

# The Student Association Constitution

## Ayrshire College 2025-2028



The Student Association is the student body of Ayrshire College.

As soon as you enrol at Ayrshire College you automatically become a member of The Student Association.

The Student Association acts as a voice for our members and their educational interests and welfare.

This constitution is our governing document. It sets out what The Student Association can and cannot do, how it operates and how members can raise any concerns or issues.

[Ayrshire College Board of Management](#) recognises The Student Association as a democratically run organisation committed to representing and serving the students of Ayrshire College.

The funding and support that The Student Association receives each year from Ayrshire College helps us to meet our aims and objectives and ensures that Ayrshire College Board of Management fulfil their obligations with regards to [Section 22 of the Education Act \(1994\)](#).

The Student Association is governed by a Student Executive Committee of volunteer Student Officers, led by an elected Student President and Student Vice President.

The Student Executive Committee and College Board of Management will review this document in partnership every three years.

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## Ayrshire College Student Association Constitution

There shall be a Student Association within the meaning of the 1994 Education Act at Ayrshire College. It will be known as 'The Student Association' and where context is required it will be known as "The Student Association at Ayrshire College."

### 1. Aims and Objectives

- (a) To enhance the experience of students at the College.
- (b) Provide support, advice, and signposting to students with regards to personal and educational challenges.
- (c) Provide a channel of communication between the student body and the College.
- (d) Support the development of student opportunities.
- (e) Support and facilitate the creation of student clubs and societies to enhance the social, educational, and cultural provision at the College.
- (f) Provide channels through which the views of its members can be co-ordinated and expressed on matters of common concern to the appropriate external bodies.
- (g) Provide a mechanism for liaising with other Student Associations or Unions.
- (h) To work with national bodies e.g. The National Union of Students, to facilitate and support the above objectives.
- (i) Engage in any other activity not mentioned that is conducive to the above objectives.

### 2. Powers

The Student Association shall have the following powers:

- (a) To appoint and dismiss such Officers as are provided for in the constitution, in line with Section 8 of the Constitution.
- (b) To enter into such reasonable contracts and agreements in line with the College's Financial Regulations as are necessary to pursue the objectives of the Association, under direct supervision of the Student Association Advisor.
- (c) To hold such property and equipment as is necessary to pursue the objectives of The Student Association.
- (d) To report to Ayrshire College Board of Management on a regular basis.
- (e) To enter into membership of any body, corporate or otherwise, whose aims and objectives are in keeping with those of the Association with agreement of the College Management.
- (f) To propose amendments to the terms of the constitution in accordance with the procedures contained herein.
- (g) To appoint committees and sub-committees as required.

### 3.Membership

The members of The Student Association are:

- (a) All registered students attending Ayrshire College shall be deemed Ordinary Members of The Student Association, regardless of mode of attendance.
- (b) Any student can opt-out of The Student Association membership by submitting a request in writing to the Student Association Advisor.

### 4. Finance

The finances of The Student Association will be determined annually by the College Senior Leadership Team. The constitutional procedure is as follows:

- (a) The budget allocation to The Student Association will be decided annually by the Senior Leadership Team as part of the overall College budget, and as approved by the College Board of Management.
- (b) The budget allocation can only be used in pursuit of the Association aims and objectives.
- (c) All monies received by any member of The Student Association, on behalf of The Student Association, shall be lodged in the College bank account through the College's Finance Team.
- (d) The Student Association Advisor shall be responsible for the management of funds allocated for Student Association activity and will administrate expenditure according to the College's financial processes.
- (e) Financial records shall be kept with the College Finance Team.
- (f) All fund allocations will be properly recorded.
- (g) The Student Association shall allow the College internal or external auditors access to their records when reasonably requested to do so by the College Senior Leadership Team.
- (h) The financial year of The Student Association shall begin on the 1 August.
- (i) A financial account of the income and expenditure of The Student Association shall be prepared by The Student Association at the end of June; and the financial report will be made available to the College Board of Management and all members of The Student Association.

