



HE Learner Voice Strategy

September 2023



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOLLOWING REVIEW

PAGE NUMBER OR HEADING NAME	DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	CHANGES MADE BY
Throughout Document	FE Learner Voice removed	RG
8	Learner Voice Activities updated - Appendix 1	RG
10	Timeline Learner Voice - date changes – Appendix 2	RG

Equality Impact Assessment

It is proposed that this form be included in all college policy template from hereon before the contents page..

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	1 September 2023
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Tracy Espinosa
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Student Services Manager (Engagement and Funding)
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	All Higher Education students
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	To provide a more concise document which can be easily understood by all

You will need to consider whether its possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy /procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

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Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age				
Disability				
Gender (Sex)				
Gender Reassignment				
Marriage or Civil Partnership				
Pregnancy / Maternity				
Race				
Religion or Religious Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Any other element that needs to be considered.	5	This is a positive change for Students for whom English is a second language although they may still struggle to understand this strategy	Appropriate action will be taken to ensure any person who discloses English as a second language are provided with adjustments to enable them to understand and be aware of processes	Ongoing – throughout academic year

Note:

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

HE LEARNER VOICE STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

South Essex College values the views of its learners. Learners are defined as any person studying at the College whether full time, part time, day release, distance learner or apprentice. The HE Learner Voice Strategy specifically relates to learners at Level 4, 5, and 6. The College believes that listening to learners' views and involving them in decision making will result in engaged, inspired and empowered individuals, leading to improvements in teaching learning and assessment, enhanced learning environments, improved retention and successful outcomes and progression.

POLICY AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to set out the intentions of South Essex College Group in seeking, listening to and acting on student views.

RELATED COLLEGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FE Learner Voice Strategy

Key Principles

- To maximise opportunities available to ensure learners' views are heard and responded to across all types of provision.
- To ensure that the learner voice permeates throughout the College to support continuous improvements
- To proactively promote learner voice mechanisms so that every learner knows how to share their views
- To offer a range of methods to gather the views of learners
- To ensure learners are involved in decision-making and strategic development
- To establish feedback as a route that leads to improvement
- To guarantee fair opportunities for all groups of learners across all College campuses to engage with the learner voice
- To actively engage HE learners as 'participants', 'evaluators' and 'co-creators'

Learner Voice Activities

All learners will have an opportunity to provide feedback about the College either individually or collectively. Learner representation provides our learners with a voice to influence decision making and the feedback provides information from the learner experience, which will have a significant impact on the future development and success of students, the college and the local community.

Responsibilities

The Student Services team will:

- Provide support and guidance to College Student Union/ Course Representatives
- Manage Student Union and Student Governor nominations
- Run semesterly Course Representative meetings
- Engage Course Representatives in cross College activities/meetings
- Provide feedback/responses on departmental/ cross College learner voice activity
- Facilitate College/ external surveys eg. NSS

Director of HE Operations/ Programme Partnership Managers/ Programme Leaders will:

- Appoint Class/Course Representatives and engage them in cross College activities/meetings
- Run semesterly Programme Board meetings
- Nominate Course Representatives to attend cross College meetings
- Provide feedback/responses to issues raised via Programme Board and cross College based meetings.
- Gather learner voice during observations of teaching, learning and assessment
- Respond to compliments and complaints
- Facilitate College/ external surveys e.g. HE Internal Survey

Compliments and Complaints are the responsibility of all College staff. Detailed information and responsibilities are published within the Compliments and Complaints Policy.

Student Union

All learners become a member of the College's Student Union when they enrol. The Student Union is part of the National Union of Students (NUS) and exists to improve student experience at the College. Membership of the union gives students access to advice and information, discounts on parking, shopping, stationery and other benefits. All College students are encouraged to take an active part in shaping the Student Union.

The Student Union will run as two associations under the branding FE Student Council and HE Student Union. HE students will form an HE Student Union and vote in 4 executive officers. These Officers are elected by the HE learner body. Executive Officer Roles are President and Vice President, Access and Participation and Equality and Diversity.

The Union Council which consists of The Executive committee and Class/Course representatives including the Class Representatives from Higher Education is the

supreme decision making body of the Union and responsible for raising issues that are a concern to its members to the Senior Management team of the College

South Essex College Group Student Union will meet termly with representation from both the FE and HE along with student governors and relevant staff members.

