSS represents a significant body of membership with 32,000 individual members and 35 educational institutions and an impressive facility estate. Its members and partners support a strong and growing structure that seeks to provide opportunities for growing participation in sport and other physical activity with progressions to regional competition and national representation.

3 Regional Network. The newly-created regional network with coordinators in three of the five SSS regions has shown significant results, creating new structures, inviting increased participation and important relationships with local and regional partners. Further development across the network together with focused effort will see the creation of a truly national structure.

4 Clubs and Governing Body Relationships. The number of clubs continues to grow as does the desire to improve their functions with support from sports unions and sports departments. Clubs are being created and grown within colleges and also within universities with a less-developed track record. A more outward-looking approach to sports development is evident as universities and colleges seek partnerships with governing bodies and others that will see their sports grow and provide improved quality opportunities for all.

5 Competitions and Events. The Scottish structure for competitions is evolving to offer more and improved opportunities for players, coaches and volunteers. The professional delivery by SSS in Scotland continues to provide high quality competitions at every level and promote strong integration between the Scottish and UK structures.

6 Colleges. Sport and other physical activity in Scotland's colleges has been strongly identified as an area of concern and a focus for future effort. In order to realise a more equitable provision that will see sustainable development, sports development staff need to be appointed and specific regional targets identified.

Each of these themes will be presented in turn through the following pages, based on the evidence provided by survey respondents, interviewees and focus group members.

Recommendations

- 1 SSS uses a high-level working group to grow signature programmes shaping the core of the strategic plan to further develop student sport into the 2020s.
- 2 The SSS regional network is grown to sustainable maturity with continued investment from national partners.
- 3 SSS grasps and enhances its pivotal role as the national agency for student sport and engages accordingly at the highest level with key agencies, partner organisations and the senior management of Scotland's universities and colleges.
- 4 SSS drives a targeted campaign to help individual colleges and less-developed universities in developing their sport and other physical activity.
- 5 SSS and its members and partners advance plans for dedicated sport and physical activity staff based in every college and university.

Overarching Theme – Achieving in Action

- 1 Members and partners alike recognise and value the reputation of SSS as a progressive and dynamic organisation. Respondents consistently perceived SSS to be delivering with quality and making a significant contribution to the physical activity and sport landscape. It is clear from the evidence that the achievements of SSS to date represent a strong performance against its stated targets, and a proven track record of delivery against partner investment.

SSS Headline Targets 2018 – Progress Check		
Key Priority	2018 Aim	Update August 2016
Member Services	Fit for purpose sports structures in 20+ institutions	Development toolkit prepared – to be piloted in institutions during 2016-17
	Full membership uptake across tertiary education	Membership as of end May was 28/35 (80%) – representing 91% of total student population
	Increase number of student sports clubs to 600	584 clubs as of end-March 2016
	Self-sufficient student sport workforce across officiating, coaching and volunteering	Play Sport Promoter Programme in place; Reffin' Brilliant numbers up 15% on last year (n=130 officials).
	SSS competition entries to have increased by 50%	Currently 25% up on 2013-14 figure (11,280 entries in 2015-16)
Competitions	Between 45% and 55% of participants in SSS events to be female	2015-16 figure 43% female – trending in the right direction (41% female last year)
	Strong regional structure in place across a minimum of four areas	Regional competitions offer bedded in well; four regional groups in place and three staffing roles in place.
	High quality representative sport opportunities across 12 sports	Delivery in 14 sports this year. Working to enhance quality +/- BUCS involvement
	Formal partnership agreements in place with 15 Scottish governing bodies of sport	Eight in place. Good progress being made towards next phase.
Advocacy	Further evidence of impact and benefits of sport and other physical activity to be generated and published	Scottish Active Students project under way in conjunction with ukactive and Precor. Named partner in What Works Wellbeing review.
	Integrated communications plan to cover members, partners and the media	Achieved. 7,500 total social media followers by July 2016
	Formal partnerships in place with key agencies	Work continuing with BUCS, NUS Scotland, Scottish Sports Alliance, Youth Sport Trust, NHS Health Scotland, FIT
	SSS recognised as a 5-star destination within the Volunteering Champion Award scheme	4 star rating achieved and working towards recommendations to achieve 5 star in 2017
Strong Organisation	SSS to achieve Preliminary level on Equality framework	Achieved. Preliminary level achieved July 2016 – working towards Intermediate
	SSS to achieve Investors in People award	Achieved. March 2016 at Silver level (plus Investors in Young People)
	SSS to achieve top level (Satisfactory) fit for purpose approval	1% short of top level rating at January 15 – all recommendations to be adopted by 2017
	Organisational reserves to be maintained at >40% of core costs	46.5% as of August 2015

- 2 The perceptions from the evidence gathered for this review are that SSS is a strong, professional, national representative organisation with excellent leadership, a positive culture, and quality staff leading a real sense of direction and commitment to delivery for its members, the sector and its investment partners.
- 3 SSS's innovative, active and ambitious approach and culture is recognised and applauded by many. Its 'contemporary connectivity' with and through sport and physical activity, together with its growing developments, is valued. Its energetic culture, rooted within its predecessors, is widely praised. Whilst there is some small level of debate about SSS's pursuit of a national advocacy and influencing role versus its central responsibilities to deliver a competition and events programme, the view of the vast majority of respondents is one of fulsome support and encouragement for a truly national role and remit.

"The sea change that has occurred in the profile, quality, quantity and impact of student sport since SSS was established has been amazing. They have truly been game-changers in revolutionising the sector. All of their efforts and their good example makes university sport and exercise a great place to work." (Survey respondent)

In the last academic year SSS has:

- Engaged a record number of colleges and universities in membership
- Helped to support 34 new sports clubs and over 2,700 new club members
- Formalised three new partnership agreements with SGBs
- Supported over 130 students to become referees, judges or umpires
- Run a successful Rainbow Laces campaign in conjunction with Stonewall
- Actively contributed to the LEAP Sports national panel on inclusion in sport
- Supported 12 institutions to pursue Healthy Body Healthy Mind awards
- Supported 6 institutions to complete the Volunteer Champion Award
- Welcomed record numbers to competitions at both regional and national level
- Provided National Squad opportunities to students across 14 sports
- Provided quality, supported volunteering roles to over 50 students and staff
- Launched the Active Students survey in conjunction with ukactive and Precor
- Influenced all Scottish political parties via the Manifesto for Sport campaign
- Taken part in the NHS 'Exemplary Physical Activity Employer' scheme
- Achieved Investors in Young People and Investors in People Silver rating
- Managed the existing resources of SSS effectively and sustainably

(SSS Chair, Strategic Update, AGM, June 2016)

Supporting Themes

The overarching message of ‘achieving in action’ was detailed throughout the gathered evidence. The report also identified these six interlinked supporting themes:

- 1. A National Organisation and Partner.** SSS has now established itself as a key national organisation, recognised by others and securing investment from the Scottish Funding Council and **sportscotland**, to enhance and further develop its aims for the student sport sector and its contribution to the national picture.
- 2. Members and Pathways.** SSS represents a significant body of membership with close to 32,000 individuals across 35 educational institutions and an impressive facility estate. Its members and partners support a strong and growing structure that seeks to provide opportunities for growing participation in sport and other physical activity with progressions to regional competition and national representation.
- 3. Regional Network.** The establishment of a regional network with coordinators in three of the five SSS regions has shown significant results, creating new structures, inviting increased participation and initiating important relationships with local and regional partners. Further development across the network together with focused effort will see the creation of a truly national structure.
- 4. Clubs and Governing Body Relationships.** The number of clubs continues to grow as does the desire to improve their functions with support from sports unions and sports departments. Clubs are being created and grown within colleges and also within universities with a less-developed track record. A more outward-looking approach to sports development is evident as universities and colleges seek partnerships with governing bodies and others that will see their sports grow and provide improved quality opportunities for all.
- 5. Competitions and Events.** The Scottish structure for competitions is evolving to offer more and improved opportunities for players, coaches and volunteers. The professional delivery by SSS in Scotland continues to provide high quality competitions at every level and promote strong integration between the Scottish and UK structures.
- 6. Colleges.** Sport and other physical activity in Scotland’s colleges has been strongly identified as an area of concern and a focus for future effort. In order to realise a more equitable provision that will see sustainable development, sports development staff need to be appointed and specific institutional and regional targets identified.

Each of these themes will be presented in turn through the following pages, based on the evidence provided by survey respondents, interviewees and focus group members.

“There is no question that without SSS the integrated development of sport and physical activity for students would not have taken place. SSS provides a robust and integrated structure which enables member institutions to progress their work.”

(Survey respondent)

1: A National Organisation and Partner

1 The principal investment partners of SSS, the Scottish Funding Council and **sportscotland**, both regard SSS as a ‘national partner’ and both express satisfaction and confidence in their investment at this midpoint of review. This Impact Assessment exercise seeks to present evidence and opinion to critically determine SSS’s ability and progress as a National Organisation with its positive culture and against its strategic aims and impacts.

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast. If you can’t change the culture, all the strategy in the world won’t help.” (CEO, BUCS, Presentation to SSS Conference, 15/06/16)

2 SSS is recognised by its principal investment partners as a **key national body**, new to the context of 21st century sport and other physical activity in Scotland and within the UK. It is at its midpoint of delivery of its Strategy 2014-18, *National vision, regional focus, local impact*. Developing its vision, “at the heart of a world-class system for physical activity and student sport”, SSS is seeking to make a significant contribution and add value to Scottish sport for its members and constituents locally, regionally and nationally.

How effective would you say SSS is, on a scale of 1-10 (10 being most effective)?

Rating	Percentage of respondents
7	39
8	27
9-10	16

“The sea change that has occurred in the profile, quality, quantity and impact of student sport since SSS was established has been amazing. They have truly been game-changers in revolutionising the sector. All of their efforts and their good example makes university sport and exercise a great place to work.” (Survey respondent)

(Appendix 1, Questions 12 and 11b)

How effective is SSS at representing the student sport sector in terms of advocacy and influencing?

Rating	Percentage of respondents
A fair extent	45
Very effective	35

“SSS have been, and continue to be, strong and powerful advocates for the value of student sport, championing our cause with key groups such as Scottish Government, UK Government, **sportscotland**, NGBs, BUCS, UK Active, universities and colleges, NUS Scotland, and individual institutions. Through the training and development opportunities, good practice has been able to be shared across the sector elevating the quality of the delivery of sport and physical activity opportunities.” (Survey respondent)

(Appendix 1, Questions 11a and 14b)

- 3 SSS is recognised as leading a growing network and provision for Scotland's c.460,000 students in higher and further education, its 78,000 HE students, staff, community members and individuals who regularly visit HE facilities and, significantly, its 31,000 registered student members of 584 sports clubs. The evidence of activity, achievements and planned developments is regarded as a mandate for SSS, its members and investment partners to continue to encourage its strong lobbying voice and profile with Government, national agencies and all deliverers.

"SSS have been tireless in their commitment to be the voice of student sport in Scotland. SSS is a key partner in producing *A manifesto for Scottish sport* as part of the Scottish Sports Alliance. Producing sector standards and guidance/ good practice for volunteering (Student Volunteering Award). Supporting provision for sport within the college sector through the Regional Development Officer appointments. Bringing together individuals/institutions through its committee structure and other activity (annual seminar/conference) to debate/discuss provision for sport and physical activity, and develop policy and actions in this field. Lobbying for and raising the profile of sport and physical activity in the tertiary education field and advocating for sport and PA with key partners and stakeholders – **sportscotland**, Scottish Government, etc."

(Survey respondent)

"SSS has achieved what they set out to achieve, and could do more. They make a real contribution to the Scottish sporting landscape, and that needs to be recognised. It's about 'sport for students', not 'student sport'. SSS is a governing body providing for an audience and moving forward with passion, enthusiasm and commitment."

(Director of Sport, Scottish university)

- 4 SSS is seen as continuing to deliver and develop its competitions and events programmes at all levels, from recreational activity to club sport to the newly-created regional levels, to representative performance-level competition with BUCS and to the highest platform for national and international competition. SSS seeks to integrate into national systems within Scotland and the UK, with governing bodies of sport and local government, with its focus and provision regionally and nationally.

"SSS has been responsible for developing the extensive inter-university and colleges sport programme, ensuring that more students have more opportunities to take part in quality competition. This has been achieved by providing competition at different levels and staging events at all points of the student year."

(Survey respondent)

- 5 SSS is viewed as seeking to build and influence a strong case for the future of sport and other physical activity within tertiary education and to contribute to the local to regional to national context and structures. Its efforts to grow its network and reinforce the work and directions of its member institutions and their communities, has seen investment from national partners. Progress is evident and real early achievements recognised as SSS delivers on its three priorities as a **member** focused body, providing a breadth of **competitions**, and **advocating** its worth and position.

“It’s a strong organisation because of its member perspective; it engages them in committees and involves the roles of volunteers; it gets the right people in the right roles. People are passionate about the organisation and come forward and fulfil those roles. As a group it has exceptional momentum and has good synergy, good directions. The strategy is going in the right direction. We need a good structure to deal with the members and the volunteers. The structure has changed with the varying times; and it is dynamic.” (Assistant Director of Sport, Scottish university)

“Good networking among institutions, evident in everything coming through SSS. A collaborative understanding around the sector: help, support, good practice, sharing ideas, guidance. Combination of the culture that has emerged; SSS provides the underlying platform and the glue that underpins that.” (Sports Performance Manager, Scottish university)

“It is hard for SSS to steer the political agenda around sport with all the institutions in sport that are so different. SSS can't provide a unified response on their behalf. That’s not what one of its focuses should be.” (Sports Department, member university)

“Much activity must come from institutions themselves – from staff dedicated to the development and provision of sport and physical activity. SSS cannot be 'all things to all people' and care must be taken that SSS is not expected to have responsibility for local development within institutions.” (Survey respondent)

“SSS is well connected to the student sector and the sporting sector such as the governing bodies. The dialogue is right for these sectors.” (**sportscotland**)

What would you see as being the most valuable contribution of SSS in terms of enhancing your work?

	Percentage of respondents	
General guidance and support	24	
Sharing best practice/ knowledge	14	(Appendix 1, Question 17a)

“Best practice sharing. Regardless of the task that you face there is always support and examples available through SSS. They are excellent at having a knowledge of what is occurring throughout the sector, and signposting you to the relevant institution which could support your work.” (Survey respondent) **(Appendix 1, Question 17b)**

- 6 SSS has pursued opportunities to establish its credentials with equality and has achieved its Preliminary and Foundation Equity Standard. Together with Scottish Disability Sport, LEAP Sports Scotland and others it seeks to develop future support for students with protected characteristics.