### 5. Governance

The Student Executive Committee is the governing body of The Student Association. The operation of the Student Executive Committee is outlined below:

- (a) The Student Executive Committee of The Student Association shall consist of The Student Association Student President and Student Vice President and the Student Executive Officers.
- (b) The members of the committee are members by virtue of the office they hold. Consequently, should they leave their position, they will cease to be members of the Student Executive Committee.
- (c) The function of the Student Executive Committee shall be to exercise control on all matters relating to the work of The Student Association.
- (d) The Student Executive Committee have the power to appoint ad-hoc committees and to determine their remit.

(e) Student Executive Officers shall be recruited and appointed within a reasonably practicable period of time following the start of each academic semester.

## **6. Executive Committee Meetings**

(a) The Student Executive Committee will meet a minimum of three times during the academic year.

(b) The quorum for the Executive Committee will be no less than 50% plus one of the current members of the Student Executive Committee.

(c) The first Student Executive Committee meeting shall take place within 2 weeks of the appointment of the executive officers, as far as is reasonably practicable.

(d) Any item for inclusion on the agenda of a Student Executive Committee Meeting shall be submitted to The Student Association office in writing.

(e) All motions shall bear the names of the proposer and seconder and should be submitted five working days prior to the meeting.

(f) Proxies may attend meetings of the Student Executive Committee where they have been selected to act as such and shall have the right to participate in meetings and vote in absence of the regular member. Prior notice must be given by any officer intending to send a proxy.

## **7. Appointment of the Student President and Student Vice President**

The Student President and Student Vice President will be democratically elected each year by means of a Student President election.

(a) Any Student Association member over the age of 16 (at the time of taking up the position) is eligible to stand in the Student President elections.

(b) All Student Association members are eligible to cast one vote in the Student President elections.

(c) Officers shall be voted in on the following terms:

(i) Presidential terms will run for one calendar year beginning 1 July to 30 June the following year.

(ii) Vice Presidential terms will run for one calendar year beginning 1 July to 30 June the following year.

(iii) Terms shall not overlap. The outgoing Student President and Student Vice President must finish their term before the incoming officer takes up their position.

(iv) The maximum term any student can spend as a Student President and Student Vice President is 2 years.

(d) The Student President and Student Vice President are automatically appointed as Board Members of Ayrshire College Board of Management.

Full details on the election process and rules can be found in Schedule 4.

## **8. Appointment of Student Executive Officers**

Student Executive Officers will be appointed whose titles and roles will be defined by the sitting Student President and Vice President to best support the manifesto, The Student Association's Operational Plan, and the needs of the membership.

Students may undertake the role of an Executive Officer on the following basis:

- (a) Any member of The Student Association is eligible to put themselves forward for an Executive Officer position.
- (b) Where an Executive Officer position represents a specific community, the role bearer must self-identify as being part of that community.
- (c) Student Executive Officers are selected and in post within a reasonably practicable time after the start of each academic semester.
- (d) Executive Officers are selected by means of an application and selection process at an Executive Committee meeting.
- (e) Students cannot hold any more than one Student Executive Officer position at the same time.
- (f) Post holders will remain in post until they resign or are no longer a student at the College.
- (g) There is no time limit for the length of term of a Student Executive Officer.

### **9. Removal of Student Association President or Vice President**

An elected Student President or Vice President shall be removed from office if:

- (a) They resign.
- (b) Elected Officers are also subject to Ayrshire College policies, processes and procedures
- (c) They fail to attend three Executive Committee Meetings with no reasonable explanation or prior agreement with the Executive Committee Chair.
- (d) A motion of no confidence in the officer is passed by a simple majority of student members voting in a Referendum. Such motion shall only be triggered by a petition signed or agreed by at least 10% of full-time student members or a motion of no confidence in the elected officer is passed by a two thirds majority in the vote of the Executive Committee. Such a motion shall only be triggered by a secure petition signed or agreed to by at least 10% of full-time student members.

A Student Association President or Vice President will not be removed from office without prior consideration of procedures which are applicable to the individual's terms of office.

