

Scottish Student Sport **Festive Gathering** 2025

Digital Programme



Welcome to Festive Gathering 2025!

Today we are delighted to be hosted by UHI Perth. This isn't our first time in the Fair City for Festive Gathering having last held the event here in 2019.

The agenda has been designed to cover a range of topics which should prove insightful to lots of you across the sector. It's always a pleasure to welcome external speakers and we thank **Glasgow 2026** and **Robert Kielty** for joining us.

Several SSS Partners will be presenting today with **sportscotland** and **SAMH** both in action. From our members, we look forward to hearing from Ben Graham (**Heriot-Watt**) and Karl Kirkpatrick (**Glasgow**) in their respective breakout rooms.

Full information on each breakout session can be found in this programme. Please ensure you select your sessions before we get underway.

We remain indebted to Headline Partner **Technogym**, and Official Kit Suppliers **Canterbury** and **BE Uniforms**, who join us today. Be sure to check out their stall!

Should you have any issues, please seek out a member of SSS staff who will be on hand to offer assistance.

We hope you have a brilliant experience at Festive Gathering!



SCOTTISH STUDENT SPORT



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Visit Rennie and Ian at their stall in the main foyer to see what BE and CCC could do for your institution.

Agenda - at a Glance

Time	Session	Speaker
10:00	Arrival & Registration	
10:30	Opening Address	Catherine Etri
10:45	Glasgow 2026: The Lead Up & What's Next	Alex Johnston
11:30	Sport for Life in Tertiary Education	Fiona Wernham
12:00	Mentoring & Careers in Sport	Robert Kielty
12:30	Lunch & Activities	Get active with Cricket Scotland or treat yourself to a massage!
14:00	Welcome Back & Transition Time	
14:10	Breakout Room Sessions Select 2 Full details to follow	Ben Graham Heriot-Watt Ryan Wood SAMH Karl Kirkpatrick GUSA Chris Purdie SSS
15:30	Keeping Score: Reflections on 20 Years in Student Sport	Stew Fowlie
16:10	Round Up & Farewell	

Main Room Sessions

Alex Johnston | Glasgow 2026

Glasgow 2026: The Lead-Up & What's Next

This time last year, Glasgow 2026 featured on our Festive Agenda programme just months after being announced as the latest Commonwealth Games host venue.

Fast forward 12 months and with the Games looming ever closer, Legacy Manager Alex Johnston joins us to chat about what the next few months look like, alongside securing a valuable legacy to the event.

Fiona Wernham | sportscotland

Sport for Life in Tertiary Education

Head of Sport at sportscotland, Fiona. has a wealth of experience having been with the organisation since 2009, Previously working with Glasgow City Council and Edinburgh Leisure, she has held a variety of roles across the coaching, volunteering and development space.

Fiona joins us to discuss the national picture of their *Sport for Life* strategy, how tertiary education fits into this framework, and our sector's role in delivering it.

Main Room Sessions

Robert Kielty | Proform/University of Stirling **Mentoring for Careers in Sport**

Robert is a familiar face in the world of sport and tertiary education. Currently based at the University of Stirling where he lectures in Sport Management, his CV across both education and high performance sport makes for impressive reading!

His session will focus on the topic of mentoring, and providing purposeful opportunities for students at the start of their career journey.

Stew Fowlie | Scottish Student Sport **Keeping Score: Reflections on 20 Years in Student Sport**

In 2005, SSS (then SUS) first lept into action. Back then, a fresh-faced Stew Fowlie was one of the first through the door, helping bring this new organisation to life.

20 years on and plenty has changed, but one constant has been Stew's leadership. In this year's closing session, we look forward to Stew reflecting on how the sector has evolved since 2005.

Breakout Sessions

Please pick 2x sessions to attend

Ben Graham | Heriot-Watt University **Rethinking Training for Clubs**

This breakout session will outline the participant-led approach taken over the summer to club training at Heriot-Watt University. It will explore the rationale for change, highlight the changes made and reflect on its effectiveness by looking at what worked along with the lessons learned. Attendees will gain a clear understanding of the approach and its impact on student clubs as the season unravels.

Ryan Wood | SAMH **Understanding the New Scottish Mental Health Charter**

An introduction to the new Scottish Mental Health Charter and the role that university and college sport has in providing support to students through the power of physical activity and sport. The session will outline the new charter framework, look at understanding the current impact of work happening across the sector and how SAMH, and the charter, can support future activities to support the work happening in your institutions.

Breakout Sessions

Karl Kirkpatrick & Negin Golzari | University of Glasgow **Engaging the Disengaged: GUSA's Journey so far**

This session explores how we can more effectively engage students who rarely participate in sport or physical activity. It highlights the work undertaken by GUSA over the past 18 months, showing how a data-driven approach aligned with wider university priorities has begun to shift behaviours within historically hard-to-reach groups, including mature, international, and widening participation students. A current case study, led by a dedicated student intern, illustrates the early impact of this approach. There will be space for wider discussion as well as a Q&A.

SSS Comps Team **Comps Catch-Up**

A chance for everyone to chat about how fixtures & Sports Competitions have gone so far at the end of 2025, as well as looking ahead to 2026. We'll look at what's working, what's not, and a chance for a broad discussion on all things Competitions!

Please note this breakout will only run in Session 1

Staff Structures

Wondering who does what in each institution?

Following member feedback, we are once again in a position to share the staff structures and diagrams supplied to us.

We hope this information will help you understand who your counterparts in other institutions may be. If your institution is not listed and you'd like to share a staff structure, please send to julia@scottishstudentsport.com

