

STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2022/2023



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST of SCOTLAND

UWS

YOUR **union**
UWS



Section A

PURPOSE, APPROACH & VALUES

SPA: Purpose

We believe partnership should be at the heart of a 21st Century University. To reinforce this the Students' Union and the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) have agreed to annually review the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA). The purpose of this Student Partnership Agreement is to outline the areas in which UWS and the Students' Union will work together in partnership to enhance the student learning experience. The 2022-2023 agreement reinforces our commitment to working together to create a contemporary, inspirational, and collaborative learning environment where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to enhance the learning experience, both for themselves and future students.

SPA: Approach

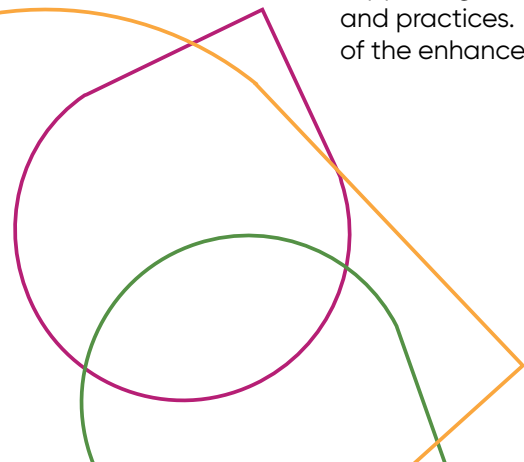
We agree that our partnership approach is based on mutual respect, trust, and genuine commitment to instil and enhance feelings of belonging and worth. Section A provides an overview of partnership opportunities at UWS and describes how all students can get involved. Section B identifies our agreed priorities and actions, which will be the focus of our shared activity across the next academic session. Section C provides an update on the successes achieved through our partnership.