### **10. Removal of non-elected Student Executive Officers**

A non-elected Student Executive Officer can be removed from office if:

- (a) They resign.
- (b) They fail to attend three Executive Committee Meetings with no reasonable explanation or prior agreement with the Executive Committee Chair.
- (c) They are no longer a student at Ayrshire College.
- (d) They are removed by means of an Extraordinary Executive Committee Meeting where in a secret ballot, 50% plus one of the existing committee members vote in favour to remove the officer.

## 11. Class Ambassadors

Each class shall be entitled to appoint one class representative called a Class Ambassador by whichever means is agreed by the class.

The purpose of the Class Ambassador is to act as an interface between the students within their class, the curriculum team, and The Student Association.

Class Ambassadors are required to:

- (a) Inform The Student Association of their appointment.
- (b) Attend Class Ambassador training as provided by The Student Association.
- (c) Keep up to date with information communicated to them by The Student Association.
- (d) Attend regular Class Ambassador meetings.
- (e) Gather feedback from their class and communicate this to their curriculum team.
- (f) Deliver at least one focus group to their class during the academic year.
- (g) Attend curriculum team meetings.
- (h) Feedback information from the curriculum and Student Association where appropriate to their class.

## 12. Clubs and Societies

The Association has a duty to support and facilitate student clubs and activities as desired by membership where the club or society's aims are compatible with those of the Association and within reason of capacity of the Association.

Any club or society wishing to formalise their structure by creating a committee and/or constitution, can do so with the support of the Student Association Advisor.

If any club or society is found to be acting contrary to the values of the Association, it may be disbanded by a majority vote of the Student Executive Committee.

In addition, clubs and groups may be subject to the Ayrshire College Code of Conduct, Student Agreement, and/or additional Community Standards. Breaches of said codes and agreements may see students subject to a suitable penalty, including (but not limited to) a temporary ban from the club or group, a permanent ban from the club or group, and where necessary be referred to the appropriate key stakeholders for enactment of the Student Conduct and Student Agreement Policies and Procedures.

## 13. Review and Amendments to the Constitution

Any proposed changes to the constitution will be discussed and decided by the Student President, Student Vice President, and Student Association Advisor prior to consideration by the Student Executive Committee, the Senior Leadership Team, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, and the College Board of Management.

The Constitution can be amended by a resolution passed by the Student Executive Committee by at least 50% plus one of the current Student Executive Committee members.

Amendments to the constitution must be ratified by the College Board of Management.

The constitution must be reviewed by The Student Association every three years.

## Schedule 1 -

### Code of Conduct

#### General Principle

1. In common with many membership governed organisations, it is important to clarify expectations surrounding the relationship between Members and Officers.
2. Members and Officers should feel able to critically appraise the work of The Student's Association, but this should be through the appropriate channels as set out within the Code of Conduct.
3. This code applies at meetings and events organised by The Student Association, and in communication that refers to the Association and/or its officers, including on social media platforms such as Facebook and X.

#### Standards of Behaviour

All members will:

- Treat each other with respect.
- Raise complaints through appropriate channels as set out in the Complaints Procedure.
- Avoid behaviour that is damaging to The Student Association or its reputation.
- Support a culture of kindness and respect.

You may be excluded from membership if your conduct is deemed to be detrimental to The Student Association, its interests, or its members.

Officers in addition will:

- Provide leadership to The Student Association.
- Be accountable to members for their performance.
- Carry out duties and responsibilities, as set out in the role descriptions for their position.
- Treat member information with respect and confidentiality and in accordance with data protection regulations.
- Promote a culture of inclusion, equality, support, and respect.

#### Protection from Harassment

Members, Officers, and Staff are entitled to protection from any form of harassment.

Harassment may result in the Member, Officer or Staff Member withdrawing the support or withdrawing from the event at which the harassment is taking place. The person or persons subjected to the harassment should bring this to the attention of the Student Association Advisor as soon as possible to discuss what action would be appropriate.