For further information please refer to the Student Union constitution.

Feedback, Reporting and Impact

The College provides feedback to learners in a variety of ways through social media, College website, meetings, letter or email (where appropriate) and via infographics. Impact will be measured through timely responses to compliments and complaints, positive distance travelled in survey results and improved engagement and outcomes.

Monitoring and review of the Strategy

The Learner Voice Strategy will be reviewed at the end of each academic year by the Group Director, Student Experience, the Director of HE Operations and the Student Services Manager (Funding and Engagement).

Appendix 1

Learner Voice Activities

HE Course Representatives: At the start of the academic year, each class will elect a course representative (rep) and deputy course representatives to liaise with their lecturers and Student Engagement team to put forward ideas and suggestions. Representatives are invited to attend Programme Board meetings each Semester to feedback the views of their class regarding course specific issues. Representatives are also invited to attend a Faculty Wide Course Representative meeting each semester to discuss HE/ College wide issues. The Faculty Course Rep meeting is chaired by the Student Engagement Officer with HE representatives from the Student Union in attendance. Minutes of meetings, feedback and responses are posted on the Course Representative Canvas/ Teams page.

Programme Boards: Higher Education learners attend programme boards which provide an opportunity to feedback, evaluate the effectiveness of, suggest improvements to, and recognise good practice related to their programme of study, as well as monitor the progress made on their feedback and suggestions in subsequent programme board meetings. This approach recognises learners as 'participants', 'evaluators' and, to an extent, 'co-creators'. The programme boards include learner feedback templates that are aligned to the latest iteration of NSS and are contextualised to the annual learner journey across all levels and years of study.

Learner Surveys: A Start of Year Survey is carried out in October and an In Year Survey in March. The College undertakes and participates in a number of HE learner surveys, including the annual National Student Survey (NSS) for learners, conducted in the final year of their level 5 and 6 programmes and also undertakes its own internal Learner Survey at levels 4 and 5.

Programme/module feedback survey: Each Higher Education subject discipline undertakes an annual programme/module feedback survey which feeds into the annual monitoring and review (AMR) of programmes and modules

Focus Groups: A variety of focus groups will take place throughout the year facilitated by members of the HE Student Support team and Student Union.

Student Governors: The College appoints two Student Governors each academic year, one FE and one HE. The Governors do not have to be an elected SU Officer but must proactively engage with the Student Union

Committee/Board Meetings	Learner Representation
Governing Board (4 times a year plus 2 x board development days)	HE Student Governor
HE College Executive Board (Termly)	1 x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Audit and Finance Committee (Termly)	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Access and Participation Committee (Termly)	HE Student Union Access and Participation Officer
HE Student Experience Committee (Termly)	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Student Experience Committee (Termly)_	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Curriculum and Quality Committee (Termly)	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Programme Board meetings (Semesterly)	1x Course Rep from each year of each Programme
HE Course Rep Meeting (Semesterly)	1x Course Rep from each year of each Programme
HE Student Support Forum (3 times per year)	Student Union HE President Student Union Equality and Diversity Officer

Appendix 2

Timeline FE Learner Voice

Month	Activity	Week commencing
September	HE Student Union Executive Officer nominations	25/09/23
	HE Student Governor nominations	25/09/23
October	Course Representatives appointed	09/10/23
	Start of Year Survey (Induction)	09/10/23
	Student Union elections	18/10/23
	Student Union Training	30/10/23
	Drop in with the Director of HE	30/10/23
November	Programme Boards Semester 1	06/11/23
	HE Course Representatives Meeting	20/11/23
December	Student Focus Group	04/12/23
January	Drop in with the Director of HE	15/01/24
	Programme Board Semester 2	22/01/24
February	HE Course Representatives Meeting	26/02/24
March	Student Focus Group	04/03/24
April	Drop in with the Director of HE	15/04/24



Senior Leadership Responsibility	Adam Fahey, Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality
Policy Author	Rachael Glover
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Group Director, Student Experience Director of HE Operations Student Services Manager (Funding & Engagement)
Issue date of current version	September 2023
Date to be reviewed	August 2024
Type of Policy	Public / Internal