What more could SSS do to support opportunities for students with disabilities and other protected characteristics? (Options ticked by at least half of respondents)

Percentage of survey respondents

Promote Disability Inclusion Training courses for coaches and officials	79
Promote inclusive publicity for all sports organisations	54
Encourage all clubs to be actively welcoming to all students	52
Help to develop disability-only clubs where appropriate – eg, wheelchair sports	50

“Great presentation by LEAP Sports at the SSS conference, and SSS should be working heavily with the likes of this organisation to be developing our sector's experience and filter this down to institutions.”

“SSS should take the lead in raising the profile of disability sport and the need for clubs to be inclusive, as these are considerations which are fairly new to student sports clubs.”

“Better awareness of being inclusive would be useful and, for those with disabilities with more specific requirements, signposting towards specialist clubs that already exist is a supportive and efficient approach.”

“SSS have been the key support in helping SDS support disabled athletes within tertiary education and have partnered our attempts to embed inclusion and training within the curriculum.”

What would not have happened without SSS? “We would not have made the inroads to embed inclusion into student sport and the tertiary education sector that we have achieved to date.”

(Appendix 1, Questions 8a, 8b, 17b, 15b)

(Survey respondents)

“I am a huge fan of what SSS is doing and they should be enabled to do more. It would be nice to feel that **sportscotland** could do more to recognise SSS as an important conduit for sport in Scotland. SSS is a good thing, and we should do everything we can to support them.” (Chair of BUCS)

“The aspiration is that it should be the key national body for tertiary education. The reality is not yet the same as that vision/mission, but that is what they should be aiming at.” (Scottish Funding Council)

“Generally, in terms of activities, advocacy and impact, the universities, particularly, are very good, and SSS is key to that. **sportscotland** still must listen and understand the work of SSS better. The Scottish Funding Council is a more dynamic advocate of what SSS does. **sportscotland** doesn’t quite get the nature of SSS which is not a typical governing body. Where does SSS fit for **sportscotland**? The SFC is interested in the power of sport.”
 (Director of Sport, Scottish university)

“SSS's involvement in lobbying **sportscotland**, the Scottish Funding Council and Government is critical in further successes being delivered. The reality is that we can do so much more but require genuine recognition from **sportscotland** of the critical role we play both individually and collectively. Successive national strategies for sport continue to omit tertiary education in any meaningful way and Scottish sport will continue to be compromised as long as this approach continues.”

(Survey respondent)

“SSS is a ‘national partner’. **sportscotland** is in the process of re-defining those bodies like SSS that don’t always align with the conventional governing bodies of sport. **sportscotland** will potentially change them into a different type of partnership. We want to redefine them as strategic partners, like the Youth Sport Trust. It’s challenging to treat them as governing bodies – the development outcomes for organisations like SSS don’t apply in every respect in the same way as they do for governing bodies. We want to reset the mechanism and the relationship... There’s time to go on the targets, but it’s all looking positive for the targets by 2018.”
 (**sportscotland**)

How could SSS further assist in supporting the governance structures and good practice in student sport?

Percentage of respondents

Develop examples of good practice for clubs and sports associations	75
Encourage institutions to adopt and share these examples	67
Provide or facilitate training courses for sports leaders	65
Promote case studies of good practice	50

“SSS needs to fulfil a role in governance and good practice in sport – which it currently does. The promotion and championing of good practice, and the development and implementation of good governance across student sport and physical activity provision is an important part of the SSS activity.”
 (Survey respondent)

(Appendix 1, Questions 9a and 9b)

2: Members and Pathways

- 1 A total of 28 out of 35 (80%) colleges and universities were members of SSS by March 2016, representing 91% of all students in Scotland. Its *Strategy 2014-18* has a focus for them and their communities to “achieve a clear and integrated vision for the future of physical activity and student sport”. SSS is regarded as an organisation that communicates well with its members with its website, regular SSS Updates and annual conference; also with its member sports unions and through its Executive, Project Groups, core personnel with their national sports roles, development programmes and the newly-established regional network.

“SSS is dynamic, inclusive, very much a member organisation. Their AGM goes out of its way to engage members. The Chief Operating Officer wears his mantle well; he engages very well with people.” (Assistant Director of Sport, Scottish university)

“SSS are a partner in this – not the only voice; there’s a need for everyone to come together. Sports governing bodies and universities have invested, with an improved student experience as a result and also a real medal opportunity at the highest level. SSS needs to be brought in far more; and the universities need to reduce their barriers and manage this integration.” (Scottish Funding Council)

- 2 Members are evidently enthused with the fledgling regional approach and model, though concerned that only three of the SSS regions are currently active. Members recognise early problems with organised competition, delegated responsibilities and communications, and integration with institutions that are less well developed and supported. Longer-term funding of the regional posts, and the addition of the remaining two regions into a national network, would underpin the sustainability of the current strategy. Members clearly play an active part in providing student sport.

<i>What is your main role in relation to student sport?</i>		<i>To what extent does your institution work with Scottish Student Sport?</i>	
	% of respondents		% of respondents
Staff member	50	Not at all	2
Elected student	23	A small amount	14
Volunteer	23	A fair amount	39
Other	3	A lot	45
<i>To what extent has SSS supported an increase in the quantity and quality of provision for sport and other physical activity?</i>			
	Quantity	Quality	
	Percentage of respondents		
A fair amount	54	50	(Appendix 1, Questions 1, 3, 4)
A lot	26	24	

- 3 Concerns are evident that there is something of an inability to address recognised groups within the broad sector that are marginal and disadvantaged due to socio-economic factors and poor provision, especially within the college sector.

“Youngsters from deprived areas struggle in HE, they don't have the right backgrounds, they need to be supported. There is a big dropout rate for them; so we need to use sport as a vehicle for that.” (Director of Sport, Scottish university)
 “It's the case that the colleges are the initial starting place for many people from disadvantaged backgrounds – we need to engage them and try not to lose them.”
 (Chair of BUCS)

- 4 Opportunities for participation, improved inclusion and addressing evident inequalities are recognised in responses from stakeholders. SSS, and others, are asked to identify this dimension with programmes created to respond to providing equal opportunities, more volunteering, and student sport workforce development. A philosophical lead is effective where sport is identified as a transformational tool for the individual and community. A range of initiatives are valued such as the ‘Play Sport Promoter’, Refereeing and Coaching introductory awards and promotion of best practice through the website, with governing bodies of sport, SSS Updates, regional liaison and seminars.

“Arguably the quality of programmes and opportunities without SSS would be poorer and arguably some would not happen at all, particularly award schemes and the knowledge transfer across the network. Things like Refin’ Brilliant and Coachin’ Brilliant feel hugely SSS-driven although obviously supported by **sportscotland** and SGBs.”
 (Survey respondent)

What more could SSS do to promote participation in grassroots sport and other physical activity?
 (Options ticked by at least half of respondents)

Percentage of respondents

Signpost or deliver training courses	75
Identify and share good practice	54
Promote grassroots events and programmes	52

“A lot of this work is best carried out at a local level as individual institutions will understand the sporting network in their area. However, SSS have a role to play in providing opportunities to professionalise the management of university and college sports clubs.”

“Provide basic development support [for less-developed institutions]. However, the ball is in the institutions’ court: how they choose to resource staff/student sport. Ultimately this will dictate how much focus an institution places on developing sports opportunities for their students. SSS can only help as far as institutions allow them to.”

(Appendix 1, Questions 6a, 6b, 16b)

(Survey respondents)

- 5 Member institutions expressed substantial support for the regional development network and pathway provision, and for creating transitions which realised participation from schools to community clubs and hubs, to colleges and universities, post-education transition to employment and playing an active part “within their neighbourhood”. Transition from school to college and university and their clubs, or “shared clubs”, and back through to the community following tertiary education, is valued as a SSS ambition.

“The regional staff have made connections between schools and HE/FE – a key transition that the regional staff are promoting; getting sports awareness to high school pupils of the sports opportunities in HE/FE. We are also doing unique things in [our university]; integrated models where HE/FE doesn’t stand alone, so for example basketball combines the university club with the youth basketball club from the community, which gives far more opportunities to the community. Half student and half community. We’ve burst that bubble of segregation. With the influence of SSS, **sportscotland** has now put HE/FE into their Corporate Plan. They encourage links with the community.”
(Sports Development Manager, Scottish university)

- 6 National and regional partnerships with governing bodies, community engagement with local authorities and a community for sport was evident as an aspiration from respondents. SSS’s role and relationship with **sportscotland**, local authorities through member institutions, and agreements with specific governing bodies were seen as central means for creating effective transitions and structures.

“SSS do a very valuable job in forging links with NGBs. However, there is a need for some NGBs to get switched on to the value of student sport and to incorporate the sector in their strategic planning.”
(Survey respondent)

SSS-SGB Partnerships: Progress

SGB

Signed/Expected

Scottish Football Association	June 2014
Scottish Disability Sport	Aug 2014
Scottish Hockey	June 2015
Badminton Scotland	June 2015
Scottish Target Shooting Federation	Aug 2015
Netball Scotland	Sept 2015
Scottish Volleyball Association	Mar 2016
Scottish Lacrosse	May 2016
Scottish Swimming	2016 ¹
Judo Scotland	2016 ¹
Basketball Scotland	2016 ¹
Scottish Archery	2016 ¹
Mountaineering Council of Scotland	2017 ²
Tennis Scotland	2017 ²
Scottish Rowing	2017 ²
Scottish Golf	2017 ²
Scottish Handball	2017
Scottish Rugby	2017
Royal Yachting Association (Scotland)	2017
Camanachd Association	2018
Royal Caledonian Curling Club	2018
Scottish Athletics	2018
Cricket Scotland	2018

¹ Proposals drafted and discussed

² Early meetings held

3: Regional Network

- 1 Consistent support is evident for the SSS regional network approach with staff and volunteers recruited to establish a support network and programmes and to stimulate additional participation opportunities and competition structures.

How useful have the SSS regional staff and groups been in adding value to your work with student sport?

	Percentage of respondents	
Not at all useful	8	
A small extent	24	
A fair extent	29	
Very useful	39	(Appendix 1, Question 5)

“The regional structure is good for the less well-developed universities and for the colleges. It also allows the lower-level teams to have a competitive structure. It could be a bit better in the competitive structure in some regions. But it’s going in the right direction, encompasses the college sector more in some regions. The regional structure is going in the right direction. The regional level will find its way ok.”

(Director of Sport, Scottish university)

“SSS's greatest support of us is their support of the network, knowledge transfer and sharing of good practice and information, competition programmes and engaging on our behalf with governing bodies.”

(Survey respondent)

- 2 SSS has a flexible model, now in its 18-24 month development phase, that recognises regional differences, targets development and understands less mature practice. It is regarded as SSS “very much going in the right direction”. Organising regional leagues and events is creating a breadth of opportunities for students from initial involvement to the levels up to the BUCS performance stage.

“The regional network reflects the challenges they have of embracing the whole sector. They have very committed volunteers and staff; the regional officer helps them to deliver for college students in particular. The real issue is how to engage the college sector. There are also low-level university student opportunities through the regional structure. They have opened doors for club teams.”

(Assistant Director of Sport, Scottish university)

- 3 Embedding regional staff in institutions and the infrastructure they create has triggered links between the student network and the local agencies, governing bodies of sport, regionally and nationally, and others. Viewed as important links and partnerships, these are becoming stronger in numbers and in development processes with coaches, volunteers and officials, and in some referenced cases, creating transition links to community sports hubs with established sports clubs in the community.

Case Study: Institution and Community Club Links

A former university sports president created matches with other universities, similar to the rowing and rugby matches that take place annually between Glasgow and Edinburgh. They weren't part of that then; so she decided that Stirling as a sporting university should have something like that. She drove that. It was the year of the Commonwealth Games, so she obtained additional funding to host the Stirling Games. Stirling University hockey, tennis, football and basketball teams played local community clubs with a view to developing links and an annual competition; but that hasn't continued since. "That's the difficulty with student presidents – they're quickly replaced with new presidents." She briefed the new president on the importance of the event, which linked with Active Stirling who thought it was a good initiative, but continuity was not maintained.

(Appendix 2, Case Study 3)

- 4 Particularly responding to the needs of colleges and the less sportingly developed universities, the regional dimension allows more participants to play at an appropriate level of competition such as club sport, and places more people on the pathways to sport and activity for life. Whilst there is strong support and recognition for the early work and achievements of the regional approach, concerns centre on the need to be more specific and focused towards targets that come from the SSS strategy and reflect the aspirations of the two main external investors and their targets.

"The regional network has to approach universities and colleges differently in terms of development. Ayrshire College is a good example of effective development, specific to what works best with them. The College created a multi-sports club as a sort of sports union with a localised approach, making governance as flexible as possible. Dundee and Angus College is also good, with funding for a staff member. Edinburgh College is good with a flexible approach avoiding a one size fits all approach. SSS is trying to create a post in each college, pulling pockets of funding from different sources to achieve that.

"The elected role is new in Edinburgh College – they have just appointed someone and they're leading the way; few others have a sports president. Universities have a sports president with a team, but that's not the case in colleges. It's a complex set-up.

"Edinburgh College and Ayrshire College each has an elected person. It's the stage of development. SSS would prefer them to have a staff member in place before an elected student, as it gives continuity."

(SSS Development Manager)

How could SSS support less-developed institutions in the future, given their different levels of maturity and infrastructure?
(Appendix 1, Question 16b)

“This is where the regional team are at their most effective by supporting individual institutions in a bespoke manner.”

“The regional support is key. This support gives less-developed organisations the opportunity to interact with a sport professional, receive examples of best practice, share their ideas and improve the sustainability of activity and ideas. These benefits would not occur if there was no regional support and the aims/ambitions would change year-on-year depending on the preferences and manifesto of the elected students. The opportunity to interact with other institutions through the elected student forum, at which best practice is shared, can only be a benefit, and SSS's input during these meetings and in organisation is key.”

What would you see as being the most valuable contribution of SSS in terms of enhancing your work?
(Appendix 1, Question 17b)

“Working with each individual institution to identify the priority areas where it can be supported in attaining its strategic goals. Greater ability to offer sensitivity to local needs would be more beneficial than a whole sector approach.”