Reports of Harassment will be recorded by the Student Association Advisor. Action may then be taken under the terms of this code, or the College Student Disciplinary Procedure.

#### Data Protection

Members, Officers, and Staff are duty bound to protect themselves and other members data from being unnecessarily used, stored, and passed on. All Members, Officers and Staff are required to comply and adhere to the Colleges Data Protection Policy. Where a Safeguarding issue arises and a data breach is necessary then Members, Officers and Staff should use the appropriate college processes to report this.



## Freedom of Speech

The Association and its members are bound to observe the College's code of practice in relation to freedom of speech as required by section 43 (no 2) Act of 1986.

## Breaches of Code of Conduct

Members who breach the code may be suspended or removed from The Student Association. Procedures for dealing with a breach of the Code are as follows:

- Concerns about potential breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported to the Student Association Advisor as soon as possible. The Advisor will take this to a panel of three members of the Executive Committee including the Student President and Student Vice President.
- The panel will agree the appropriate course of action and the decision will be communicated to the member within 5 working days of the meeting.
- Appeals should be submitted to the Student Association Advisor within 30 days of the notification of the panel's decision.
- The appeal will be looked at by at least three members of the executive committee who were not involved in the earlier decision, supported by the Head of Quality Enhancement.
- The decision of the appeal panel will be communicated within 5 working days of the meeting.
- If the potential breach of the Code of Conduct relates to a member of the Executive Committee, they will take no part in the decision-making process.
- If the potential breach of the Code of Conduct relates to the Student President or Student Vice President, the matter will be referred to the Head of Quality Enhancement and will be taken forward through the appropriate measures as laid down in this constitution.
- Breaches in relation to the Ayrshire College Code of Conduct as it applies to the Student President or Student Vice in their role as a Board Member will be referred to the Chair of the Board of Management.

## Schedule 2 –

### Complaints Procedure

Members, Association Volunteers, Executive Officers, and Class Ambassadors may give feedback, raise issues or questions about The Student Association directly to the Student President and/or Student Association Advisor or through the Executive Committee Meetings.

Concerns, criticisms, or complaints about the performance and/or behaviour of individual office bearers should be made directly to the Student Association Advisor.

Complaints regarding the Student Association Advisor should be raised directly with the Head of Quality Enhancement.

Complaints about members of staff out with The Student Association should be made through the Colleges Complaints Procedure.

Students who remain dissatisfied with their dealings with The Student Association may refer their complaint to the Colleges Complaints Procedure.

Criticism of officers and staff not communicated through the procedures outlined in this procedure may be considered harassment and dealt with accordingly.

### **Schedule 3 -**

## **Ayrshire College Student Association**

### **Responsibilities of the Office of Student President**

Represent all members of the Association across Ayrshire College.

Support the Class Ambassador model of student feedback within the College.

Lead on the strategic direction and support the Association's future development.

Deliver on the Association's strategic direction and operational plan.

Lead the Association with regards to activity, policies and ethos as directed by the Executive Committee.

Participate as a member of the College Board of Management and/or relevant Board Committees as identified by the Board of Management and comply with the terms and conditions of appointment as a Member of the Board of Management.

Ensure that the Association is meeting its set objectives.

Chair and support the Executive Committee meetings.

Ensure that the Association's budget is effectively managed.

Build and maintain a positive, high profile and partnership ethos within the Association and across the college, encouraging students to become involved.

Work in partnership with staff across the College to ensure that the Association has an active role in enhancing the quality of the student experience at Ayrshire College.

Represent Ayrshire College students with organisations at a national level, for example, the National Union of Students (Scotland).

Undertake delegated responsibilities from the College Senior Leadership Team, the Student Association Advisor, and the Head of Quality Enhancement.

Work in partnership with the Quality Enhancement Team, Equality and Inclusion and Health, Safety and Wellbeing in addition to the college management and external stakeholders to ensure there is a consistent, high quality student support system across the region.

Ensure open communication channel between the College, Executive Committee, and the Student's Association's members.

