



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

HE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Owner:	Head of Quality and Student Engagement
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1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 The policy outlines the mechanisms by which all Higher Education students enrolled at South West College participate in quality enhancement and quality assurance processes, which includes but is not restricted to representation of the student view through formal representation mechanisms.
- 1.2 It is widely accepted that the views of students, individually and collectively, should inform quality and enhancement systems with the purpose of improving the student educational experience both for current and future cohorts. Student involvement in quality can have a positive influence on the delivery and development of any aspect of the student educational experience.
- 1.3 Aspects of the educational journey into which students can offer insight to South West College include:
- application and admission;
 - induction and transition into higher education;
 - programme and curriculum design, delivery and organization;
 - curriculum content;
 - teaching delivery;
 - learning opportunities;
 - learning resources;
 - student support and guidance; and
 - Assessment and feedback.

2. **Scope**

- 2.1 This policy has been guided in its development by Sector-Agreed Principles of the revised UK Quality Code. As defined by the UK Quality code “Student engagement refers to the participation of students in influencing and improving their educational experience. This includes, but is not restricted to, participation in quality assurance and enhancement processes and engagement in learning and teaching as active partners.” For further information, visit <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>.

3. Student Involvement in Quality

- 3.1 All Higher Education students at South West College have the opportunity to be involved in quality enhancement and assurance processes in a manner and at a level appropriate to them.
- 3.2 South West College is committed to:
- i.) Fostering active student participation in South West College quality systems, including using individual and collective feedback from students;
 - ii.) Implementing transparent mechanisms, agreed with students, for the nomination and election of South West College Student Representatives;
 - iii.) Providing induction and ongoing support for students and staff appropriate to their quality assurance roles;
 - iv.) Monitoring, reviewing and enhancing the effectiveness of their policies and processes for engaging students in South West College quality processes.

4. Student Involvement in Learning and Teaching

- 4.1 Student engagement in learning and teaching refers to students' active participation in the academic environment resulting in an enhanced learning experience. This may be through involvement with their individual studies, and/or the structures and processes that underpin learning and teaching.
- 4.2 South West College recognises that student engagement in learning and teaching is important for the following reasons:
- i.) Active participation encourages our students to take more responsibility for, and have ownership of, their learning, thus enhancing their academic experience.
 - ii.) Student engagement in learning and teaching recognises the different goals, approaches and motivations of each individual student as well as the collective student voice.
 - iii.) Active engagement of our students is the main channel through which we are able to get feedback from our students, helping us to develop and improve all aspects of university life.

- iv.) Partnership and collaboration between our students and staff create mutually beneficial learning communities.
- v.) Student engagement in learning and teaching underpins deep, transformational learning.
- vi.) Student engagement in learning and teaching enables the attainment of skills, thus enhancing the employability of our students.

4.3 Student engagement is a broad concept, comprising a number of important features. These features are outlined below in a series of 'Contextualising Principles' which demonstrate the practical ways in which student engagement in learning and teaching can be understood at South West College. In addition, these principles are strongly reflected in the College's teaching and learning strategy.

4.4 **Contextualising Principles:**

- i.) There is a commitment to recognise and address barriers to engagement, so that all students can have an equal voice and opportunity to contribute.
- ii.) Students are engaged in decision-making processes and are equipped with sufficient background knowledge to make effective contributions. Students are encouraged to initiate conversations, make suggestions and ask "why?" The learning and teaching environment is receptive to contributions made by students.
- iii.) Regular feedback allows students to review their own academic performance and progress. Through dialogue with staff, students are enabled to set their own learning goals appropriate to their own learning and development needs.
- iv.) Students are encouraged and enabled to learn independently both within and outside their core programme of study.
- v.) Engagement opportunities are recognised as a means to enhance the development of employability, professionalism and active citizenship in a global context. Students are able to identify and articulate the skills they gain from these opportunities.
- vi.) Opportunities to engage are widely publicised, accessible and flexible, to meet the needs of all students and staff. Expectations for students and staff are made clear.
- vii.) Students are encouraged to undertake formal roles and are inducted, trained and supported to fulfil these roles. Opportunities also exist for students to

contribute more informally at a departmental, and institutional level.

- viii.) Staff are well-informed about student engagement in learning and teaching and are appropriately trained in specific roles which support engagement activities.
- ix.) Student engagement in learning and teaching is recognised and rewarded appropriately.
- x.) The effectiveness and impact of student engagement in learning and teaching are regularly monitored, reviewed and disseminated.