(Survey respondents)

4: Clubs and Governing Body Relationships

- 1 Evidence informs us that sports clubs and their Sports Unions wish to become “more professional” in their approach, and strong examples nationally are evident within the universities (see Appendix 2, Case Study 5). Club members recognise the cyclical and changing nature of their settings as students and Union Presidents move on, endeavouring to bequeath a legacy for the next regime. Developments with the regional network and local, regional and national joint working with governing bodies and their member clubs has influenced development and delivery, and have provided real opportunities for the future with SSS and national partners.

“SSS is not just about running a tournament – genuine partnerships are emerging, with local authorities, governing bodies, SSS, colleges and universities – meaning that sport will grow, and the quality of the student experience will grow. This will help the governing body at performance level. SSS can have a huge positive impact as a role model. It’s really about participation at every level.” (Scottish Funding Council)

- 2 Respondents identified a variety of good practice at local and regional level and referred to partnerships agreements made between SSS and eight governing bodies of sport (and a further eight being pursued), stating the positive nature of such partnerships and citing significant numbers of meaningful developments.

How effective are links between the student network and governing bodies of sport at local, regional and national level?

	Local	Regional	National
	Percentage of respondents		
Not at all effective	18	6	8
A small extent	37	45	35
A fair extent	39	37	45
Very effective	6	12	12

“I think there are pockets of strong working relationships with NGBs which vary from city-to-city or sport-to-sport. For some sports, student sport is a bit of an afterthought where the priority is to count memberships rather than develop the sport.”

(Appendix 1, Questions 10a and 10b)

(Survey respondent)

“**sportscotland** gets off too lightly here. They give SSS money and support, but haven’t had the strength to say to governing bodies that they must focus on the college and university sector as a condition of grant aid. There is a key stage between tertiary education and employment, and governing bodies are only paying lip service to the issue. **sportscotland** could use their strength more. SSS should be advocating that and leaning on the governing bodies to do more in the tertiary education sector.”

(Sports Performance Manager, Scottish university)

Through its sports village, Aberdeen University supports students locally and nationally. Through its relationships with Scottish Rugby and Scottish Swimming and their academies, the partnership is investing in sport in the north of Scotland enabling all to work together. (Appendix 2, Case Study 5)

SSS / Netball Scotland Partnership Agreement 2016: Selected Items

<i>Work Area</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>KPI</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Competitions and events	Joint planning of event calendar min of 6 mos out	2016-17 events to be agreed by Sept 2016	BBN Festival, Reffin'/Coachin' Brilliant, SSS Tournament, Scottish Cup, National Squad programme.
Workforce	Joint targeting of SSS clubs as destinations for emerging coaches	Signposting qualified coaches to student clubs	
Managing the partnership	Managing agreed and resourced development plan, three mtgs per year	Involving staff on both sides, +/- key volunteers	Group recognised by both SSS and Netball Scotland as part of governance structure
Club Development	Three Approved Community Club Links to be formalised per year	Three by Aug 2016	Delivered by regional staff on both sides

SSS / Scottish Volleyball Association Partnership Agreement 2016: Selected Items

<i>Work Area</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>KPI</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Workforce	Promote the Student Volleyball Officers programme	Programme to be launched with the aim of recruiting six people in year one	Notes of interest being sought by the end of September 2016
Club development	Engage institutions with SVA community outreach projects	SSS regional staff to facilitate meeting between clubs and SVA regional staff	
Managing the partnership	Student sport recognised by SVA through the Student Commission	Incorporate some of the Partnership Agreement KPIs and deliver an agreed operational plan	
Membership and affiliations	SSS receive 60% of total student affiliation as a kickback	Agreed timescale for kickback being paid to SSS	Money to fund development of regional and national programmes within Scottish Student Volleyball

- 3 With sports unions having the governance and development responsibilities for their member clubs through fit for purpose audits, together with formal and informal sport service department input and advice on all aspects of union and club running and delivery, evidence indicates that an outward facing approach to the local community and its clubs is now surfacing which will realise benefits for growth and development for SSS and its partners at all levels.

“There is a real understanding of how to increase participation – a real opportunity for SSS. Both among students, and the role that students can play in increasing participation in the community. Students know they have to work hard academically but also that they need more on their cv. A SSS programme to get students coaching qualifications; then working with regional development officers to do coaching in schools.”
(Scottish university Principal)

- 4 The SSS Approved Community Club Link scheme received support as a means to grow sport locally within the academic setting and into the immediate community to the benefit of the broad community and also students leaving their institutions and transitioning to community club sport opportunities.

Most students involved in university sports clubs will still be engaged in sport when they leave university. One student president will join a local Glasgow club, for university alumni. Another will join a netball alumni club in London, part of a local league. Another would like to carry on playing rugby after Queen Margaret U as they have a great link with Musselburgh Rugby Club. Heriot-Watt University is looking at developing a pathway; and there is a need for SSS to support better post-university transition links to community clubs.
(Scottish universities’ sports presidents)

“Only a few NGBs actively seek out student clubs at a local level to provide club development support and establish general links. Many other NGBs remain outside the student sport network. Regional links have vastly improved due to SSS regional staff and their base at partnership offices. Student sport will be part of many NGBs’ wider sport strategy.”
(Survey respondent)

- 5 Creating more ‘open clubs’ within the sector whereby everyone locally is welcome, though not all can compete in all competitions sees some support from members. Whilst clearly there are pressures with this approach regarding facilities, court/field times, institutional regulations, coaches, and others, the ethos is being realised into delivery in a number of situations and is worthy of promotion and development.

How effective are links between the student network and governing bodies of sport at local, regional and national level?

“This answer varies considerably depending on each sport. On a **local** level many governing bodies are looking at joint delivery with student clubs, as they recognise them as a useful resource. On a **regional** level governing bodies recognise the importance of regional involvement to underpin numbers and increase activity. At a **national** level several governing bodies now have strong links and partnerships with the student network and more are recognising the benefits of this – whether it be to increase numbers at grassroots level, or to have a performance pathway through the university.”
(Survey respondent)

“The challenge at a local level is the perception among local clubs that student sport is not organised, only happens a few months of the year, and is not worth engaging with. Small strides are being made with some sports, but it can be frustrating.”

(Survey respondent)

“There is great potential for community sports development in HE/FE. There are some negative connotations about student sport – the cyclical nature of students, being replaced every year or two. We need to manage that transition. They can get involved in the community and volunteering, get qualifications and experience; these make them more capable graduates and will help them later in life.”

(Sports Development Manager, Scottish university)

Growth in Student Sports Clubs and Membership, 2012/13-2015/16

	<i>2012/13</i>	<i>2013/14</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>Increase last year</i>
Clubs	531	536	550	584	6%
Male members	12,863	14,780	14,920	16,560	11%
Female members	10,704	14,199	14,060	15,190	8%
Total members	23,567	26,867	29,060	31,770	9%

In the period of current investment from SFC/**sportscotland**, the total number of members has risen by 4,907 (an increase of 18%).

Less than 10% of the clubs are currently in colleges.

5: Competitions and Events

- 1 Competitions and competitive structures have been a traditionally strong delivery area for SSS. The well-delivered Scottish approach and identity, good delivery and improved quality of competitive opportunities with integration of BUCS to fit this Scottish structure is broadly recognised. Together now with more regional and better structured competition, second tier platforms, college opportunities and an evolving sustainable structure, models were seen as good and growing with every year. However, some grass-roots respondents saw the BUCS/SSS competitions as complicated and confusing, with issues involving timings, clashes with other events at performance levels and lack of clarity about the BUCS leagues and the role of SSS. These problems were generally seen as early difficulties and part of the development processes for SSS and the regional network.

What more could SSS do to facilitate involvement in competitive sport?

(Options ticked by at least half of respondents) Percentage of respondents

Support coaching, coach education and CPD for coaches	69
Help increase the number of officials	62
Develop stronger links to governing bodies of sport	60
Help increase the quality of officials	56
Signpost or deliver training courses	52
Promote and publicise opportunities	50
Expand the regional and national competition structure	50

“Give strategic focus to selected headline sports events to help better market and promote the best that student sport has to offer.”

“It depends on whether the institutions are receptive to feedback. However, to progress collectively certain institutions need to improve their organisation. SSS should provide the systems to allow competition to take place.”

(Appendix 1, Questions 7a and 7b)

(Survey respondents)

“There is a lack of clarity among sports students about the BUCS leagues and role of SSS; clubs think it's an SSS event, same as BUCS, generally students don't know the difference between the two. The competition structure and its branding are confusing.”

(Student President, Scottish university)

“The competitive structure has been very successful; both high end and as an extension of participation and the lower-level competitions. The regional competitions have been very successful.”

(Sports Performance Manager, Scottish university)

“Without the two days help from the regional coordinator, we wouldn't have been able to do the high end stuff.”

(Student President, Scottish university)

- 2 Overall the SSS competitive structure was regarded as being ahead of BUCS which was regarded as “an excessively rule-based model” lacking in flexibility. At times the current approach did not facilitate the development and growth of sport through partnerships with local authorities, governing bodies, colleges and universities. Thus, the opportunities to develop sport locally and regionally through competition, and improving the student experience over a longer period of time within education and with transition into community clubs and experiences post education, was compromised because of set regulations. Overall, the increased engagement into regional leagues and competitions has been viewed as an exciting and progressive development which will create a framework for future development.

<i>What would not have happened without SSS?</i>	
Summary of Responses	Percentage of respondents
(Well-structured) competitive sport opportunities	40
“Many students would not have been able to take part in competitive sport.”	
“The quality and ‘fit’ of the extensive BUCS competition programme would not have been as effective for Scottish institutions.”	
(Appendix 1, Questions 15a and 15b)	(Survey respondents)

“At UK level, BUCS deserves credit for delivering a challenging programme, and problems that happened ten years ago are no longer there. It’s better in Scotland than the rest of the UK because of the input of SSS. SSS helps with the quality level.”
(Director of Sport, Scottish university)

“Without the extensive work of SSS the quality and ‘fit’ of the extensive BUCS competition programme would not have been as effective for Scottish institutions. The profile of student sport would not be as high or as well considered. The college sector would not have access to the range of competition and participation opportunities in sport and PA (eg, SSS championships/events/ BUCS competition, etc). **sportscotland** and SGBs would not be as engaged or informed about the range, extent and quality of work and provision taking place within the student sector.” (Survey respondent)

- 3 College competitions were seen as particularly problematic with communication difficulties, late match call-offs, development status and governance, uncertain resourcing and constraints which effected the ability of colleges to engage with SSS.

“SSS Regional Sports Coordinators have been able to get into colleges, and grow provision in colleges. The college sector has been through dramatic change – there was and still is a danger that sport could get lost in that process. Different colleges face different challenges – issues of geography, size, resources. SSS needs to move beyond the one size fits all; needs to move to a level of sensitivity to determine where we need the most amount of specific support.”
(Sports Performance Manager, Scottish university)

- 4 Respondents identified opportunities to adapt and evolve existing structures to tailor competitions to suit the needs of differing institutions and competitors. They saw the need to identify the appropriate type of competition for colleges and some less developed universities, including opportunities for all students with protected characteristics.
- 5 Events such as the Christmas national seminar, CPD opportunities within sport and internship experiences were all highlighted as important strands for the member workforce as contributing to their sporting and professional development. These also provided soft skills that benefited them in their post-education pathway, community sport and work-life pathways. Being part of SSS is highly regarded and the benefits of collaboration with other partners and agencies recognised. In particular, the SSS Annual Conference is regarded as an important event with an energy and dynamic realised from the members which significantly influences future development across the board and provides significant networking opportunities.
- 6 SSS and BUCS are widely regarded as being integral to each other and most focused through the competitions structures. 'Integrated yet independent', SSS is recognised as a standalone Scottish body and also part of BUCS.

“SSS as a Scottish governing body will function independently of BUCS, but always be part of it. A mixture of independence and being part of BUCS. Two independent organisations, one ingrained into the other.”
(CEO, BUCS)

“Although SSS is better than BUCS, the BUCS CEO understands the issues. He will create a better BUCS more like SSS. He’s looking for a more regional and UK focused operation. He’s in awe and envious of what SSS is doing.”
(Director of Sport, Scottish university)

6: Colleges

- 1 Scotland's colleges represent nearly half of Scotland's student population, "the poor relation of tertiary education". Many responses⁵ highlighted the very real differences between the college sector and universities. Several strongly contested that the college sector is not understood well by the universities, and many recorded their lack of knowledge as to how the college sector has been affected by change and financial pressure over recent years. At the same time, it was recognised that there are a number of universities that are less developed in sporting terms.

"I would be more comfortable if SSS took a focused approach on what each particular institution needs, specific to its needs. Say, work with one college for a period, sensitive to their individual needs. This sensitivity and specificity is the way forward for SSS."
(University sports department)

- 2 Indeed, views were expressed that so difficult are the current circumstances and challenges within colleges for sport and other physical activity, that a blanket national or regional approach would not return benefits in the shorter term, and that a very targeted strategy may be required to see real sustainable developments. With only two 'sports unions' (albeit not necessarily run solely by students) in Scottish colleges, and perceptions of more challenging times ahead for the new regional college structure, difficult decisions by colleges may not see opportunities for sport, physical activity and health realised.

"Developing a strong infrastructure in the college structure is challenging; there are ways of doing this. There are student associations in colleges that are beginning to work albeit with some problems of consistency, especially with students only there for a short time. These associations need help from college staff. Colleges can work in collaboration on this, especially the smaller ones."
(Scottish Funding Council)

- 3 Many college students are part time and attending college for only a year or two, and with many progressing on to university. There was a focus on emerging college ideas around local and regional collaboration between a university and a neighbouring college. These can develop a 'buddy' approach whereby mentoring, sharing ideas and practice together with open facilities and clubs could have benefits for both and all.

"Scottish competition is good because of their engagement with the colleges. By and large it seems to work. The challenge is to engage the colleges in delivery – they're recipients of a programme rather than providers of the programme."
(CEO, BUCS)

⁵ It should be noted that the college sector was not as fully represented in the survey as we would have wished, with only 17% of FE/HE questionnaire responses from colleges compared with 83% from universities. This illustrates the broader issue that colleges still lag behind in terms of communication and adjusting to new structures and responsibilities.