Communicate effectively with the Student Vice President, Head of Quality Enhancement, and the Student Association Advisor.

Ensure that the safety and wellbeing of the Associations members is at the forefront of all Student Association Activity and be familiar with the responsibilities set out within the College's Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy HSP001.

## Schedule 4 -

### Ayrshire College Student Association

#### Responsibilities of the Office of Student Vice President

Represent all members of the Association across Ayrshire College.

Support the Class Ambassador model of Student Feedback within the College.

Assist the President in leading on the strategic direction and support the Association's future development.

Work with the Student President and Student Association Advisor to ensure the delivery of the Association's strategic direction and operational plan.

Along with the Student President, lead the Association with regards to activity, policies and ethos as directed by the Executive Committee.

Participate as a member of the college Board of Management and/or relevant Board Committees as identified by the Board of Management and comply with the terms and conditions of appointment as a Member of the Board of Management.

Represent the Student President in their absence at the College Board of Management/Committee meetings, as required.

Ensure that the Association is meeting its set objectives.

Chair and support the Class Ambassador meetings.

Ensure that the Association's budget is effectively managed.

Build and maintain a positive, high profile and partnership ethos within the Association and across the college, encouraging students to become involved.

Work in partnership with staff across the College to ensure that the Association has an active role in enhancing the quality of the student experience at Ayrshire College.

Represent Ayrshire College students with organisations at a national level, for example, the National Union of Students (Scotland).

Undertake delegated responsibilities from the Student President, the Student Association Advisor, and the Head of Quality Enhancement.

Work in partnership with the Quality Enhancement Team, Equality and Inclusion and Health, Safety and Wellbeing in addition to the College Management and external stakeholders to ensure there is a consistent, high quality student support system across the region.

Ensure open communication channel between the College, Executive Committee and Association members.

Communicate effectively with the Student President, Head of Quality Enhancement, and the Student Association Advisor.

Ensure that the safety and wellbeing of the Associations members is at the forefront of all Student Association Activity and be familiar with the responsibilities set out in the College's Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy HSP001.

## Appendix 1

### Election Regulations

#### 1. General

- 1.1. The Elections of the Student President and Vice-President shall be carried out in accordance with these regulations.
- 1.2. The Student Association Advisor shall implement the Election process.
- 1.3. The elections shall be by secret ballot of all members of the Association.
- 1.4. In addition to the Regulations, the Association will be obligated to comply with:
  - (a) College rules, regulations, and policies.
  - (b) The Student Association rules, regulations and policies.
  - (c) The laws of Scotland.

#### 2. Returning Officer

- 2.1 The Returning Officer Shall be an independent person chosen by The Student Association in advance of each election. They shall not be a member of The Student Association.
- 2.2 They shall be responsible for the good and fair conduct of the Student Elections.
- 2.3 They shall be responsible for investigating any complaints made with regards to the proper and fair running of the elections.
- 2.4 The Returning Officer's interpretation of election regulations shall be final.
- 2.5 Any Student Association member who is not satisfied with any decisions made by the Returning Officer can submit a formal complaint through the college's normal complaints process.
- 2.6 The Student Association Advisor, in acting on behalf of the returning officer as Deputy Returning Officer, may carry out the following functions.
  - (a) Oversee the procedure for the acceptance of nominations and the determination and publication of valid nominations.
  - (b) Fix the date of the elections and publication of the notices giving information about the date of the elections and the election arrangements.
  - (c) Supervise the election online process.
  - (d) Announce the result.

#### 3. Nominations

- 3.1 Any member of The Student Association over the age of 16 is eligible to stand as a candidate for the election.
- 3.2 The Student Association Advisor will post on the outside of each Student Association offices and send to all students via all student email, at least eight college days before the nominations open stating the:
  - (a) Period of nominations.
  - (b) Posts for which nomination can be made.

(c) Where the nomination form can be obtained.

(d) The closing date for nominations.3.4 Candidates are required to submit a manifesto alongside their nomination form. All manifestos will be collated and published by The Student Association.