5. Framework for Student Engagement

- 5.1 The College Curriculum and Quality Committee and the Higher Education Academic Board (HEAB) will have oversight in the development, implementation and monitoring of the College's Student Engagement Strategy. Membership of this group includes the Director of Curriculum, the Head of Quality and Student Engagement, Higher Education Coordinator, Student Representatives, and the Student Engagement and Support Manager.
- 5.2 Student Engagement with Institutional Committees - There are a number of key committees within the college where the College Senior Management Team consider student representation to be critical. Student representatives sit on the College Governing body and the HEAB.
- 5.3 Student engagement at programme level: One student from each programme is elected by fellow classmates to represent them as a Student Representative. Student Representatives are full members of the Course Committee and are expected to:
 - i.) Canvas opinions of their fellow students.
 - ii.) Act as a single voice for their fellow students on the programme.
 - iii.) Deliver 'open access' sessions to allow contact outside the classroom.
 - iv.) Meet regularly with the Student Engagement and Support Manager / and Course director to share views.
 - v.) Provide two-way feedback to classmates and course directors.
 - vi.) Work with Student Support team to produce a Calendar of Events and deliver

a range of extra-curricular activities.

vii.) Contribute to the annual course review process.

viii.) Contribute to the review of curriculum and assessment through the revalidation process.

- 5.4 Student engagement at module level: All students have the opportunity and are encouraged to complete the Student Module Evaluation Questionnaire which in turn feeds into module monitoring and the annual course review process. The Student Module Evaluation considers the learning, teaching and assessment of the module along with comments on resources and the general learning experience. Student Module Evaluations are analysed by the Quality Department and reported to the Course Director and Course Committee.
- 5.5 Student surveys are a key element in seeking feedback from students and obtaining information to improve services and enhance the student experience. Results are analysed and recommendations for change are made based on the findings. Some of the findings may prompt further research to gain more understanding of how students feel about particular issues. Important student surveys include: the National Student Survey; the QDP Learning and Teaching Survey; Post Induction and Pre-Exit Surveys that are designed specifically as a Course Enhancement Survey.
- 5.6 Focus groups may also be undertaken with students to enhance student learning and provide staff with information that they can use to guide and evaluate changes in course content and teaching, and to enhance support for learning across programmes.
- 5.7 Student Support Team Management: Student Engagement and Support Manager. (with the Student Support Team) will provide on-going training to the Higher Education Student Representatives and act as a key liaison point between Student Representatives and senior management and staff. The Student Support Team also provides administrative support to the Student Representatives and ensures the outcome of meetings is appropriately cascaded.
- 5.8 The College will ensure students receive timely feedback on actions taken in

response to student feedback through formal and informal communication channels. This will include sharing details of survey responses and significant external scrutiny activity on student gateway.

6. Assessing Student Engagement

- 6.1 Student engagement at South West College is understood and evidenced through a range of qualitative and quantitative information drawn from across the student lifecycle. This evidence supports quality assurance and enhancement activity and informs decision-making at programme, departmental and institutional level.

Sources of evidence may include, but are not limited to:

- internal and external student survey data, including module evaluations and the National Student Survey (NSS);
- feedback gathered through student representatives, focus groups and other consultative activities;
- student retention, progression, attendance and engagement data;
- levels of student participation in representative structures, committees and enhancement activities.

- 6.2 Evidence gathered through these mechanisms contributes to institutional oversight, committee consideration and continuous improvement activity, in line with the College's quality framework.

7. Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 The College will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this Policy. This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required to reflect changes in legislation or circumstances.
- 7.2 The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this Policy effectively and is committed to reviewing this Policy on a regular basis, in consultation with the recognised trade unions, statutory organisations such as the

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and in line with models of good practice.

Signed Principal and Chief Executive: _____

Date: _____

Signed Chair of the Governing Body: _____

Date: _____

Related Documentation

Title	Location	Owner
Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2025-2028	Gateway	Head of Quality and Student Engagement
Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy	Gateway	Head of Quality and Student Engagement
UK Quality Code for Higher Education	QAA Website	QAA
Higher Education Attendance Policy	Gateway	Head of Quality and Student Engagement

Change Log

Location	Change from deletion/addition	Change to
	This is an update to the “Student Engagement Policy V1.0” last updated by Centre for Excellence Manager HE, September 2019.	HE Student Engagement Policy owner Head of Quality and Student Engagement.

Communication

Who needs to know (for action)	Senior Management Team Heads and Deputy Heads of Department Course Coordinators, HLA Manager Head of Quality and Student Engagement Higher Education development Coordinator Quality Team, Marketing Team Student Support and Engagement Team Applicants, Students
Who needs to be aware	All lecturing staff

Communication Plan

Action	By Whom	By When
Communicate to all staff	Nicola Nugent	On approval
Upload to Student and Staff Gateway	B McIllduff / J Kelly	On approval

Document Development

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

Name	Role
Julie Kelly	Higher Education Development Coordinator
Brian McIllduff	Head of Quality and Student Engagement

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

Name	Organisation	Date
N/A		

Approval Dates

Approved by	Date
Governing Body	24 June 2026

Document History

Issue no. under review	Date of review:	Persons involved in review	Changes made after review? Yes/No If Yes refer to change log	New Issue No.	If changes made was consultation required?	If changes made was Equality Screening required?
V1.0	May 2026	B McIllduff/J Kelly	Yes	V2.0	No	No