- 4 Whilst colleges welcome the creation of the regional network, financial and practical issues require to be dealt with. Examples of “excellent current practice” in colleges have been cited, as have examples of previously recognised national standards of sport in colleges that have been lost due to financial pressures and new strategies. Nevertheless, SSS has done well to sustain and extend engagement, membership and income from colleges during its current strategy.

“When the colleges merged, people were taken out of position, so no longer anyone driving from the top – a lack of interest from the top. The focus was diverted to survival. The management had too much on their plate and they turned to survival from development.”
(Former Curriculum Manager, Scottish college)

“We need development officers appointed in colleges. SSS can support the colleges in making the case – advocacy and partnerships are key.”
(Assistant Director of Sport, Scottish university)

“The programme made money and it didn’t cost the College anything. It gave the College reputation, identity, success and achievement. Student athletes were attracted by the success of the programme – one fed the other.” Then innovative sports programmes were curtailed because of restructuring and there was no-one driving them.
(Appendix 2, Case Study 6)

Case Study: Impact of Sport in College

(Appendix 2, Case Study 4)

Natasha is well known within Scottish student sport. She competes in every badminton tournament that she can. She will travel all over Scotland representing the college along with the rest of the badminton players.

Initially she was “pretty poor”, but throughout her four years at college she gradually improved and through time became a more confident, assured and proficient player.

By the end of her time at college she had won several medals. This was down to application, effort and enthusiasm – allied with the fact that her doubles partner is a Scottish internationalist.

But, most importantly, the journey that she has been on since starting college has been aided by the opportunity not only to participate in these events, but by the fact it has improved her confidence, self-esteem and social skills.

Natasha is from a small village in the outskirts of Ayrshire. She never had a good experience at school. She has dyspraxia, dyslexia and is on the autistic spectrum. Her home life hasn’t been the easiest. Her achievements show that her transformation has been nothing short of phenomenal.

Sport, allied with pastoral care, has been the vehicle that has changed her life.

How could SSS support less-developed institutions in the future, given their different levels of maturity and infrastructure? **(Appendix 1, Question 16a/b)**

Summary Description of Types of Examples	Percentage of respondents
Produce guidance/ best practice guides/ case studies	43

“Even though it's time-consuming I feel that there is a role for SSS to target individual institutions on a need-by-need basis. For example, if an institution does not have the infrastructure or funding in place to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities, SSS should champion the cause to that institution's governance and policy-makers. For those institutions who are a little further on in their sporting journey, SSS should share good practice and perhaps foster links with those institutions who have already moved forward in their sport and physical activity offer.”

“Regional team seem to have been very effective for less-developed institutions, providing support and direction. I think there also need to be various models of best practice rather than just trying to implement university structures in colleges.”

“College involvement is a big concern. Currently the universities offer closed training sessions. We have been petitioning for some years to allow college students access to training. The colleges often do not have enough players to be able to support their own club.”

(Survey respondents)

What would not have happened without SSS? **(Appendix 1, Question 15b)**

“Little if any developments within the college sector. Strong possibility of increased numbers of students disengaging from playing sport.”

“The college sector would not have access to the range of competition and participation opportunities in sport and physical activity (eg, SSS championships/ events/ BUCS competition, etc).”

(Survey respondents)

“Regional activities are important for the College; that came from SSS support and sharing of best practice. Colleges are in a transitional phase of involvement with SSS. NESCOL is much more involved than Moray College which doesn't prioritise student sport. They get more support for colleges meeting up from the Regional Sport Coordinator for Tayside and Fife who provides support one or two days a month, very helpful. Maybe an opportunity for individuals from colleges to meet together – would be a good idea.”

(College staff)

“I can’t speak more highly of SSS – they’ve been brilliant with us. That’s still ongoing, and there’s still that barrier between colleges and universities. SSS welcomes everyone; they go out of their way to incorporate colleges. The organisation has been very good with Ayrshire College. The relationships are very important; there’s partnership and continuity with SSS.

“The Principal is very supportive at our College. We compete at championships; this costs money and money is tight but the Principal recognises the holistic benefit and provides the funding. Sports staff give up time freely to support sport on Wednesday afternoons. Universities have got the flexibility of Wednesday afternoons that colleges don’t.

Dedicated sports/activity promoters? “They would do more of what we’re doing already, and it would be ideal to get a dedicated person to run it. We work extensively with Active Schools. The Ayrshire Director of Education sees 94% of after-school delivery of sport in Ayrshire schools coming from Ayrshire College.”

(Curriculum Manager, Ayrshire College)

Direct Member Subscriptions to SSS, 2012/13 – 2016/17

	Colleges	Universities	TOTAL
2012/13	£27,830	£100,866	£128,696
2013/14	£31,742	£103,889	£135,631
2014/15	£33,648	£103,422	£137,070
2015/16	£37,221	£105,264	£142,485
2016/17*	£37,965**	£107,035	£145,000

* Forecast figures for this academic year

** Representing a 20% increase over the life of the current SSS plan.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 1 ***SSS uses a high-level working group to grow signature programmes shaping the core of the strategic plan to further develop student sport into the 2020s.***

Rationale. This working group (arguably including external expertise) should shape the direction of travel of SSS with bold ambitions into the 2020s through its strategic planning process. This review has shown that progress and achievements to date have been positive and influential, but there is significant untapped potential for the organisation and within the sector which will see SSS grow and develop further. Within its remit, the working group should address commercial sponsorship and brand recognition that have significant potential for growth.

- 2 ***The SSS regional network is grown to sustainable maturity with continued investment from national partners.***

Rationale. The fledgling regional network has realised early promise and progress in three of its five regions. This review has found that the impact of the regional network to date has resulted in tangible increased numbers of members, clubs and competitions, and has facilitated effective links and partnerships that contribute to national provision. Driving up the early growth, SSS should pursue and evolve this key central pillar of its work across all areas of its membership and sustain this strategic direction.

- 3 ***SSS grasps and enhances its pivotal role as the national agency for student sport and engages accordingly at the highest level with key agencies, partner organisations and the senior management of Scotland's universities and colleges.***

Rationale. Its advocacy role for sport and other physical activity for students and their communities, together with its key delivery function as a significant partner with Government, governing bodies of sport, local authorities and others, regionally and nationally, place SSS at the centre of student sport and other physical activity in 21st century Scotland.

- 4 ***SSS drives a targeted campaign to help individual colleges and less-developed universities in developing their sport and other physical activity.***

Rationale. This campaign will involve building on existing initiatives to develop mentoring relationships with universities regionally. The campaign could include the introduction of a college accreditation scheme similar to **sportscotland's** School Sport Award that recognises good practice and development. The new national college estate is now made up of regional colleges which clearly lack the history and finances of many of Scotland's universities with sport. SSS fully appreciates the reality of its member colleges and their recent pressures.

- 5 ***SSS and its members and partners advance plans for dedicated sport and physical activity staff based in every college and university.***

Rationale. The focus would be on a flexible, regional thrust to create life-long sporting opportunities for students and peers. SSS would promote the appointment of professional sports development officers to work with clubs and to interact with the local community for sport. This would integrate with national provision for community sports hubs and their clubs and would be a significant game changer creating a network with many routes and options.

Appendix 1: Survey Results

The survey link was sent through a SurveyMonkey email to contacts provided by SSS of sports-related staff in tertiary education; student sports presidents; volunteers; and others in the sector. The survey was also made available through a weblink, advertised at the SSS Conference in June 2016. There was a combination of 'tick box' questions (1-12 below, some with options for further comments) plus open-ended questions (13-17) for respondents to record their views, resulting in a rich seam of information. The result was a total of 64 responses, half from the SurveyMonkey email and half from the weblink.

1 What is your main role in relation to student sport?

Percentage of respondents

Staff member	50
Elected student	23
Volunteer	23
Other	3
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>64</i>

2 SSS Region

Percentage of respondents

South East	33
West	30
Tayside & Fife	28
Grampian, H&I	9
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>57</i>

3 To what extent does your institution work with Scottish Student Sport?

Percentage of respondents

Not at all	2
A small amount	14
A fair amount	39
A lot	45
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>64</i>

4 To what extent has SSS supported an increase in the quantity and quality of provision for sport and other physical activity?

Quantity Quality

Percentage of respondents

Not at all	4	2
A small amount	17	24
A fair amount	54	50
A lot	26	24
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>54</i>

5 How useful have the SSS regional staff and groups been in adding value to your work with student sport?

	Percentage of respondents
Not at all useful	8
A small extent	24
A fair extent	29
Very useful	39
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>51</i>

6a What more could SSS do to promote participation in grassroots sport and other physical activity?

	Percentage of respondents
Signpost or deliver training courses	75
Identify and share good practice	54
Promote grassroots events and programmes	52
Support club development	46
Support strategic planning	46
Support monitoring and evaluation	44
Embed Play Sport Promoter posts in all colleges and universities	42
Provide advice on obtaining sponsorship	42
Help recruit more volunteers	37
Support and encourage links with local clubs	35
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>(Percentages total more than 100% because of multiple responses)</i>	

Q6b If you have any other comments on those you have identified, please expand:

Be open to change.

Continue to promote and develop opportunities for disabled students across Scotland

Leadership and advocacy – creating strong partnerships to progress and develop across the sporting pathway.

A lot of this work is best carried out at a local level as individual institutions will understand the sporting network in their area. However, SSS have a role to play in providing opportunities to professionalise the management of university and college sports clubs.

Availability of documentation on different areas that sports could find useful. Not specially sport-specific documents but guides on how individual sports could seek out new opportunities.

By improving the standard and delivery of current SSS events. This will have the greatest impact on increasing participation numbers.

Incentivise the Play Sport Promoter role. Free relevant and on-going training opportunities throughout the role.

I've answered this very much from an institution perspective on the basis that SSS could very realistically do all of these, and the impact of each would be felt significantly in at least one of its member institutions. Largely, the selection for us would be greater information and training in order to improve our work in this area but I can imagine other, less well-staffed institutions requiring greater support in terms of recruitment, partnership working, club development and planning. In short, SSS can and do have a significant impact

on all of the above but the blessing of the regional team is that this can be delivered much more on a case-specific basis.

Make it more clear what services/support SSS offer to clubs.

Much of the above activity must come from institutions themselves – from staff dedicated to the development and provision of sport and physical activity. SSS cannot be 'all things to all people' and care must be taken that SSS is not expected to have responsibility for local development within institutions.

Shortage of coaches and referees are huge problems in student basketball (indeed, in the sport as a whole) and a sustained campaign to improve this is needed.

Take a lead role, where required, in advising universities on how best to develop their governance and structure to align with a future vision for a more physically active student population in Scotland.

There could be more support of H&F initiatives that go on in departments. However, conference this year showed a swing towards this which is promising.

Work closely with more national governing bodies to enable their own development plans to incorporate SSS sport and higher education into them. Government provision of sport (in Edinburgh at least) looks for higher education students to contribute to "Sport Hubs" which could be used (if not already in some sports).

7a What more could SSS do to facilitate involvement in competitive sport?

	Percentage of respondents
Support coaching, coach education and CPD for coaches	69
Help increase the number of officials	62
Develop stronger links to governing bodies of sport	60
Help increase the quality of officials	56
Signpost or deliver training courses	52
Promote and publicise opportunities	50
Expand the regional and national competition structure	50
Identify and share good practice	46
Support and encourage links with local clubs	37
Support club development	33
Support strategic planning	33
Provide advice on obtaining sponsorship	31
Help recruit more volunteers	27
Help increase the number of clubs	25
Support monitoring and evaluation	21
Help increase the number of sports involved	17
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>52</i>

(Percentages total more than 100% because of multiple responses)

Q7b If you have any other comments on those you have identified, please expand:

Competitive sport needs to be more of a focus for SSS. I personally feel this has dropped off the radar a little over the last few years.

Funding is an issue for all of the above, and clubs and SSS do not have sufficient to properly carry out all.

Give strategic focus to selected headline sports events to help better market and promote the best that student sport has to offer.

It depends on whether the institutions are receptive to feedback. However, to progress collectively certain institutions need to improve their organisation. SSS should provide the systems to allow competition to take place. They should not be responsible for the full sports development spectrum, ie recruitment, training, etc.

I would argue strongly that each of the above is applicable to some institutions within SSS. As such, I've picked out those which continue to be of best use to us.

Some sports still feel out of the full circle of support from SSS if there are not sufficient links with the governing body of that sport. Whilst SSS are active in trying to continue building links with NGBs (whilst it is appreciated that some are not engaging) further work is required.

SSS do a very valuable job in forging links with NGBs. However, there is a need for some NGBs to get switched-on to the value of student sport and to incorporate the sector in their strategic planning.

There are a now a small number of examples where SGBs and tertiary education are delivering success (eg, swimming). SSS's involvement in lobbying **sportscotland**, the Scottish Funding Council and Government is critical in further successes being delivered. The reality is that we can do so much more but require genuine recognition from **sportscotland** of the critical role we play both individually and collectively. Successive national strategies for sport continue to omit tertiary education in any meaningful way and Scottish sport will continue to be compromised as long as this approach continues.

8a What more could SSS do to support opportunities for students with disabilities and other protected characteristics?

	Percentage of respondents
Promote Disability Inclusion Training courses for coaches and officials	79
Promote inclusive publicity for all sports organisations	54
Encourage all clubs to be actively welcoming to all students	52
Help to develop disability-only clubs where appropriate – eg, wheelchair sports	50
Support and encourage links with local clubs	48
Ensure all clubs have specific policies on inclusion	44
Support monitoring and evaluation	31
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>(Percentages total more than 100% because of multiple responses)</i>	

Q8b If you have any other comments on those you have identified, please expand:

Great presentation by LEAP Sports at the SSS conference, and SSS should be working heavily with the likes of this organisation to be developing our sector's experience and filter this down to institutions.

All of the above options are laudable and positive. The question is whether SSS should be actively directing resources to these actions or whether these should be being addressed by institutions. Again, there is a danger that SSS staff/resources are spread too thinly. Some of the actions above – such as supporting and encouraging links with local clubs – may be undertaken by the RDOs with individual colleges, but this should be prioritised work in relation to their specific roles in supporting and developing college sporting activity.

SSS should take the lead in raising the profile of disability sport and the need for clubs to be inclusive, as these are considerations which are fairly new to student sports clubs.

The reality is the number of those wishing to disclose their disability is very small at our institution. Better awareness of being inclusive would be useful and, for those with disabilities with more specific requirements, signposting towards specialist clubs that already exist is a supportive and efficient approach.

