

INTERNAL PROCEDURE

Title: Student Involvement Strategy

POLICY HOLDER:	Executive Manager
SMT OWNER:	Vice Principal Student & College Services
VERSION NO:	2 (2023)
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Amendments log

Review date	Version	Changes	Originated by	Approval
02/08/2023	2	Changed structure, edited to update information on various activities.	Sebastian Gasse	

Introduction

City College Norwich embraces student learning and success as its core purpose. Student involvement is central to providing an outstanding learning experience and it is vital that the student voice is listened to when examining and improving our teaching, learning and assessment, support practice and processes.

For students' potential benefits include:

- a more responsive, more engaging, higher quality offer that empowers students in shaping their own experience;
- improved outcomes for more students, especially those who might otherwise not succeed;
- students who are more expert and independent, and who can help to shape learning experiences tailored to meet their needs and objectives in a way that achieves success;
- Students who feel more involved and are motivated to put something back into the organisation, for instance by contributing to the development of policy or by coming back to share their experience of industry with future generations of students.

For our colleges potential benefits include:

- increased participation, retention, progression and achievement;
- better quality of information about the students' perspective, which can be used to triangulate other sources of data and drive professional and organisational development
- The voice of the learner is a core part of quality improvement;
- better decisions about resource allocation and investment.

Improved Student Involvement is also:

- A key characteristic of a high performing college.
- Creates a college community where students' opinions are listened to, valued and responded to.

Aim

The College wishes to be an organisation in which student involvement is embedded throughout the organisational culture. The aim of this strategy is to ensure that student voice mechanisms are student led and fully integrated.

We aim to develop a culture where:

- students are motivated and supported to give constructive feedback;
- students see feedback is taken seriously and results in change ('You said, We Did');
- tutors have the skills to encourage and respond positively to feedback supported by appropriate resources;
- there are measurable outcomes that show the impact the student involvement has had on the life of the College.

Purpose

This student involvement strategy covers four main areas:

- Involvement of students individually in order to strengthen teaching, learning and assessment and responsiveness to individual needs.
- Involvement of students collectively in order to strengthen student participation and representation.
- Involvement of students in a range of community, citizenship or other enrichment activities in or outside the College.
- Ensuring the Student Voice is integral to the College's decision-making processes.

Current Practice

- ***Involvement of students individually in order to strengthen teaching, learning and assessment and responsiveness to individual needs***
 - Student induction programme includes sessions on learning styles and 'what makes a good student'.
 - Regular 1:1 (min 3 times a year) sessions through the academic progress tutorial programme to evaluate strengths and areas of development including clear target setting with goals for improvement.
 - Initial assessment and diagnostic at induction for all full-time students and the results discussed through the initial Individual Learning Plan.
 - Clear communication is given to students by way of 'You Said We Did' notifications (SharePoint updates, app updates plus direct email contact).
 - Termly student voice & student feedback arranged by Heads of Area via surveys
 - An annual student survey to understand the views of learners across all aspects of the college experience
 - Students (Course Representatives) attend Course Committee (HE) meetings to discuss course related issues;
 - Further questioning of students throughout Learning Walks, Direct Session Reviews and student focus groups gives us valuable feedback which is then used to identify strengths and areas for development, this informs staff feedback and planning staff development and curriculum development.
- ***Involvement of students collectively to strengthen student participation and representation***
 - All students are invited to join our open forums four times a year – every student is a representative and SU officers and the SU president will note views, questions, concerns and ideas and collate these, so that they can be reported to SMT.
 - There are structured opportunities throughout the year i.e., Student Forums, Student Parliament; events in the foyer on specific issues; organised debates on topical issues, Students' Union drop-in sessions, elected Students' Union Officers etc.

which enable students to be confident in raising concerns and assured that improvement actions are put in place and revisited regularly.

