

ASC Handover Speech

Mr. President Awuah Patrick, the Dean of Students, the Student Life and Engagement Team, the outgoing President Samuel Yussif and his team, incoming student leaders, and my fellow students.

Good afternoon, and a warm welcome to this handing over ceremony. I am Yvette Ahishakiye, the outgoing vice president.

It is an honour to stand before you today as we gather not only to mark a transition—what I would confidently call one of the best 373 days of leadership but also to reflect on a season defined by service, growth, and shared responsibility.

When we began this tenure, we had a vision ... perhaps even a dream ... to make Ashesi not just a university, but a home away from home for all of us coming from different corners of the world.

Today, I would like to reflect on that journey through the lenses of **citizenship, scholarship, and leadership.**

Let me begin with **citizenship.**

For us, citizenship meant responsibility to one another, to our environment, and to the broader community beyond Ashesi. It meant a home away from home.

Through this lens, we mobilised support for victims of the Kantamanto market fires, championed advocacy for **plastic bans off campus**, organized **tree-planting exercises and beach clean-ups** to ensure that Ashesi students were active contributors to environmental sustainability. We also formalized **hostel junction naming** and integrated these locations into **Google Maps**, improving navigation, safety, and delivery processes.

In building community and belonging, we bought **pool tables, table tennis, fixed hostel TVs in collaboration with the facilities team** to enhance student social spaces.

We improved mobility through **Swift Transport to help students able to go to Accra and back** with ease.

We launched **ASC newsletters** to highlight ASC activities monthly to strengthen transparency and communication.

We also revived **fifteen student clubs**, restoring platforms for creativity, and engagement.

Beyond campus, we built **inter-university relations**, collaborating with **Lancaster University and Academic City** through joint events. Through the Sports Committee, we hosted a **varsity league that brought together eight Ghanaian universities**, fostering unity, healthy competition, and national student engagement.

And of course we Ashesi students on their birthdays

Next is **scholarship**.

We recognized that learning at Ashesi goes beyond the classroom. In response, we invested in **entrepreneurship masterclasses that** allowed students interested in business to gain the right foundation and mentorship. We hosted **AI Week**, complementing the Provost's Office efforts to raise awareness around the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence.

Additionally, we contributed to student transition and success through initiatives such as the **Freshman Welcome Book**, ensuring that incoming students felt informed, supported, and prepared from their first days on campus. We promoted innovation and problem-solving through the **Hack54 competition**

Our goal was simple: to create pathways for students to develop holistically and prepare meaningfully for life beyond Ashesi.

Moving on to **leadership**.

Leadership, to us, was never just about holding office: it was about building capacity, encouraging dialogue, and planning for continuity. We developed **five-year transition plans** to ensure smoother leadership handovers and institutional memory beyond a single council year.

We raised **one hundred and eighty-nine thousand, four hundred and sixteen Ghana cedis and ninety pesewas** in sponsorship funding. We invested **one hundred and one thousand, eight hundred and forty-seven Ghana cedis** in fixed deposits at a six percent rollover, and we are handing over **two hundred and forty-six thousand, seven hundred and thirty-two Ghana cedis** in reserves.

Beyond the numbers, we secured **in-kind sponsorships**, including free canopies and merchandise, significantly reducing event costs. We established long-term partnerships with **MTN and ICAG, INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS, GHANA** relationships we believe will continue to

benefit future councils. Importantly, we disbursed approximately **thirty thousand Ghana cedis** in emergency funding to support students in moments of need.

We also introduced structures designed for continuity. The **Event Support Fund** was created to support student-led initiatives that lack sufficient funding. The **Progressive Fund** was established to finance long-term projects beyond a single council year. And for the first time, we institutionalized an **investment policy**, requiring each ASC to invest **seven percent of its annual funding**. These investments will be held until the third year, starting from 2025, and then withdrawn to fund a visible, campus-wide project ensuring that every council leaves something tangible behind.

We did not achieve this alone. In the name of the outgoing ASC, I would like to sincerely appreciate the entire Ashesi community for their unwavering support: especially the Student Life and Engagement team, the Provost's Office, the Facilities team, the Dean, the Chief Operating Officer, the Financial Aid team, and, of course, the student body. Your guidance, commitment, and partnership made this journey possible

To the incoming council, remember this: it is a **one-year tenure**, but it holds **endless opportunities** to shape Ashesi into the institution you envisioned when you first applied. You are an active team—and **a team divided against itself cannot stand**.

It has truly been a pleasure to serve.

Welcome on board, and we wish you wisdom, unity, and courage as you lead Ashesi forward.

To my executive team: we made it. From the late nights of planning to hours of brainstorming sessions, midnight calls, and overflowing inboxes, you have been nothing short of amazing. Just as we began our meetings with the creed, we will end this tenure with that same creed.