Wheelchair basketball needs more participants in order to be viable at most SSS member bodies, and links to clubs who can offer opportunities should be developed.

9a How could SSS further assist in supporting the governance structures and good practice in student sport?

	Percentage of respondents
Develop examples of good practice for clubs and sports associations	75
Encourage institutions to adopt and share these examples	67
Provide or facilitate training courses for sports leaders	65
Promote case studies of good practice	50
<i>No. of respondents</i>	52

(Percentages total more than 100% because of multiple responses)

9b If you have any other comments on those you have ticked, please expand:

Create stronger relationships with external partners.

Involvement with National Governing Bodies to encourage student representation in NGBs

Toolkit of templates for key documents and role descriptions?

Provide best practice documents on a variety of topics to assist with the running of sports unions.

SSS are already making a positive impact in this area – more of the same please!

SSS needs to fulfil a role in governance and good practice in sport – which it currently does. The promotion and championing of good practice, and the development and implementation of good governance across student sport and physical activity provision is an important part of the SSS activity.

There are many sport-specific opportunities organised through BUCS which can only be accessed by English institutions, and it would be good if similar schemes could be run here.

10a How effective are links between the student network and governing bodies of sport at local, regional and national level?

	Local	Regional	National
	Percentage of respondents		
Not at all effective	18	6	8
A small extent	37	45	35
A fair extent	39	37	45
Very effective	6	12	12
<i>No. of respondents</i>	51	51	51

10b Please expand on your response with any other comments:

Depending on the governing body it can be very difficult to gain support and advice. However, some governing bodies are very easy to work with.

I am not greatly aware of any links between the student network and the governing body of football at our institution as part of SSS's work.

I think there are pockets of strong working relationships with NGBs which vary from city-to-city or sport-to-sport. For some sports, student sport is a bit of an afterthought where the priority is to count memberships rather than develop the sport.

It is extremely varied on a case-by-case basis. The SSS network is fairly good, however I do not think that they are prioritizing appropriately. The NGBs are general fairly poor and inconsistent.

Largely depends on who is involved. Regional manager has left NGB and person covering is less communicative, so not sure how links will progress.

Limited view on this due to being a volunteer not attached to an institution (Sports Chair).

Locally we know who is involved, nationally we have less of an idea.

Only a few NGBs actively seek out student clubs at a local level to provide club development support and establish general links. Many other NGBs remain outside the student sport network. Regional links have vastly improved due to SSS regional staff and their base at partnership offices. Student sport will be part of many NGBs' wider sport strategy.

Response to this question very much depends on the sports and regions involved. There are some very strong partnerships/links with SGBs/SSS, while at the same time some SGBs still seem 'closed' to the opportunities available through working more closely with the student sector. Similarly, local and regional links are variable. This is a two-way process and I believe that national and regional sports bodies should be required to have student sport links as a key part of their strategic activity.

SDS branches link to student networks in some areas of the country, with good links particularly at Regional Manager level.

Since regional members of staff were embedded within regional partnership structures the difference has been significant. We are still reliant on individual relationships but these have become stronger and stronger through the work of the regional team.

The challenge at a local level is the perception among local clubs that student sport is not organised, only happens a few months of the year, and is not worth engaging with. Small strides are being made with some sports, but it can be frustrating.

The governing body of my sport has not once in the 3+ years I have been involved with SSS worked with me in any way.

The Lawn Tennis Association/ Tennis Foundation are very supportive of university and college tennis both financially and resource-wise. I believe we need to be more actively engaged with Tennis Scotland. They would support us, but I don't think we ask for their support enough or proactively engage with them enough.

There is a small amount of support at the moment but hopefully current communications in aquatics at least will help to improve these ties.

There is certainly more work to be done in this area, and SSS has made significant progress in recent years. There is, however, a need for SGBs/NGBs to understand the contribution that the student network can make to their sport – this is a two-way conversation!

This answer varies considerably depending on each sport. On a local level many governing bodies are looking at joint delivery with student clubs, as they recognise them as a useful resource. On a regional level governing bodies recognise the importance of regional involvement to underpin numbers and increase activity. At a national level several governing bodies now have strong links and partnerships with the student network and more are recognising the benefits of this – whether it be to increase numbers at grassroots level, or to have a performance pathway through the university.

Too many NGBs to give an accurate answer to this question, as some links are strong in different ways.

11a How effective is SSS at representing the student sport sector in terms of advocacy and influencing?

	Percentage of respondents
Not at all effective	4
A small extent	16
A fair extent	45
Very effective	35
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>51</i>

11b Please expand on your response with any other comments:

Good examples such as regional DO post investment from SFC and SSS are offset by the ongoing genuine recognition by **sportscotland** of the critical role of SSS as a key player in the national delivery of sport.

I have never seen any evidence that they represent the best interests of my minority sport.

It is definitely moving in the right direction compared to a few years back. Good work is being done to expand student sport.

Key role at national level with bodies such as **sportscotland** and BUCS.

SSS is now recognised as significant 'player' in the Scottish sporting landscape, and the quality and extent of our contribution is now accepted – we are a major NGB within – respected and valued.

Stew is the figurehead of SSS, and his advocacy and influencing skills are second to none. Below this I would question how big the impact is.

The COO has an excellent manner and deals well at a senior level. I get the feeling that we could use our resources better in terms of how much time we do with SALSC, etc.

The profile of student sport has never been higher. This is due to SSS leading the development of the sector, and through excellent championing of the work of all institutions.

The sea change that has occurred in the profile, quality, quantity and impact of student sport since SSS was established has been amazing. They have truly been game-changers in revolutionising the sector. All of their efforts and their good example makes university sport and exercise a great place to work.

The work and activity of the COO and RDOs in representing student sport is a key delivery of SSS and has had a significant impact on the profile, funding and partnerships that currently exist in the sector.

The work that SSS has done with SGBs and with the Scottish Sports Alliance has been fantastic and very impactful, the sense is absolutely that we are a more prominent feature on the landscape than ever before.

This is one of the major strengths of SSS.

12 How effective would you say SSS is, on a scale of 1-10 (10 being most effective)?

Percentage of respondents

1-5	4
6	14
7	39
8	27
9-10	16
<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>51</i>

Open-ended Questions

Unlike questions 1-12 above that provided options to be ticked (although some have the option to follow up in their own words), the following questions 13-17 are summary analyses of the open-ended questions where the respondents recorded their views in their own words. These summary analyses are followed by the verbatim responses in full.

13 Please give examples of projects or partnerships that have resulted, or benefited, from working with SSS (Summary description of responses)

Summary Description of Types of Examples Percentage of (49) respondents to this question

1 Strong Organisation⁶	
High quality/ helpful/ proactive staff	4
Supportive organisation	2
2 Member Services⁷	
Good source of information/ Have benefited from consultation	18
Have benefited from membership of committees/board/forums	14
Networking opportunities	10
Have benefited from collaboration with SSS	6
Have benefited from administrative support	2
Sharing best practice	2
3 Competitions⁸	
Able to host/ participate in more (SSS) competitions	43
Inter-university fixtures	2
4 Advocacy⁹	
Promotion of specific event(s)	4
Recognition of the impact of (student) sport	2
5 Regional Approach¹⁰	
Local or regional opportunities or events created	29
Relationship with Regional Sport Coordinator	4
6 Club Development¹¹	
Have received support with strategic planning	4
New or enhanced programme(s) introduced or developed	2
7 Transitions¹²	
Able to compete or participate at a more professional level	2
8 Partnerships¹³	
Partnership with national governing or other sporting body	14
Community partnership(s)	4
Partnership(s) with other club(s)	2
Partnership with sportscotland	2
9 Participation¹⁴	
Increased participation	8
Increased opportunities for participation	6
10 People¹⁵	
Volunteering/ Play Sport Promoters volunteer programme	4
Reffin' Brilliant / Coachin' Brilliant	4
Students have learned new skills	2
Professional development	2

Percentages sum to more than 100% because most respondents provided more than one example.

The examples are given in full in Appendix 2, Case Study 6, below.

⁶ This means a leading national agency which is well run, well governed, makes sensible use of resources, is well administered, operates efficiently and effectively, recruits and develops strong staff.

⁷ The (potential) member institutions are all the Scottish colleges and universities, so is it seen as providing for them. May include sharing best practice, networking, providing a consultative service.

⁸ Both SSS and the overall British body, BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport), run leagues and competitions at local and national level.

⁹ SSS is out there trying to influence organisations and get messages across. This can be captured by the thought of making sport more integral to education, and education more integral to sport.

¹⁰ SSS is divided into five regions with (so far) three regional coordinators covering them. Any references to their work at regional level.

¹¹ Includes most references to clubs, both within colleges/universities and in the community. May also include work aimed at building stronger clubs, such as coaching/ coach education.

¹² These can happen in different ways: from school to sports participation when going to college/university; moving into community club participation while still in college/university; moving onto community clubs after leaving college/university; and moving up the performance ladder from local to regional to national competition.

¹³ Formal and informal links with specific colleges/universities and with governing bodies of sport, and any other agencies such as local authorities. Additionally, capturing internal partnerships such as those between colleges and universities themselves, between students and staff, between the service and the curricular/academic or between various departments of institutions.

¹⁴ Physical activity and recreational sport as opposed to taking part in competition structures.

¹⁵ Opportunities for students, staff and volunteers to access opportunities and build skills and experiences.

14a In what ways has the work of SSS directly enhanced sport and other physical activity? (Summary description of responses)

Summary Description of Types of Ways	Percentage of (43) respondents to this question
1 Strong Organisation¹⁶	
Supportive organisation	2
2 Member Services¹⁷	
Networking opportunities	5
Sharing best practice	5
Good source of information/guidance	2
Have benefited from membership of committees/board/forums	2
3 Competitions¹⁸	
Able to host/ participate in more (SSS) competitions	23
Opportunities to participate in BUCS events/leagues	7
4 Advocacy¹⁹	
Raised profile of student sport	5
Advocacy among stakeholders (sportscotland , Scottish Government, etc)	2
5 Regional Approach²⁰	
Local or regional opportunities or events created	2
Appointment of Regional Sport Coordinators	2
6 Club Development (No responses in this theme)	
7 Transitions (No responses in this theme)	
8 Partnerships²¹	
Partnership with national governing or other sporting body	2
Regional partnerships	2
Partnership with BUCS	2
9 Participation²²	
Increased participation	5
Increased opportunities for participation in a range of sports	5
Increased opportunities for participation	2
10 People²³	
Volunteering	2
Reffin' Brilliant / Coachin' Brilliant	2

Percentages sum to less than 100% because 24% of responses fell into an 'Other' category. The illustrations are given in full on the next pages.

¹⁶ This means a leading national agency which is well run, well governed, makes sensible use of resources, is well administered, operates efficiently and effectively, recruits and develops strong staff.

¹⁷ The (potential) member institutions are all the Scottish colleges and universities, so is it seen as providing for them. May include sharing best practice, networking, providing a consultative service.

¹⁸ Both SSS and the overall British body, BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport), run leagues and competitions at local and national level.

¹⁹ SSS is out there trying to influence organisations and get messages across. This can be captured by the thought of making sport more integral to education, and education more integral to sport.

²⁰ SSS is divided into five regions with (so far) three regional coordinators covering them. Any references to their work at regional level.

²¹ Formal and informal links with specific colleges/universities and with governing bodies of sport, and any other agencies such as local authorities. Additionally, capturing internal partnerships such as those between colleges and universities themselves, between students and staff, between the service and the curricular/academic or between various departments of institutions.

²² Physical activity and recreational sport as opposed to taking part in competition structures.

²³ Opportunities for students, staff and volunteers to access opportunities and build skills and experiences.

14b In what ways has the work of SSS directly enhanced sport and other physical activity? (Responses in full)

A mixture of one-off competition days as well as a regional league structure across a range of sports which allows participation for those interested in one or several sports. This also helps in planning internal activity around the SSS programme to promote specific sport(s) within the institution.

A whole host of opportunities across the sector. Opportunity to engage and participate in BUCS competition. A platform for competition. The work done in 2015/16 has been particularly beneficial. Partnership working with BUCS has been of particular value to our students.

As part of our 10-point action plan we have working partnerships between our Regional Managers, developed case studies within student sector, and have worked together to influence the curriculum for trainee teachers to be inclusive of disability.

Basketball representative games would not have happened without SSS although prior to SSS being set up there were Scottish universities representative games.

Coordinates and delivers a wide programme of SSS national championships and events. Manages and administers the BUCS competition programme to ensure that it fits the needs of Scottish institutions (eg, re fixture dates; allocation, etc). Works with SGBs in building partnerships and ensuring the best provision for students (eg, membership fees, rebates, etc). Development and delivery of Reffin' Brilliant and Coachin' Brilliant initiatives with SGBs, supporting the development of student officials. Lobbying for and raising the profile of sport and physical activity in the tertiary education field – eg, key partner in producing *A manifesto for Scottish sport* as part of the Scottish Sports Alliance. Producing sector standards and guidance and good practice for volunteering (Student Volunteering Award). Supporting provision for sport within the college sector through the RDO appointments. Bringing together individuals/institutions through its committee structure and other activity (annual seminar/conference) to debate/discuss provision for sport and physical activity, and develop policy and actions in this field. Advocates for sport and physical activity with key partners and stakeholders – **sportscotland**; Scottish Government, etc.

Created opportunities for recreational sides to compete.

Created opportunities for students to participate in the core sports.

Difficult to say at the moment as our engagement with SSS has been low in the past, but greater promotion by Edinburgh Napier Students' Association staff has led to an increased uptake in SSS development competitions.

Direct support for developing sport in the college sector. Strong competitive structures in a wide range of activities. Enhanced representative opportunities that benefit greatly the student experience.

Enabled us to get university venues at no cost.

Greater participation of students in competitive sport. In BUCS strong relationship between Scottish institutions encouraged by SSS has meant more fixtures can be played.

Has helped some sports develop but have left others to their own devices.

Higher profile. Development of college sector. Provision of more competitive opportunities. Increased awareness of physical activity benefits. Networking opportunities.

Inclusion of colleges – especially the numerous extra football teams playing in BUCS leagues now.

Increased opportunity and exposure of offers.

Increased participation at university in aquatic disciplines through the league, championships, and assisting the clubs.

Integrated and extensive competition programme. Creation of strong regional partnerships across tertiary education. Leadership and best practice. Advocacy. Increased opportunities for participation and competition.

