



# **Scottish Student Sport Impact Assessment**

**by Best and Randak Associates**

**for**

**Scottish Student Sport**

**Scottish Funding Council**

**sportscotland**

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**October 2016**

## 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 highlighting 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.

**This document comprises a summary drawn together from the full Best and Randak report, to be published on the SSS website by the end of October.**

## 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- 1 A trawl of published and unpublished documents from SSS itself; its members; its partners including SGBs, BUCS, **sportscotland** and the SFC.
- 2 A substantial questionnaire to sports-related staff, elected students and volunteers - gleaning 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 with 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 and his colleagues at SSS who gave us full support and access for the review.

The main questionnaire was a demanding one and we are very grateful to all those who responded, including 40 individuals who gave their views on every question. More time was required of those who contributed to the focus groups and in-depth interviews – all of whom provided valuable perspectives on the role and direction of SSS and its milieu. We hope that the report will do justice to those who contributed so fully.

## Student Sport Context

There are:

- some 460,000 students in Scotland in 2014/15, split roughly equally between universities (232,570<sup>1</sup> in 19 higher education institutions) and colleges (226,920<sup>2</sup> in 17 further education institutions);
- Over 78,000 regular active participants in HE institution facilities<sup>3</sup>;
- 31,774 students registered in student sports clubs; and
- 584 student sports clubs<sup>4</sup>.

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).

## SSS Strategic Direction

SSS is at the midway point of its current strategic plan for 2014-18: *National Vision, Regional Focus, Local Impact*.

This plan attracted significant support from both **sportscotland** and the Scottish Funding Council, each of whom provided an initial three year funding package against SSS’ plans.

**sportscotland** has provided annual investment of £130,000 p/a over the academic years 2014/15 to 2016/17.

The investment focus within **sportscotland**’s Corporate Plan is for resources towards ‘Effective Organisation’ and ‘Development’, both identified as staffing investment.

Within the investment agreement, these resources are directed towards outcomes for the period 2014-18 and specifically focus on:

- 1 achieving full membership of SSS across tertiary education institutions;
- 2 formal partnership agreements in place between SSS and 15 SGBs; and
- 3 SSS achieving the preliminary level of **sportscotland**’s Equality Standard

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

<sup>2</sup> Colleges Scotland *Keyfacts*. Stirling: Colleges Scotland, June 2016.

<sup>3</sup> ‘An Audit of Sports Provision in the University Sector in Scotland: 2013 - A Report to SSS’

<sup>4</sup> Figures on participants and clubs from SSS membership data, March 2016.

The Scottish Funding Council has provided annual investment of £65,000 across academic years 2014/15 to 2016/17 to fund activity plans and to establish a regional support network.

This investment is to enable SSS to extend its reach into the new college structure, giving it the capacity for applying the positive experience and progress already made within university sport.

Specifically, as per its conditions of funding, the Scottish Funding Council requires of SSS:

- 1 a review process assessing raising participation in sport, the establishment of college sports unions, and raising the number of available sports clubs;
- 2 the appointment of staff to establish a regional support network and the absorption of these core SSS staff once funding has ended;
- 3 evidence of increased collaboration between universities, local authorities and colleges working closely with sports governing bodies to share resources for coaching and the organisation of competitions; and
- 4 tangible evidence to demonstrate increased income from colleges in support of its services and its activities.

It is clearly evident that SSS has made tangible progress against the conditions of funding as set out by its partners.

Further, SSS has demonstrated that it is well on the way towards achieving its stated 2018 outcomes as set out within the Strategy.

An analysis of the progress made by SSS against its strategic aims is included in the following pages.

## KEY FINDINGS

### OVERARCHING THEME – SSS ACHIEVING IN ACTION

Members and partners alike recognise and celebrate SSS' reputation 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 SSS' achievements 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
<b>Member Services</b>	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 at 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]
<b>Competitions</b>	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.
<b>Advocacy</b>	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	<b>Achieved. 7,500 total social media followers by July 2016</b>
	Formal partnerships in place with key agencies	Work continuing with BUCS, NUS Scotland, Scottish Sports Alliance, Youth Sports 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
<b>Strong Organisation</b>	SSS to achieve Preliminary level on Equality framework	<b>Achieved. Preliminary level achieved July 2016 – working towards Intermediate</b>
	SSS to achieve Investors in People award	<b>Achieved. March 2016 at Silver level (plus Investors in Young People)</b>
	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

## Overarching Theme - Achieving in Action

- 1 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.
- 2 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 student 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 2,713 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)

**This overarching message was detailed throughout the gathered evidence. The report also identified six interlinked supporting themes, as follows:**

- 1. A National Organisation and Partner.** SSS has now established itself as a key 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 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: SSS – 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.
- 2 SSS is recognised by its main investment partners (Scottish Funding Council and **sportscotland**) as a **key national body**, new to the context of 21<sup>st</sup> 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.
- 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 31,774 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 6 SSS has pursued opportunities to establish its credentials with equality and has achieved its Foundation and Preliminary Equality Standards. Together with Scottish Disability Sport, LEAP Sports Scotland and others it seeks to develop future support for students with protected characteristics.

## 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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-SGB Partnerships: Progress**

<b>SGB</b>	<b>Signed/Expected</b>
Scottish Football Association	June 2014
Scottish Disability Sport	Aug 2014
Scottish Hockey	June 2015
Badminton Scotland	June 2015
Scottish Target Shooting	Aug 2015
Netball Scotland	Sept 2015
Scottish Volleyball Association	Mar 2016
Scottish Lacrosse	May 2016
Scottish Swimming	2016 <sup>1</sup>
Judo Scotland	2016 <sup>1</sup>
Basketball Scotland	2016 <sup>1</sup>
Scottish Archery	2016 <sup>1</sup>
Mountaineering Council of Scotland	2017 <sup>2</sup>
Tennis Scotland	2017 <sup>2</sup>
Scottish Rowing	2017 <sup>2</sup>
Scottish Golf	2017 <sup>2</sup>
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

<sup>1</sup> Proposals drafted and discussed

<sup>2</sup> Early meetings held

‘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.’

Survey respondent

### 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.
- 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- 5 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.

‘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.’

‘The student experience would be weaker overall for member institutions without support of SSS.’

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

### 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>
<b>Clubs</b>	531	536	550	584	<b>6%</b>
<b>Male members</b>	12,863	14,780	14,920	16,560	<b>11%</b>
<b>Female members</b>	10,704	14,199	14,060	15,190	<b>8%</b>
<b>Total members</b>	23,567	26,867	29,060	31,770	<b>9%</b>

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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## 6: Colleges

- 1 Scotland's colleges represent nearly half of Scotland's student population, "the poor relation of tertiary education". Many responses<sup>5</sup> 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.
- 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.
- 3 Colleges represent nearly half of Scotland's students, many 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.
- 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.

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

	<b>Colleges</b>	<b>Universities</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

## Summary and Recommendations

It is clear from the evidence that SSS' achievements to date represent a strong performance against its stated targets, and a proven track record of delivery against partner investment.

The investment into SSS from members, partners and funding agencies has been translated into clear progress. Respondents consistently perceived SSS to be delivering with quality and making a significant contribution to the physical activity and sport landscape.

Some notable challenges remain across further and higher education, creating a testing environment within which SSS continues to operate. However, with sustained support from members and partners – and following its current strategic direction – it seems likely that SSS will continue to unlock the significant potential for further physical activity and sport across the sector.

Based on the extensive responses to the report, and against the backdrop of the current sporting and educational landscape, the following recommendations are made to SSS and its partners:

## 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.***