- Each area has two student representatives in the Student Parliament. These are elected during the Autumn Term and represent students across all courses within their area.
 - Staff at all levels work to ensure that the views of students regarding the quality teaching, learning and assessment for each course, are sought and that this feedback helps to inform an area's self-assessment/improvement planning.
 - Each course review meeting (carried out approximately 3 times a year) has a mandatory section in the course review document which asks course leaders to provide evidence of how they have captured student voice and how this has informed improving student experience and planning the course for the future.
 - Student surveys throughout the year seek to gain valuable feedback from students. The findings form part of the self-assessment of each course and the SAR cross college. Any area that registers a significantly low positive score for any survey question is subsequently reviewed and improvement actions put in place.
 - Representation by Student Governors and the Students' Union President at College Corporation meetings.
 - A range of cross college events linked to the personal development programme include anti-bullying, safe driving, diversity week, mental health awareness week etc.
 - Qualification external verifier reports from awarding bodies, document student feedback and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for areas.
- ***Involvement of students in a range of community, citizenship, or other enrichment activities in or outside the College***
 - Development of fundamental British Values through our personal development programme.
 - Promoting local support, fundraising, charity and other community related activities.
 - A strong commitment to celebrating and sharing student successes.
 - A strong commitment to encouraging student involvement in fundraising and enterprise activities.
 - A strong commitment to encouraging students to lead entrepreneurial activities.
 - A good level of involvement of students in College activities and events such as Open events, Norfolk Show, Take Overs etc.
 - Students are encouraged to lead on (and/or participate in) topical 'Let's Debate' sessions – such as current affairs and equality and diversity issues.
- ***Ensuring the Student Voice is integral to the College's decision-making processes***
 - Students receive clear information at induction about the value of the student voice and are encouraged to engage in teaching, learning and assessment quality review opportunities.
 - Ongoing promotion of Student Voice via the Students' Union platforms on SharePoint, using the One College App and

Instagram.

- 'You said, We Did' SharePoint blog posts that are advertised through student emails – as well as a termly summary post on the Students' Union Instagram.
- Key feedback and priorities for change from Student Forums and Course Reviews are reported to governors via the Curriculum and Standards Committee.
- Prior to each governing body meeting (6 times per year), a number of students are invited to speak to governors informally, so that governors hear views of students alongside the formal reporting mechanisms
- Student Governors (1 HE and 1 FE) are elected each year and are supported to attend full Corporation and associated committee meetings.
- Students' Union President is a member of SMT and attends regular meetings with the Principal to provide ongoing student feedback.
- Student Survey results are an integral part of the College's SAR process.
- The College seeks the views of students on any major matter of strategy or provision that is likely to impact on the 'student experience'.

Want to get involved?

Want to see what the College has to offer you outside of your course?

As early as August, the Students' Union will be putting in place a new schedule for forums, elections and events to ensure the student voice is heard within the College. As soon as the students enrol, they automatically become a member of the Students' Union, this allows us to reach out and encourage them get involved.

During enrolment, induction and our Student Union Welcome Week, the numerous roles within the Students' Union will be advertised so students know how exactly they can get involved. The roles include Executive Officers, Parliament Representatives and Student Governors. These are active roles that require regular communication with the Students' Union, management, and the student body.

The Students' Union is run by a democratic system. Students are voted into their positions by their fellow students and are either re-elected or replaced the following academic year. Each role can be held for a maximum term of two years. A calendar of election and student voice activity is published on the SU SharePoint.

We run regular open forums at every campus. These happen termly - with two taking place in the Autumn term. The forums give the students the chance to share their ideas and opinions in an informal face-to-face chat, and their feedback is then shared and discussed with curriculum leaders and the Senior Management Team. Any actions or changes are communicated via our 'You said – we did' briefings. The forums also directly inform debates at the Student Parliament, which is the main decision-making body of the Union.

Over the past year, the student voice has led to brilliant changes within the college. We have had an influx of highly requested clubs, student-led events as well as improvements to what's on offer in the college café. There are also changes within individual courses being made to cater to the student voice.

The voice of our students is our primary focus, and we continue to develop and provide more platforms for students to get in touch. The Students' Union currently operate on Instagram, SharePoint, through emails and via our new One College App.

As part of our Student Involvement Strategy, we try to create as many opportunities as possible for students to get involved with extracurricular activities that help personal and professional development.

A great way of getting further involved is:

- Stand as an Officer of the Union, representing a certain group of students and helping with Union activities.

- Become a Student Ambassador – a voluntary role to support Open Events, show visitors around the campus or even visit your old school to talk about your course.
- Volunteering with the Students' Union.
- Speak to the Students' Union with a club, society or event idea and help organise it.
- Stand as a Student Parliament Rep and get a say in some important decisions.
- Run for Further or Higher Education Student Governor and see how the College's Governing Body works.
- Run for President and run the Union yourself!

We also encourage you to:

- Participate in the quality review of your course – inform course planning for the future as part of a student focus group.
- Represent the College at skills competitions.
- Represent the College at open days and other events as a member of College Crew' – find out more about this paid work opportunity by visiting the Advice Shop.
- Take part in industry led projects (real live work opportunities).
- Work collaboratively with other curriculum areas of the College.
- Lead on entrepreneurial activities – such as promoting and selling ideas/product and/or services by using the shop premises.
- Volunteer for a local charity or organisation.
- Fundraising for a charity/project.
- Join the College sports clubs.

For further information on any of the above activities, visit the Students' Union Office or the Advice Shop, both of which are found on the ground floor of the Norwich building.