Local leagues. Addition of new sports.

Made it possible to get venue bookings for competitions. Provided support with events.

Mostly sport through delivering the competition programme to the students. Pushing the need for having a sport strategy.

Offered opportunities for competitive sport.

Opportunity to compete, offering a range of sports.

Organised events. Training for coaches.

Promotion of campaigns, sharing of best practice, sector representation with **sportscotland**.

Promotion.

Providing a banner under which the SSR GPs operate. Without SSS's involvement I imagine the GPs would be attended by fewer students.

Providing competition opportunities.

Providing quality events and leagues across Scotland.

Provision of sports not included in BUCS. Development of competition for teams in lower leagues.

Provision of the competition framework which is so key to the development of our teams. Initiating varsity events, which give a wide group of students a great opportunity.

Raised the profile of sport within our institution. Helped us build a strong foundation to keep momentum going for the coming year.

Running annual Scottish Conference Cup for all Scottish institutions. This creates a focal point for the clubs, and students want to be a part of it. Encouraging each sport to run their own groups to boost participation. This has brought universities together and developed the social aspect within the sporting context.

SSS has been responsible for developing the inter-university and colleges sport programme, ensuring that more students have more opportunities to take part in competition. This has been achieved by providing competition at different levels and staging events at all points of the student year. SSS have been tireless in their commitment to be the voice of student sport in Scotland. They have been, and continue to be, strong and powerful advocates for the value of student sport, championing our cause with key groups such as Scottish Government, UK Government, **sportscotland**, NGBs, BUCS, UK Active, universities and colleges, NUS Scotland, and individual institutions. Through the training and development opportunities, good practice has been able to be shared across the sector elevating the quality of the delivery of sport and physical activity opportunities.

SSS has created a regional competition structure that has enhanced the experience for students who may not compete at BUCS level, but seek opportunities to take part and show excellence at their standard. In addition, the Sport Chair network have added value to individual sports who have led dedicated development groups to further progress their sport in universities and colleges across Scotland.

SSS has increased both the quality and quantity of competitive sport, but less work has gone into physical activity opportunities. Active Age and Dance festival was mainly due to the success of department staff. Good sharing of best practice documents, provided policy for all universities.

SSS have enabled students who may not play at university level in their sport to still have competitive opportunities. Also they have provided options for people who just want to play a sport recreationally, and have shown that sport is for everyone.

SSS help set up new sports for institutions creating a wider choice for students. SSS provide students with the tools to run competitions and events.

SSS provides a national profile for student sport which in turn has made governing bodies appreciate student sport far more. SSS champions participation in sport which in turn supports staff in institutions to get 'buy-in' from senior members of staff. SSS have ensured student competition is as professionally run

as possible by providing a range of excellent competitions and events from beginner upwards, thereby enhancing the student experience.

Supporting institutions with fewer resources and less structure to develop sporting activity. Fundamentally, raising the level of HE/FE sport and physical activity across the board. Representative programmes have allowed athletes to compete at a higher level, and the regional activity (targeted at below BUCS level) has given players below BUCS standard the opportunity to compete.

The introduction of a regional tier of competition has provided a launch pad for a number of teams and individuals to participate in new activity that might otherwise not have occurred. Clearly the work that they do to administer a variety of league and cup competitions up to and including representative sport is at the heart of our sporting offer as a university, and the quality of that is exceptional, largely through SSS input. Finally, as an umbrella organisation for the network, SSS provides a number of opportunities for evaluation of our own performance (Healthy Body Healthy Mind, VCA for example) while also highlighting good practice that occurs elsewhere and promoting this at conference and seminar events.

The provision of competitive club sport opportunities has improved significantly since pre-SSS.

The SSS brand has enabled us to run more prestigious events. We have been able to get support from the national governing body for these events. SSS have also been helpful in facilitating open training sessions between universities, although these talks are still ongoing.

This question is a dissertation project, and I couldn't start to answer such an in-depth question without research to back up my thoughts. I believe SSS does enhance sport, in terms of a few outstanding athletes; it can develop sports by being an example. It offers a stepping stone after university to stay active. People development is an unmeasurable outcome, but some of the volunteers within SSS have made huge impacts on Scotland and, in fact, the rest of the world.

Q15a What would not have happened without SSS?

(Summary description of responses)

Summary Description of What Wouldn't Have Happened

Percentage of (40) respondents to this question

1 Strong Organisation *(No responses in this theme)*

2 Member Services²⁴

Funding	10
SSS support services invaluable	8
Networking opportunities	5
Sharing best practice	5

3 Competitions²⁵

(Well-structured) competitive sport opportunities	40
Inter-university/college competitions	13

4 Advocacy²⁶

Profile of student sport would be lower	10
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5 Regional Approach²⁷

Fewer regional opportunities/events	8
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6 Club Development *(No responses in this theme)*

7 Transitions *(No responses in this theme)*

8 Partnerships *(No responses in this theme)*

9 Participation²⁸

Fewer opportunities for participation	13
Students would participate less, or not at all	5

10 People²⁹

Training opportunities (for volunteers)	5
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Other

Developments would have taken place anyway	10
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Percentages sum to more than 100% because a number of respondents provided more than one illustration.

The illustrations are given in full on the next pages.

²⁴ The (potential) member institutions are all the Scottish colleges and universities, so is it seen as providing for them. May include sharing best practice, networking, providing a consultative service.

²⁵ Both SSS and the overall British body, BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport), run leagues and competitions at local and national level.

²⁶ SSS is out there trying to influence organisations and get messages across. This can be captured by the thought of making sport more integral to education, and education more integral to sport.

²⁷ SSS is divided into five regions with (so far) three regional coordinators covering them. Any references to their work at regional level.

²⁸ Physical activity and recreational sport as opposed to taking part in competition structures.

²⁹ Opportunities for students, staff and volunteers to access opportunities and build skills and experiences.

Q15b What would not have happened without SSS?

(Responses in full)

A lot of my students would not have been involved in sport. None of my volunteers would have taken the courses available and hence would not be fully trained officials/ coaches.

College activity progression. Centralisation of Conference Cup Finals.

Competition and country-wide participation.

Competitive sport against other colleges. Opportunities to play regional sport.

Development of sport within institutions without relevant support structures would stagnate and there would be a lack of sustainability as each elected student comes and goes. Fewer opportunities to partake in organised sport at a level relevant to you.

Establishment of Varsity events.

Formalised regional activities.

Funding from BUCS would not have been committed, additional programmes/campaigns would not be being considered.

In terms of physical activity most would happen without SSS. Locally, the Active Age was purely organised by Glasgow, Caledonian and Strathclyde. The dance festival was not promoted well by SSS and they didn't fulfil their admin roles.

Inefficient and problematic BUCS leagues. Less positive relationships between staff across the network of professional staff and students.

Less structured framework for competition and probably fewer opportunities for students.

Little if any developments within the college sector. Students drifting to external clubs and societies to gain sporting experience. Strong possibility of increased numbers of students disengaging from playing sport.

Local events with colleges, national leagues and representative sport. The profile of student sport would not be as high without SSS, and as such investment in the sector would be far less.

Many students would not have been able to take part in competitive sport. Student experience would be overall weaker for member institutions without support of SSS.

More work for member institutions.

Much of the above would certainly not be of the same quality without SSS and arguably some would not happen at all, particularly award schemes and the knowledge transfer across the network. Things like Reffin' Brilliant and Coachin' Brilliant feel hugely SSS-driven although obviously supported by **sportscotland** and SGBs.

Networking opportunities and support across the Scottish HE Sport Network.

No structure to competition.

Other than medal supply sport would have developed anyway.

Profile. College Sector. Networking.

Recognised sport opportunities.

Regional competitions. BUCS membership. Development meetings.

Regional promotion of event.

I believe the teams that have entered this year's development competitions, basketball M & W, would continue on as before. However, having a second competition provides them with the opportunity to develop and enhance their club, as well as providing club members with more opportunity to experience competition.

Scottish Student Archery Leagues. Student Indoor Championships. Student Outdoor Championships.

SSS Fencing events could not happen without the hire costs being covered by the agreement with SSS.

Structured competition against other colleges and universities.

Students probably would not have the tools and expertise to run events to such a high standard.

The Aquatic Championships, the league.

The competitive leagues and championships may not have occurred.

The quality and 'fit' of the extensive BUCS competition programme would not have been as effective for Scottish institutions. The profile of student sport would not be as high or as well considered. The college sector would not have access to the range of competition and participation opportunities in sport and physical activity (eg, SSS championships/ events/ BUCS competition, etc). **sportscotland** and SGBs would not be as engaged or informed about the range, extent and quality of work and provision taking place within the student sector.

The Scottish Conference Cup.

The standard and quality of inter-university sport in Scotland would not have developed, resulting in our institutions being controlled by BUCS at a distance. The good work in delivering physical activity opportunities would have continued; however, it would have been in isolation. As a result the full impact of the University and College offer would have gone unnoticed.

The whole SSR season.

There is no question that without SSS the integrated development of sport and physical activity for students would not have taken place. SSS provides a robust and integrated structure which enables member institutions to progress their work.

There would be more suspended or cancelled fixtures, not as many opportunities for students to compete, and slower development due to lack of best practice sharing.

Two Irish tours.

We would have struggled to host an annual tournament without the financial support of SSS. The competition has 'broken even' in the past two years which has been beneficial.

We would not have increased the number of sports we offer, nor the number of competition opportunities.

We would not have made the inroads to embed inclusion into student sport and the tertiary education sector that we have achieved to date.

Q16a How could SSS support less-developed institutions in the future, given their different levels of maturity and infrastructure? (Summary description of responses)

Summary Description of Types of Examples Percentage of (42) respondents to this question

1 Strong Organisation (*No responses in this theme*)

2 Member Services³⁰

Produce guidance/ best practice guides/ case studies 43

Deliver staff training/ coaching/ mentoring 12

Institutions vary/ require bespoke support 10

Provide support at the club set-up stage 10

Source funding/investment 10

Set up and maintain lines of communication with less-developed institutions 5

3 Competitions (*No responses in this theme*)

4 Advocacy (*No responses in this theme*)

5 Regional Approach³¹

Regional approach/ Regional Sport Coordinator is important/effective 17

6 Club Development³²

Carry out needs analysis/ operational review 5

7 Transitions (*No responses in this theme*)

8 Partnerships³³

Help develop partnerships with more established institutions/clubs 24

Provide networking opportunities/ useful contacts 7

9 Participation (*No responses in this theme*)

10 People³⁴

Create/develop/promote volunteering opportunities 12

Percentages sum to more than 100% because many respondents provided more than one example.

The illustrations are given in full on the next pages.

³⁰ The (potential) member institutions are all the Scottish colleges and universities, so is it seen as providing for them. May include sharing best practice, networking, providing a consultative service.

³¹ SSS is divided into five regions with (so far) three regional coordinators covering them. Any references to their work at regional level.

³² Includes most references to clubs, both within colleges/universities and in the community. May also include work aimed at building stronger clubs, such as coaching/ coach education.

³³ Formal and informal links with specific colleges/universities and with governing bodies of sport, and any other agencies such as local authorities. Additionally, capturing internal partnerships such as those between colleges and universities themselves, between students and staff, between the service and the curricular/academic or between various departments of institutions.

³⁴ Opportunities for students, staff and volunteers to access opportunities and build skills and experiences.

Q16b How could SSS support less-developed institutions in the future, given their different levels of maturity and infrastructure? (Responses in full)

A challenging question, as institutions vary so much in their infrastructure/ maturity. The role of the RDOs is key in making connections and providing support to key staff in such institutions. Providing templates/ examples of good practice (eg, club development) and signposting students towards suitable activities/ opportunities. It is also beneficial for SSS to work in advocacy with such institutions to demonstrate the opportunities and highlight the landscape of sport and physical activity within the sector.

This is where the regional team are at their most effective by supporting individual institutions in a bespoke manner.

Agree to provide a full feedback report following a review of their operation. Provide strong good practice guides.

Assist with sports club set-up. Produce a pro-forma or step-by-step guide. Often there are students keen to start these but they lack the information needed to progress with this. College involvement is also a big concern. Currently the universities offer closed training sessions. We have been petitioning for some years to allow college students access to training. The colleges often do not have enough players to be able to support their own club.

Best practice sharing has to be one of the best resources – it demonstrates how it can be done and also that it can be done.

Buddy systems between institutions and clubs within this and linked to RDMs. Ideally where the buddy has come from a similar position and background and increased level of maturity over time.

Clear structure defining the pathways needed to get into competitive sport.

Contacts for areas of expertise in departments would be useful to initiate collaboration. Go through a needs analysis review to understand what SSS would recommend the institution puts in place to lay foundations of a successful structure to deliver the basic needs of student sport.

Continue to keep them involved in all events and activities. Possibly have an event for 'smaller' colleges?

Conversations with college/university exec. Devote time and resources. Understand that sport isn't a priority for all institutions, but well-being and student experience is.

Create volunteer positions within partner institutions and SSS. Provide support and monthly meetings to understand progress.

Difficult question. The main obstacle to developing sport in Edinburgh is access to good quality facilities both for training and matches. The cost to hire facilities is rising and the space available is decreasing, making it difficult to grow team sport.

Encourage them with a variety of different means.

Even though it's time-consuming I feel that there is a role for SSS to target individual institutions on a need-by-need basis. For example, if an institution does not have the infrastructure or funding in place to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities, SSS should champion the cause to that institution's governance and policy-makers. For those institutions who are a little further on in their sporting journey, SSS should share good practice and perhaps foster links with those institutions who have already moved forward in their sport and physical activity offer.

Facilitate visits to other institutions. Case studies.

Good practice resource guides. Offer of office support.

Having a good structure in place for sport and inclusion.

Having a presence from the beginning of term. Freshers' Week would be an ideal opportunity to engage with the student body.

Help to set up a stable line of communication so they don't miss out.

Leadership and support. Regional infrastructure. Models of best practice. Strategic advocacy. Investment.

Link them to more developed institutions in their area. For example, if a smaller institution had too few students to make a certain sport work for them, these students could access other programmes at a local institution. Provide coaching to get things up and running at the less developed institutions. Encourage all institutions to send students along to the 'participation events' as they try to do in the SSS Tennis Group.

Making them aware of opportunities and ensuring that they are not missed off any mailing lists. Perhaps organising college-only events, to ensure they are not dominated by larger organisations.

