

The Student Association is here to represent the interests of all students at West College Scotland.

That means working with the College's senior management to make things better for you. Earlier this year, we gave you the chance to raise important issues which we then took to management.

Here's what you said and what we did about it.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Hunter'.

Andrew Hunter
President, WCS Students' Association

You Said

AAA (access):

"We can't log on to Access All Areas on our smart phones".

AAA (self-cert):

"For some students, especially those with children, 5 days self-cert per 12 week block is not enough. These can be used up quite quickly. Could extra days be added for some students?"

ICT & Wifi

"Connections are slow and appliances are oversubscribed. There's also a lack of up-to-date software and computer rooms are in a poor state of repair."

We Did

There was an issue with security certification but this has been ironed out and you should now be able to access AAA on all smart phones.

The College will look sympathetically at any cases involving student parents or vulnerable students but feels it cannot give 5 days self-cert to some students but not others. Please let your CQL know as soon as possible if you have any issues which might affect your attendance and we will put a support plan in place straight away.

The Students' Association will promote the Retention Policy and Attendance and Progress Policy to help students keep up their classes and remain at West College Scotland.

Management acknowledges a general concern among students about these issues.

In terms of software and the condition of computer rooms, these are being addressed by:

- (i) short and long term actions arising from the College's Estates Strategy; and
- (ii) significant annual expenditure and programmed works, split across the three campuses.

In terms of WiFi connections, the College wants students to be as specific as possible about where and when problems arise. So, if you have problems, please report them, providing as much detail as possible, to your lecturer or the Students' Association and they will pass on to IT.



ICT / USB issues at Clydebank: "The system doesn't recognise USB sticks at Clydebank."

This has been resolved.

The College now provides Office365 accounts to all students. This allows 5GB cloud storage, and means students no longer need to use USBs.

FUNDING: "There's too much bureaucracy and not enough clarity over what documents we have to produce to get funding."

The College agrees that this is a very complicated process and, along with other colleges, is speaking to the funding council about ways to simplify it.

In the meantime, the quickest way to access your funding is to upload or bring in important documents – especially financial documents – as soon as you can.

The College says it will highlight this in the emails and letters it sends out to students for 2017-18

PRINTING COSTS: "Is there a limit on how much we can photo-copy? We're worried that we might not be able to print off important work."

Every student now has a £6 per month printing credit.

The College has to meet Government carbon targets and this is one way of getting students and staff to think about how much paper they are using.

If there are occasions when you need to print more, contact your CQL. Remember, nobody will be academically disadvantaged by this policy.

CATERING: "The TASTE refectories are too expensive. Can microwaves and hot water not be made available to students?"

The College heavily subsidises the catering facilities and prices compare well to other outlets near our campuses. The catering staff work hard to continuously improve the quality of the food on offer and are happy to receive feedback.

Due to concerns over cross contamination, it is not possible to provide microwave ovens or hot water in canteen areas, although packed lunches can be eaten in the dining areas.

TIMETABLING: "Why can't we have the same timetable for the whole academic year? It would be good to get consistency. Some of us have had to give up part-time jobs when class times change from block to block."

The College has given a commitment that it will do everything it can to ensure that timetables will not change across the Academic Year.

However, there will be exceptional circumstances: for example staff availability, might mean timetables have to change.

When this happens, students will be given plenty of notice.

CASH MACHINES: "We were told we would be getting ATMs at the Greenock and Paisley campuses, after all Clydebank has one. Where are they?"

NURSERY: "Why is there no nursery in Clydebank, when Greenock and Paisley each have one?"

PARKING: "We're sick of students and staff parking in disabled bays in Clydebank and Paisley. This has caused a lot of distress and, on occasion, has meant students have been unable to attend classes."

"There aren't enough spaces at Clydebank and some of the parking on double-yellow lines and elsewhere is unacceptable."

Unfortunately, the College has had to put these plans to one side.

The bank would have charged as much as £2.50 for a withdrawal and the College felt it was wrong to ask students to pay this. It also took the view that it would be wrong for the College to pay the charges, as this, effectively, would be giving taxpayers' money to a financial institution.

This goes back to the period before the College merged in 2013. WCS inherited these facilities from the former colleges.

The College does not have the finances or the space to set up a nursery in Clydebank but it should be remembered that it continues to fund places for students' children in local nurseries in West Dunbartonshire.

The College agrees and continues to do all it can internally to stop this behaviour.

Police Scotland has told the College that officers will issue tickets to drivers in the Clydebank campus who chose to park in disabled bays without blue badges. Likewise, the police in Paisley have indicated that in the near future they will commence ticketing offenders at our Paisley campus.

The College agrees but says this is a council matter. It has suggested that students and staff might want to consider parking away from the College and making the short walk to the campus.

Also, Estates staff at Clydebank are investigating the use of bollards to prevent illegal parking which can obstruct emergency vehicles such as fire engines gaining access to the campus.