3.3 On closing of nominations the Student Association Advisor will collate all nominations and check that they comply with the regulations.

3.4 The Student Association Advisor will draw up a list of candidates and will communicate this to all students via an all-student email as soon as possible, alongside dates and arrangements for voting.

3.5 The Student Association Advisor will arrange to meet all candidates to deliver a candidate's briefing at which they will brief the candidates on the election process and procedure.

#### **4. Campaigning**

4.1 As soon as is reasonably practicable following the close of nominations the Student Association Advisor will publish the list of nominations and manifestos.

4.2 The campaigning period shall commence at the end of the candidates briefing at a time announced by the Student Association Advisor and will end upon close of voting.

4.3 Any coverage of the elections by the Association shall be fair and balanced, providing exposure to all candidates, as reasonably practical.

4.4 Each candidate will receive an electronic copy of their Manifesto as prepared by the Association that they can use in their campaigns.

4.5 Each candidate may receive a small budget from the Association for canvassing materials and no other monies shall be spent by the candidate. Finances shall be confirmed at the candidates briefing.

4.6 No offensive or derogatory election material shall be produced during the campaign by any candidate.

4.7 The Returning Officer reserves the right to remove any election material which in their reasonable opinion is inappropriate or poses a health and safety risk.

#### **5. Elections**

5.1 The Student President Election shall be held no later than the final Friday in May of each academic year.

5.2 In the event that at least one post remains vacant, it will be reasonable to hold further elections to fill the vacant post. The decision whether a further election should be held and what the arrangements should be are at the discretion of the returning officer.

5.3 In such cases the additional election should take place no later than the last Friday of November of the relevant year.

#### **6. Voting**

6.1 The responsibility for ensuring voting is conducted in accordance with this regulation shall rest with the Returning Officer and any deputy appointed.

6.2 Voting shall take place electronically at times to be decided by the returning officer.

6.3 Members of the Association may vote once with their college login as being their proof of eligibility to vote.

6.4 Candidates and their supporters should not be present in any of the Learning Resource Centre areas whilst voting takes place.

## **7. Administration**

7.1 A quota will be calculated as follows:

(a) The candidate with the highest number of votes will be deemed to be elected to the position of Student President.

(b) The candidate with the second highest number of votes will be elected to the position of Student Vice President.

(c) In the event that the electronic ballot results in there being fewer than five votes of a difference between candidates, the returning officer will decide whether it is necessary to return nominations and whether a new election is necessary. The returning officer's decision shall be final.

## **8. Candidates**

8.1 Candidates already in office shall be given the same privileges and restrictions as any other candidate.

8.2 Candidates may only benefit from what is openly available to all candidates.

8.3 Campaigns should be conducted in accordance with The Student Association and Colleges ethos and values and in line with the Code of Conduct and Health and Safety Policy.

## **9. Tenure of Office**

9.1 The tenure of officer for any elected officer shall be 12 months commencing the 1 July in the same year of the election.

9.2 An elected officer may stand for re-election at the close of their first tenure of office.

9.3 The maximum period a of office for any Student President and Student Vice President is two tenures.

## **10. Complaints and Appeals**

10.1 The procedure for the consideration of complaints relating to the elections shall be as follows:

10.1.1 Formal complaints must be submitted in writing with any supporting evidence to the Returning Officer

10.1.2 The Returning Officer reserves the right to investigate any unsound activity and make any rulings which are fair and reasonable in the circumstances.

10.1.3 The Returning Officer shall investigate any formal complaints in a timely manner to minimise disruption to the election process and will decide what action shall be taken, including but not limited to the disqualification of any candidate concerned, or the annulment of the relevant election.

10.1.4 Disqualified candidate may appeal the decision of the Returning Officer in writing to a designated College staff member appointed by The Student Association who shall set up an appeals panel.

10.2 Outcomes open to the appeals panel include but are not limited to:

10.2.1 Upholding or dismissing the appeal.

10.2.2 Requesting a re-run of the elections.