Offer free 'limited time' membership of the organisation to encourage these institutions to engage.

Operate placements for a specific project or period of time. This could be a regional SSS staff member or a graduating sabbatical from another institution, taking on a paid or voluntary internship.

Possibly encourage more students to get involved in being a Play Sport Promoter because the work that SSS does with its PSPs to help develop their institutions is fantastic!

Provide basic development support. However, the ball is in the institutions' court, re: how they choose to resource staff/student sport. Ultimately this will dictate how much focus an institution places on developing sports opportunities for their students. SSS can only help as far as institutions allow them to.

Provide examples and case studies of good practice, and help to recruit volunteers.

Provide funding and training.

Providing documentation on how other similar, perhaps more developed clubs have reached their stage in development. Provide contact details for other members in the sport who could assist with the development of newer institutions.

Recruit local volunteers to help institutions set up clubs. Get bigger institutions to provide taster sessions to smaller institutions.

Regional team seem to have been very effective for less-developed institutions, providing support and direction. I think there also need to be various models of best practice rather than just trying to implement university structures in colleges.

Set up mentoring scheme/ best practice visits?

Share good practice and help set up infrastructure where possible.

Share good practice within institutions and promote the inclusion of events.

Sharing good practice and supporting institutions to convince those at a strategic level that financial support is crucial for the sustainability of SSS activity in some colleges.

Sharing of best practice and training for staff.

SSS has great knowledge and experience that could support the learning of less developed institutions. Great case studies and examples of good practice from across Scotland, as well as links to external partners who could also support development.

Support from regional sport coordinators is hugely important, and there should be staff and student representation from each institution at SSS meetings and events to enhance communication and development.

The regional support is key. This support gives less-developed organisations the opportunity to interact with a sport professional, receive examples of best practice, share their ideas and improve the sustainability of activity and ideas. These benefits would not occur if there was no regional support and the aims/ambitions would change year-on-year depending on the preferences and manifesto of the elected students. The opportunity to interact with other institutions through the elected student forum, at which best practice is shared, can only be a benefit, and SSS's input during these meetings and in organisation is key.

This is a never-ending process and needs to be undertaken continuously. However, the returns are slow and gradual. There is a tendency, however, to give too much emphasis to this as opposed to developing the flagship activities of the organisation.

Training programmes.

Q17a What would you see as being the most valuable contribution of SSS in terms of enhancing your work? (Summary description of responses)

Summary Description of Types of Examples Percentage of (42) respondents to this question

1 Strong Organisation³⁵	
High quality/ helpful staff	10
Strong knowledge of sector	2
Supportive organisation	2
2 Member Services³⁶	
General guidance and support	24
Sharing best practice/ knowledge	14
Consultative service	12
Sourcing funding	7
Delivering staff/volunteer training/CPD	5
Access to (free) venues	2
Helping with running events	2
3 Competitions³⁷	
Delivering/supporting competitive programmes/events	10
4 Advocacy³⁸	
Advocacy	12
Publicity/ Promotion of events/opportunities	5
Advocacy among governing bodies of sport	2
5 Regional Approach³⁹	
Regional approach is important/ Work of Regional Sport Coordinator is important	10
6 Club Development (No responses in this theme)	
7 Transitions (No responses in this theme)	
8 Partnerships⁴⁰	
Provide networking/ idea-sharing/ collaboration opportunities/mechanisms	12
Provide useful contacts	2
Signposting to organisations/services	2
9 Participation (No responses in this theme)	
10 People (No responses in this theme)	

Percentages sum to more than 100% because most respondents provided more than one example. The illustrations are given in full on the next pages.

³⁵ This means a leading national agency which is well run, well governed, makes sensible use of resources, is well administered, operates efficiently and effectively, recruits and develops strong staff.

³⁶ The (potential) member institutions are all the Scottish colleges and universities, so it is seen as providing for them. May include sharing best practice, networking, providing a consultative service.

³⁷ Both SSS and the overall British body, BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport), run leagues and competitions at local and national level.

³⁸ SSS is out there trying to influence organisations and get messages across. This can be captured by the thought of making sport more integral to education, and education more integral to sport.

³⁹ SSS is divided into five regions with (so far) three regional coordinators covering them. Any references to their work at regional level.

⁴⁰ Formal and informal links with specific colleges/universities and with governing bodies of sport, and any other agencies such as local authorities. Additionally, capturing internal partnerships such as those between colleges and universities themselves, between students and staff, between the service and the curricular/academic or between various departments of institutions.

Q17b What would you see as being the most valuable contribution of SSS in terms of enhancing your work? (Responses in full)

Access to sports venues.

Advocacy.

Being on the end of the phone or email to answer questions. Helping with the running of events.

Benchmarking and sharing of ideas as well as giving a feel for the sector.

Best practice sharing. Regardless of the task that you face there is always support and examples available through SSS. They are excellent at having a knowledge of what is occurring throughout the sector, and signposting you to the relevant institution which could support your work.

Continued support from regional staff is key to keep pushing sport at West Lothian College.

Convincing those at a strategic level that financial support is crucial for the sustainability of SSS activity in colleges.

Delivering a fantastic competitive programme.

Ensuring that the lessons already learned by others in the sector are flagged to us as we develop, so as to prevent us making avoidable errors.

Financial. We struggle to secure funding for events from universities and the national governing body – leaving the student clubs with the option of fund raising. Although this is possible, it does create more stress around the event. For the past two years the events have been run to budget.

Guidance and support.

Have a database of all sites' different policies and procedures so others can view for best practice, new ideas etc.

I feel it's a great support network and the staff help instil confidence in all the volunteers which makes it easier to get involved with sport and take on a leadership role.

Integration, networking and sharing best practice. Provision of a high quality competition and events programme. Advocacy.

More direct communication, face to face rather than emails and website posts.

National evidence-based study demonstrating the value of sport: Development of key graduate attributes through organised sporting activity. Impact of those physically active (SSS member institution members' health). What percentage of our members are meeting the recommended physical activity guidelines?

Networking.

Open up opportunities for training and CPD. More effective communication between institutions to reduce workload and errors.

Promotion of sporting opportunities.

Providing a banner under which I work, and assistance whenever required.

Providing opportunities for professional exchange and supporting/ providing for student competition.

Providing opportunities to link with other Sports Chairs to allow programme to develop and gain ideas for this.

Providing support to the elected officers.

Representation of the collective student sport voice.

SSS community.

SSS has helped me develop contacts.

SSS have been the key support in helping SDS support disabled athletes within tertiary education and have partnered our attempts to embed inclusion and training within the curriculum.

The SSS Regional Sport Coordinator provides valuable support and sense-check of work going on in our institutions. This has been a huge help given low staff resource during 2015/16.

SSS's greatest support of us is their support of the network; knowledge transfer and sharing of good practice and information, competition programmes and engaging on our behalf with governing bodies.

Support when needed, especially in office and financial issues.

Support, publicity through SSS bodies, and funding.

Support.

The advocacy role which is undertaken by SSS on our behalf.

The regional group with regular meetings, combined with expertise from the regional sport coordinator. Excellent communication skills with the institution from all the SSS staff.

The staff always being there to help and always offering sound advice.

The support and advice of all staff.

The support of SSS in providing admin support and collection of athlete contributions is vital.

The support provided, as needed.

To continue exploring shared work and partnerships.

Training and development opportunities for elected students and Play Sport Promoters.

What they are doing now.

Working with each individual institution to identify the priority areas where it can be supported in attaining its strategic goals. Greater ability to offer sensitivity to local needs would be more beneficial than a whole sector approach.

Appendix 2: Case Studies

1 Sports Career Pathway: Chris Sellar, Heriot-Watt University

Education. Chris took Higher PE at school but it did not have a big sports culture; no special training or scholarships. He played football for the school – the head dinner lady was in charge of the team. He also played for the Salvesen football team and had a trial for Alloa; but he was offered a successful conditional acceptance for Stirling University and took that route, continuing to play football there and becoming president of the University football club. Through that he got the bug for sports volunteering.

SSS. The Sports President at Stirling University signposted him to SSS, starting with the conference where SSS was born out of SUS. He was recruited as an intern when SUS became SSS in 2011; initially a voluntary position when he finished his undergraduate degree. The restructuring then created the part-time paid administrator job which he secured. The post was “the glue that makes the operation tick”. He got onto the ladder that way; doing a part-time Masters at the same time in Sports Management at Edinburgh University. Then the full-time Sports Administrator left and Chris got that job as an internal applicant. He was ten months in that role. He was given more and more responsibility in his work with SSS. Gave him a knowledge of national level HE/FE sport. That gave him the right background for his next job

Heriot-Watt University. This experience led to the Community Sports Manager post at Heriot-Watt University. This was the SW Edinburgh Community Sports Hub. He was employed by Heriot-Watt; looking at sport and other physical activity in the surrounding area; very focused on club sport; the post had funding from **sportscotland**. The role was to connect with clubs and the other organisations and universities and colleges. “A glorified connector.” The SSS regional staff have made connections between schools and HE/FE – a key transition that the regional staff are promoting; integrated models where HE/FE doesn’t stand alone. For example, at Heriot-Watt, basketball combines the university club with the youth basketball club from the community, which gives far more opportunities to the community. He is now line managing the Community Sports Manager post; from Sept 2015 he has been in his current role of Sports Development Manager of Oriam covering the three elements of sports unions, community sport and sports programmes for children.

Other Experience. Involvement in the volunteering, the career development and friends in the HE sector have all been very positive. He was on the Young People’s Sports Panel run by **sportscotland**; presented at a **sportscotland** sports development conference; involved with other young people who’d done a lot of volunteering; a phenomenal networking opportunity. Worked at a summer camp in the US as a life guard; loved that and got development from it. He’s secured his coaching qualifications – “a transferable skill”.

2 Sports Career Pathway: Craig Nicoll, Dundee and Angus College

Education. PE was his main subject at school, an early driver for him as he was keen to join the sports industry. Went into HND at Angus College for two years, at the Saltyre Leisure Centre. Did HND and HNC, and then a direct entrant into Abertay University. A mix of a development module there; worked as Active Schools volunteer at both college and university; started up a soccer school which was very successful;

Development Roles. His first proper career job was at the Cafe Project (Community Alcohol Free Environment) in Arbroath; outreach projects to schools and individuals all over Angus; there for 14 months. He was undertaking outreach work for Atholl Football Club at the same time. Youth Coach. Then worked for Norwegian Cruise Lines, started as youth counsellor then youth programme manager – a summer camp programme but on cruise ships.

Dundee and Angus College. Current post is Sport and Wellbeing Officer. Initially a role funded by the students' association including equipment and kit from the College's Transformational Fund. The College made his contract full time and permanent, funded directly by the Learning and Engagement Team of the College as a core member of staff. The role is with the sports union that was set up in 2014 (the second college sports union in Scotland). The SSS regional coordinator helped set up the post: "the regional coordinator was fantastic and really helpful; SSS gave the college a bit of pride in its sport and provided examples of good practice". Five roles: competitive sport; recreational sport; health and wellbeing; volunteering; CPD and training; now condensed a bit. They have a volunteer programme that matches the SSS champion award; he also works on the Healthy Body Healthy Mind initiative with SSS.

3 Role of Sports President: Stirling University

Rebecca Gracey, now Education & Development Officer at Netball Scotland, started university in 2009 and graduated in 2013, so was involved right at the beginning of SSS. Did sports studies at Stirling University and became sports president. Heavily involved in the netball club; discovered through the netball club and volunteering in Active Stirling that here was a real pathway in volunteering and development.

She worked with the current sports president at the time, pulled together a campaign to grow sport and the individual; they developed a holistic approach. She created university matches with other universities deciding that Stirling as a sporting university needed that kind of competition. It was the year of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, and they got funding to host the Stirling Games that included hockey, tennis, football and basketball; local community clubs playing against university teams. However, they haven't continued since. "That's the difficulty with student presidents – they're quickly replaced with new presidents." She briefed the new president on the importance of the event, and the link with Active Stirling who welcomed the Stirling Games, but no result. So it fell by the wayside.

Success was winning the BUCS 1A league, delivering high standards, recognised by the Principal of the university. She saw the governance and development of sports clubs as very much the responsibility of the sports union. She put a real focus on gender equality

– that had been a passion of hers from the start. She finished in June 2014, and was asked to stay on as Project Coordinator until October 2014, a paid position by the union to plan and deliver the women and sport conference in 2014, very much a positive experience. SSS spoke at it. “I’ve always said that it was the best thing I’ve ever done.”

4 Colleges: Student Impact of Sport

Four years ago Natasha came to the College as a painfully shy and introverted student with severe confidence issues. Natasha is on the autistic spectrum and has selective mutism which impacted severely on her ability to interact with other students in her class and prevented her from working with the wider community.

The progression Natasha has made since then has been remarkable. Although she is still working on her confidence issues, the amount of voluntary work, allied with 100% college attendance, that Natasha has carried out is tremendous and is indicative of her dedication and commitment.

Through hard work and determination, Natasha has far exceeded expectations, and has gone above and beyond in her volunteering efforts. The College is very proud of Natasha for being able to make a huge difference to so many people despite her anxiety issues.

Natasha’s transformation from an introverted girl who barely spoke a word to anyone, into a pillar of the Ayrshire sport and fitness community, is nothing short of remarkable.

Starting college has made such a difference to Natasha. I would strongly argue that no learner in the country has travelled further or had a greater impact on their local community than Natasha Kerr.

Natasha has just completed an HND in Sports Coaching and Development at Ayrshire College. Throughout her time at college she has endeared herself to her classmates, staff and the wider community through her sheer commitment to immerse herself in the ‘student experience’ and community engagement, through the VIEW (Values, Equality, Inclusion and Wellbeing) and Healthy Body Healthy Mind groups.

Modules that Natasha works through as part of the course include: Developing Potential in Sport, Sports Development and Research, Managing Volunteers, Inclusive Sports Coaching and Improving Coaching in Sport.

Four years ago an introverted and timid Natasha was referred to Ayrshire College by her social worker and, while her metamorphosis is not complete, Natasha is now unrecognisable as a magnificent role model and key figure in delivering opportunities across the local authority.

From a deprived former mining village in East Ayrshire Natasha travels across Ayrshire to inspire, develop and engage others in sport and recreation and acts as a role model for others. As a rough estimate outside college Natasha delivers over 800 hours of community development in East Ayrshire each year and inspires over 200 young people each week through sport and recreation.