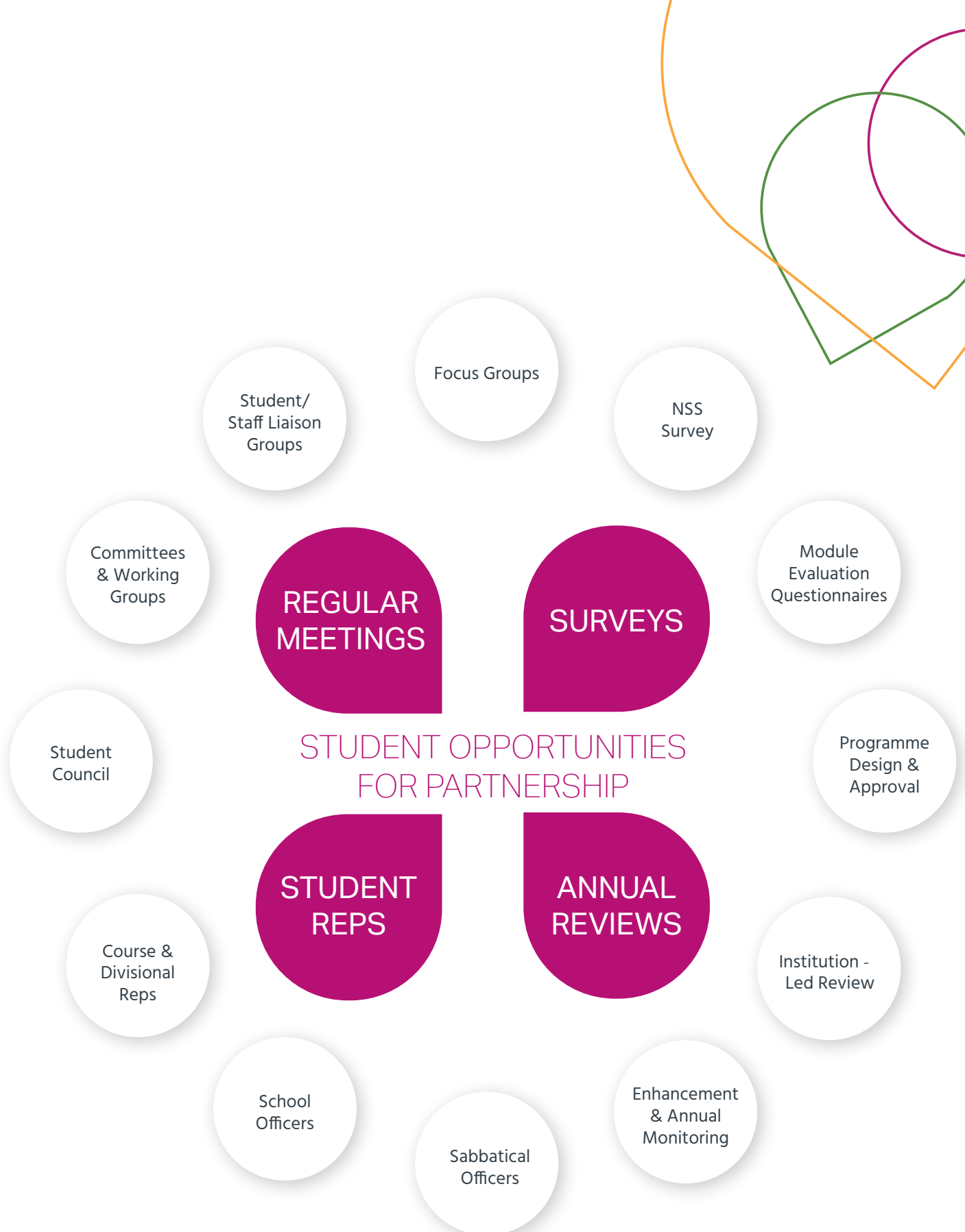
SPA: Values

The Students' Union and UWS believe that the SPA continues to be a powerful driver of positive change, promoting critical reflection and enhancement activity across the work and activity of the University. Through a united approach to partnership working, we actively draw upon the diverse perspectives, experience, and expertise available across the University. Our Partnership Agreement emphasises the significance and importance of the role of students in decision-making at UWS.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PARTNERSHIP AT UWS?

The commitment to partnership can be clearly seen in the UWS Strategy 2025 and Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan. The University and the Students' Union also have a Memorandum of Understanding which sets out how the two organisations practically work together. This Student Partnership Agreement is written for all partners, including students, academics, professional service staff and senior managers, vigorously supporting a breadth and depth of reflection on our current relationships and practices. The 2022-2023 SPA explicitly places students at the centre of the enhancement work of our University.





Section B

Education

We will continue to work together to keep developing the involvement of students in improving their educational experience at UWS. We will:

- Continue to work together to ensure equity in hybrid delivery design, informed by all members of our UWS community. Hybrid delivery should be sufficiently flexible and inclusive to accommodate everyone's diverse needs.
- Endeavour to develop an institutional strategy for a decolonised and anti-racist curriculum that builds a shared understanding, language, and approach across the University.

Student Opportunities

We will continue to work together to ensure students have opportunity to work in partnership and participate fully in life at UWS. We will:

- Proactively create better connections between University and students to develop and maintain opportunities within and across campuses, enabling further development of UWS graduate attributes.
- Work together to ensure that students know about the varied opportunities to engage at UWS and externally (as appropriate), utilising a range of communication methods.

Mental Health/Wellbeing

We will support students' mental health and wellbeing, being mindful of the ongoing considerations and impact of the coronavirus pandemic and helping them to achieve their ambitions. We will:

- Foster a sense of community at UWS.
- Enhance the accessibility of UWS and continue to provide a supportive environment, remaining mindful of the financial, digital, and practical barriers our students face.

Section C

SPA PARTNERSHIP SUCCESSES

The following section provides an overview of partnership achievements during 2021/2022 which are successes we will continue to build on as we progress this new Partnership agreement for 2022/2023.

Education

- In 2021, the Student Experience Committee was reimagined as the Student Partnership Forum to provide a space for student feedback and has been set up as a student-centred space to discuss feedback and inform developments in UWS learning experiences such as hybrid delivery.
- UWS senior managers continue to attend each student council and been able to tap into the views of students regarding hybrid delivery design, and mini surveys at council have been used by Sabbatical officers to ensure the hybrid approach is reflective of the needs of students.
- Based on student feedback, staff and students have joined together to form a working group addressing assessment/deadline clashes. Information is currently being gathered from staff and analysis will follow to allow UWS, the Students' Union, and the Sabbatical team to pinpoint where the issues are and ensure they are addressed.
- Union and UWS staff meet each term to discuss Student-Staff Liaison group progress, issues, and engagement raised to inform development of learning experiences.
- Sabbatical officers have led two 'Short-life working groups' working collaboratively with partners from across the University to recommend ways to reduce dissertation stress and assessment deadline clashes.

Student Opportunities

- Careers and Skills Team staff have been improving links between societies and relevant support services through utilising the societies' committee members' teams page to connect with students and share opportunities.
- Careers, Skills, and Counselling Services attended Societies Council meetings to introduce their services, explain how they can support societies and answer student questions
- Specific careers sessions have been created in partnership for 3rd and 4th year reps focussed on student rep employability and transferable skills.
- Union Student Opportunities Staff members and UWS Careers worked together to host volunteering promotion events in September and February, introducing students to a variety of external volunteering roles
- All society committee members and students who registered for external volunteering opportunities through the Students' Union website were encouraged to register for relevant UWS Achievement Awards and offered support with completing submissions
- Union Sabbatical Officers and Team UWS worked together on the #trysomethingnew campaign to encourage students to try a team or activity that they haven't done before.



Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Union and University Student Services teams now work together and share social media schedules to ensure regular and proactive signposting of support for students.
- As part of a holistic approach to supporting students' mental health, partnership work is ongoing to reduce dissertation stress. Recommendations created in partnership and focussing on removing unnecessary stress and ensuring students are supported have been approved by the University Senate.
- The Union have held social walks to support students' mental health, which have been well attended including by UWS counsellors who were able to connect with students.
- A student mental health day was held in March where UWS Library, Student Buddies, Student Mental Health Advisory Panel, Team UWS and Union Staff worked together to inform students of all the support available to them both at stalls on campus and on social media.
- Union Sabbatical Officers and Team UWS have worked with wider staff and students towards achieving the Scottish Student Sport's Healthy Body, Healthy Mind award which, once achieved, will further cement the UWS commitment to supporting student wellbeing.
- The Union and University are committed to the NUS Student Mental Health Agreements (part of the NUS Think Positive Project). We were successful in achieving a small grant to establish a student mental health advisory panel. The advisory panel is made up of students with lived experience of mental health difficulties and/or a passion for shaping UWS mental health support and they work to help shape our NUS Student Mental Health Agreements. To date the group has conducted mapping and student engagement exercises, helped develop content for social media and advised on student suicide awareness training.

THE AGREEMENT

This partnership agreement communicates our commitment to continue to work in partnership to enhance and improve UWS for all members of the University.

Signed on behalf of
University of the West of Scotland



University Principal

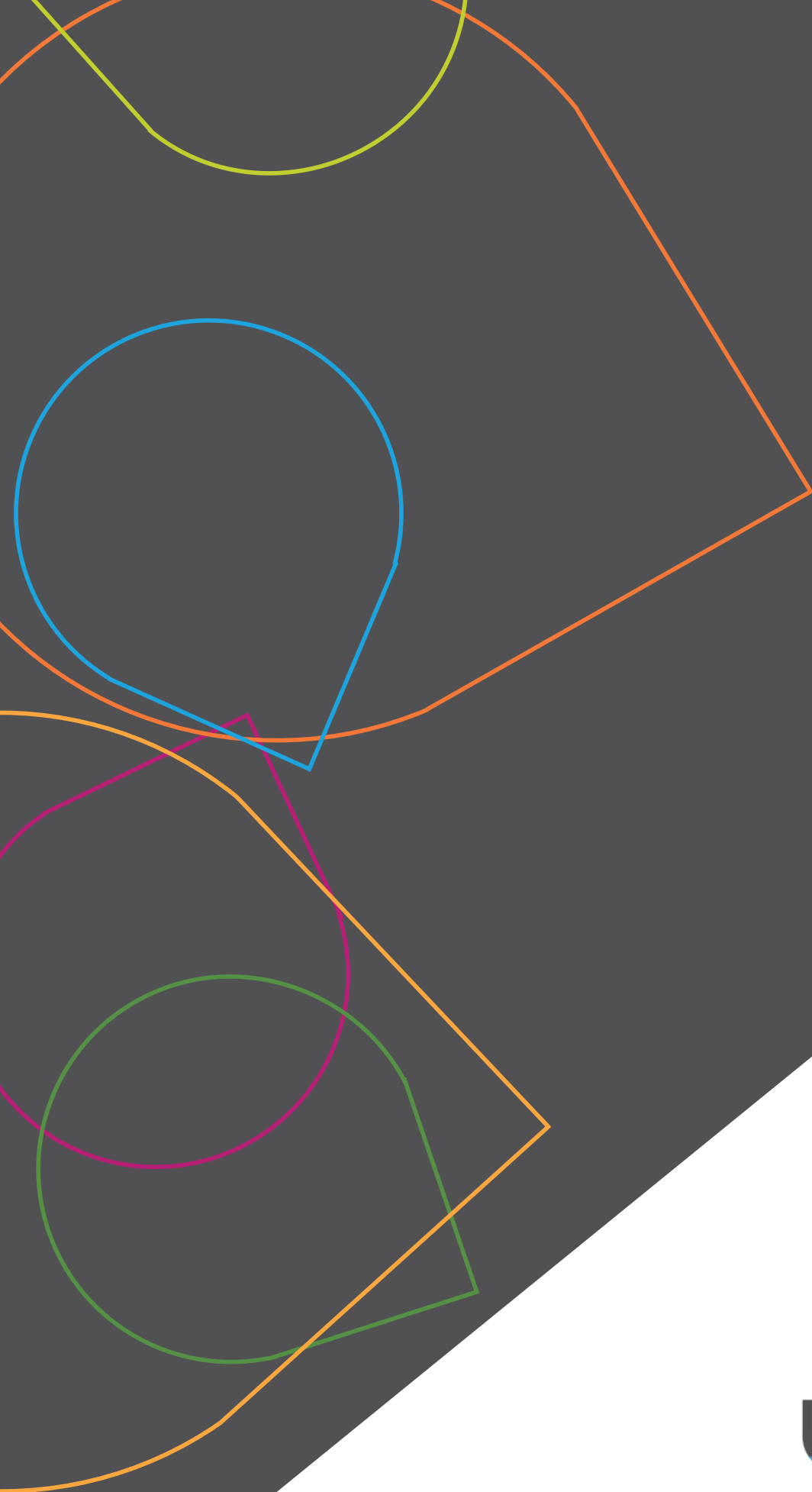
Signed on behalf of the
Students' Association of UWS



Students' Union President

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST of SCOTLAND
UWS

YOUR union
UWS



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST *of* SCOTLAND

UWS