Natasha is still working on her confidence issues and has built up a first rate CV as she seeks to improve the opportunities for others within sport and recreation.

Natasha's achievements can be measured by the reputation she has gained with numerous external partners for her commitment and passion for working with others,

Natasha volunteers at numerous Ayrshire Sportsability events. Ayrshire Sportsability is a charity that promotes the education and welfare of children with physical, sensory and learning disability through sport: <http://www.ayrshiresportsability.org.uk/index.html>

Natasha volunteers at numerous events throughout the year. The highlight being the weeklong Festival of Sport which is attended by over 500 young people with a variety of disabilities. Despite having severe confidence and personal issues Natasha has worked hard to develop the potential of others. Despite her own problems Natasha gives up her time and talents to enhance opportunities for others.

As a result of her experience at ASA Natasha started volunteering with Kilmarnock Harriers and is now heavily involved with the disability specific section of the club.

It was through working with Ayrshire Sportsability that Natasha struck up a working relationship with Kilmarnock Harriers – where she is now heavily involved with the disability specific section of the club.

College - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

Monday:	Athletics		Kilmarnock Harriers
Tuesday:	Badminton	East Ayrshire Leisure	Mauchline Games Hall
Wednesday:	Special Needs Athletics		East Ayrshire Council
	Athletics		Kilmarnock Harriers
Thursday	Badminton	East Ayrshire Leisure	Catrine Games Hall
Friday	Youth Club		Catrine Youth Club
Saturday	Badminton	East Ayrshire Leisure	Mauchline Games Hall
Sunday	Badminton	East Ayrshire Leisure	Grange Leisure Centre

Natasha, despite having severe confidence and personal issues, has worked hard to develop the potential of others.

Earlier this year Natasha was named Volunteer of the Year at YouthLink Scotland's National Youth Worker of the Year awards.

Natasha also won the main prize of the night as she was crowned Scotland's Youth Worker of the Year:

<http://www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/news/news-events/2016/natasha-joins-illustrious-list-of-successful-sports-stars-at-college/>

In April, Natasha was a finalist at the Young Scot awards in the Volunteering category:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mch_pIS0rWY

She has been shortlisted for The Herald Higher Education Awards for 'Outstanding Contribution from a Student'. Natasha is the only college student shortlisted alongside students from three universities:

<http://newsquestscotlandevents.com/events/the-herald-higher-education-awards/>

Further recognition is evidenced by YWCA Scotland who have deemed Natasha to be one out of 30 of the most inspirational females under the age of 30 in Scotland. This can be found at: <http://www.ywscotland.org/30-under-30/>

She was personally thanked by the MP for Kilmarnock and Loudoun, who said that *“Through her hard work, selfless dedication and personal development she encourages the health, happiness and wellbeing of others through sports and embodies what volunteering is all about.”*

http://www.cumnockchronicle.com/news/14549840.High_praise_for_volunteer_Natasha/

As a result of all her hard work endeavours and achievements, Natasha has also gained an offer a place at St Andrews University. This is a truly remarkable honour to be bestowed to Natasha, but completely deserving.

Natasha is a truly inspirational young woman who selflessly puts others before herself. She is a great ambassador not only for Ayrshire College and wider community, but is a prime example of young people in society who make such a difference to so many.

“I was also extremely lacking in confidence. Volunteering and being at college has helped me increase my confidence and control the selective mutism. [Ayrshire] College has also helped me immensely throughout the last four years. They actively encourage me to believe in myself.”

“Awards are nice, but rewards are better. I am rewarded every time I volunteer.”

“There is nothing more satisfying than knowing that I have helped children improve their skills, increase their ability, but most importantly, seeing the smiles on their faces knowing that they are happy and enjoying themselves.”

<http://www.ywscotland.org/30-under-30/>

Natasha is a product of the pastoral care afforded to her by her college lecturers, the Students Association and Student Services. This also extends to our community partners such as Vibrant Communities, Active Schools, Kilmarnock Harriers and in particular Ayrshire Sportsability who have all been very supportive of Natasha. But all that she has achieved and the difference she has made would not have been possible without her commitment, compassion and willingness to help others. She is a great ambassador not only for Ayrshire College but for all young people who strive to make a difference to the communities that they live in. Irrespective of what career you have, where you stay, what age you are, ultimately everyone can make a positive difference to society. This is what Natasha does on a daily basis. She is someone who we are exceptionally proud of.

She is such an inspirational role model to other students and is also an ambassador for Ayrshire College. Coming to college has changed Natasha’s life but, as importantly, since coming to college she has positively impacted on the lives of many others. She has made a difference.

(Information provided by John McTaggart, Curriculum Manager, Kilmarnock Campus, Ayrshire College, and reproduced by kind permission of Natasha Kerr.)

5 Regional Cooperation: St Andrews University / Aberdeen Sports Village

St Andrews University is part of a regional group for sport, engaging with lower-level competitions. That includes Fife and Dundee & Angus colleges. There are no formal relationships, quite informal, a “good neighbour” principle. There is a similar arrangement with local clubs: “we challenge all our clubs to do community engagement with coaching and support”. Also some school activity. Community groups also use the University’s facilities. They try and encourage all their clubs to be good neighbours. The result is good student development opportunities: “we get our money’s worth out of these relationships”.

They don’t have formal community club partnership agreements, just develop relationships on a case by case basis where there are efficiencies or benefits. “It’s useful for our students, producing better students, positive ambassadors, meeting different people, being volunteers.” The profile of being a good neighbour is good news for them – bad news travels in quickly in a place the size of St Andrews. There are clear benefits for the students, and students can contribute. There would be no problem in having external members of the University sports clubs – who could themselves add value and contribute through coaching and other ways.

The Aberdeen Sports Village arose from a realisation that the city needed a step change in its sporting facilities to enable all people to benefit; and for Aberdeen University as well – it needed to transform facilities going back to 1968 when the University was a third of its current size. The University’s joint venture with the city council and **sportscotland** demonstrated a commitment to work together. The University put in more money to make the aquatic centre work, then new AstroTurf – a long-term commitment.

It supports student, local and national sport. The latter includes Scottish rugby and swimming academies, two national governing bodies investing in the north of Scotland, enabling all to work together. SSS uses the facilities for competitions: “Aberdeen University is a proud member of SSS.” Hundreds of sporting activities take place there. It has proved to be a developing partnership and includes access for students of NE Scotland College. The village was the start of a much better relationship with the city council.

6 Recent Significant Practice: Telford/Edinburgh College

Edinburgh’s Telford College (‘Telford’), now Edinburgh College, developed its ‘Developing Excellence’ Performance Centre in 1992. Responding to **sportscotland**’s then strategy ‘Achieving Excellence – Coordinated Action’, Telford, along with the University of Edinburgh, received pump priming investment over a three-year period to work with governing bodies of sport to support athlete and coach development with formal education courses delivered within the College. Five governing bodies of sport – rugby, skiing, badminton, swimming and judo – were selected to partner the College to

coordinate a programme that allowed athletes to develop their sports standards as well as continuing their educational pathway towards university and career destinations.

The programme attracted interest from many sporting and educational agencies as it sought to provide a support programme involving a comprehensive approach to fitness, nutrition, psychology, and strength and conditioning, delivered by both governing body staff and lecturers from Telford Sports Studies department. With **sportscotland's** investment (prior to the Lottery and the Scottish Institute of Sport), the pilot programmes achieved credibility and recognition in creating and providing a pathway to high performance. Her Majesty's Inspector of Education recognised the 'model of excellence' and the programme received a national training award. Over a number of years Telford was able to offer a flexible approach to individual athletes and groups with many gaining full international level achievements at Commonwealth Games, World Championships, and Olympic and World Student Games.

Offering educational modules to part/full-time athletes with their governing body coaches allowed the athletes to focus on their development and to achieve qualifications from National Diploma level to University degree with Edinburgh Napier University. The model was seen to be viable and credible with coaches being employed as part-time lecturers, athletes registered as students and contributing to the finances of the programme and the College through the 'student unit of measurement' (SUMS).

"The programme made money and it didn't cost the College anything. It gave the College reputation, identity, success and achievement. Student athletes were attracted by the success of the programme – one fed the other." (Former Telford Curriculum Manager)

Over a peak period of some ten years between 2000 and 2012, other sports entered the programme, including cricket and football. With the addition of two adjacent local authorities' sports development programmes, together with individual athletes from other sports in the region, the initiative became known as an 'Integrated Performance Sport Programme'.

However, the college sector rationalisation and regionalisation of this period began to erode the programme. "When the College merged becoming Edinburgh College, people were taken out of position so were no longer driving it from the top. The new College focus was chaotic and the landscape had changed dramatically. Innovative programmes were curtailed because of restructuring and there was no-one driving them. The structure that was there to support was all gone. Experienced people were lost together with opportunities for the future. Positively, colleges seem now to be creating posts for sport and physical activity and creating links to local authorities and governing bodies for everyone from participation to performance development – that's great." (Former Telford Curriculum Manager)

7 Projects Benefiting from Working with SSS

Survey responses: *Please give examples of projects or partnerships that have resulted, or benefited, from working with SSS*

Aberdeen is very isolated from the rest of Scotland and travel cost is something we cannot get around. Creating more activity within the city was one way to combat these rising costs. Working closely with the Grampian Regional Development Officer we helped create a fairly exciting programme. It did not go perfectly, however, apart from giving more students access to playing certain sports. I found, as a direct result of working together on a quite small project like this, the city was able to produce a much more coordinated varsity event which proved to be the most amount of activity within the city that there has been before, and at a more professional level, which I think shows a deeper understanding of the power of working together. We have now confirmed a regional activity calendar for next year, and it is sure to be a success.

Ability to host more competitions – national level annual competitions. Ability to increase participation. Entry numbers have doubled in the last year.

Basketballscotland partnership. Scottish student basketball programme for students.

Central point to get information and office help due to working as a sole volunteer in the sport, not based in an institution.

Community Sports Partnerships: Community Sports Hubs in Dundee and Arbroath. Arbroath Victoria Junior Football Club. Arbroath Lawn Tennis Club. Arbroath Community Sports Club.

Competitive sports opportunities for university sports clubs (SSS Championships/BUCS Championships). Healthy Body Healthy Mind award. SSS Volunteer award. Training and development opportunities for students and staff. SSS Active Age Festival. Host venue for SSS Cup Finals.

Continual work with BUCS to maintain the highest leagues of university sport competition in Scotland.

Created a regional netball event through the help of a regional SSS staff member. It is hoped this becomes an annual event. Gained further knowledge on sports development and the opportunities of working in sport.

Cricket representative programme tour to Cambridge, along with other representative programmes.

Directors' forum. Competition for students. Recognition of impact of sport.

Edinburgh College football, basketball and badminton teams.

Funding for SSS, sport programmes, board representative positions, etc.

Gives students the opportunity to take part in competitions and events all over Scotland; making memories, learning life skills and keeping active. Students on committees are able to gain valuable skills in organisation, etc.

Governing body partnerships: SSS have supported these links very well. Acting as mediator between institutions and the relevant governing body. Institution strategy development: support from SSS throughout the development of our recent strategy. Available to be consulted and offered support through RDMs. Rainbow Laces Campaign: liaised with relevant company and institution to ensure buy-in prior to the campaign, and promotion throughout.

Healthy Body Healthy Mind. Approach to partnerships with external clubs. Input into new structure and strategy.

Help to promote events. Guidance on how to engage students with sport.

Hopefully in the future Reffin' Brilliant and Coachin' Brilliant.

Hosting SSS events and competitions. Continued partnership working with SGBs. Appropriate CPD developments.

Hosting SSS events.

Increased regional opportunities and activity within Tayside and Fife allowing students to engage in a range of sports throughout the academic year.

Inter-university fixtures. Representative programme. **sportscotland**. NGB programmes. SFC.

I've run a few regional badminton tournaments with SSS and I don't feel I would have been as confident running them without the support and organisation of SSS.

Local regional activity leagues. Annual events.

Our women's basketball team did an SSS tournament, and women's basketball and netball reached the cup finals for our respective divisions.

Participation in weekly leagues.

Play Sport Promoter volunteer programme. West Region Group competition programme for development teams.

Rainbow Laces campaign. More local leagues established and more teams entered, thus increasing participation.

Range Conducting Officer course for rifle clubs.

Reffin' Brilliant. Coachin' Brilliant. Regional competition to increase volume of activity. SGB partnerships; DCI applications, etc.

Regional activity for teams starting out in competitions. Networking across Scotland – huge benefit from knowing other elected students.

Regional activity: SSS has organised a number of regional events and leagues which have created opportunities for students who do not make the BUCS teams a chance to compete. **Equality:** SSS organised the rainbow laces varsity campaign across Scottish institutions. **Governing bodies:** SSS have strong relationships with governing bodies and act as a strong mediator/link. **Sharing best practice:** SSS is a great platform for sharing best practice with other universities. **Community engagement:** SSS have a good relationship with Active Schools and help to establish community links.

Regional activity: tournaments, festivals etc. The Regional Sport Coordinator (West) has helped establish better links with NGBs.

Regional Sports Partnership. Regional Development Officer. Regional student sporting structures. Numerous networking projects across a range of activities.

Research study into impact of SSS undertaken three years ago. Winning Students. West Regional Sport Coordinator post. Ongoing enhanced sport competition structure (including events). Professional development opportunities and proactive network of high quality staff across Scotland.

School sport coaching academy. Regional competition for teams. Regional development forum. Healthy Mind Healthy Body activity.

Sports Union participation. National Representative Sport. Local provision of events and tournaments.

SSS Championships and Leagues for our teams. We have set up a SSS Tennis Group which is benefiting all levels of student.

SSS Development League Competitions. General information about the sector, and funding.

SSS worked with Zara Lipsey and BEAT along with Physical Activity Group to form the Appropriate Guideline Document which has been accepted by all institutions. Setting up of forums in different subject themes.

The beginning of student sport at West Lothian College. Increased participation over the two years we have been involved with SSS. Opportunities to work with peers within the region through development meetings. Opportunities to compete in a number of sports, host events and take part in national competitions.

The students benefit from being involved in competitive sport and representing their college/region.

Volunteering. Competitions.

We have developed a shared 10-point action plan to embed inclusion within student sport across Scotland.

Working closely with the Regional Sport Coordinator (West) we have run the West Coast Varsity with Ayrshire College and SRUC, and they have also assisted us with reviewing our governance structure.