

### **Strategy description:**

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that students (all students and apprentices) at the College are involved in influencing, changing and improving their experience at College for themselves and other students both now and in the future.

This strategy does not relate to the engagement of hard to reach potential students within the wider community, this can be found within the College Community Engagement and Responsiveness Policy.

### **Supporting documentation:**

- Committee Structure
- Election of Student Governors
- Formation of Student Union
- Roles & Responsibilities of Course Representatives
- Survey procedures
- Other engagement processes
- Course Representatives

### **Links to other policies:**

- Community Engagement and Responsiveness Policy
- Single Equality Scheme
- Student Support Strategy

## 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that students at the College are involved in influencing, changing and improving their experience at College for themselves and other students both now and in the future.

The Learning and Skills Council report "Developing a Learner Involvement Strategy" (June 2007) identified the following benefits for students and the College.

Students:

- A more responsive, more engaging, higher quality offer that empowers students in shaping their own experience, and delivers improved outcomes for more students, especially those who might not otherwise succeed.

The College:

- Increased participation, retention, progression and achievement
- 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.
- Better quality of information about the student's perspective, which can be used to triangulate other sources of data and drive professional and organisational development and quality improvement.
- Better decisions about resource allocation and investment.
- Students who feel more involved and are motivated to put something back into the organisation.

## 2.0 Student Engagement Strategy – what are we aiming to achieve?

Student engagement is a valued and important part of the College decision making and continuous quality improvement processes and through a range of meaningful and worthwhile engagement opportunities students will be able to:

- Impact positively on the learning and teaching experience
- Impact positively on student support services that underpin the learning and teaching experience
- Engage with the wider work and life of the College
- Gain lifeskills to support future employment and engagement in the community
- Know when and how their engagement directly impacts on and brings about quality improvement.

An aim is to ensure that student engagement is embedded in the culture, practices, processes and procedures of the College and the strategy will:

- Recognise existing opportunities for students to engage
- Recognise the role of the Student Council and student representation on the Governing Board in student engagement
- Identify potential future opportunities for student engagement and
- Identify how the impact of student engagement on the College can be measured.

### **3.0 Opportunities for students to engage with learning, teaching and assessment processes and quality improvement activities**

- Attendance at pre-entry guidance meetings to ensure placement on the correct course
- Identification of learning aims as part of the tutorial process.
- Initial assessment of learning level, style and progression support needs to ensure the most appropriate learning programme is adopted
- Being an active and positive member of a class group and participating within a group setting
- Involvement in class and individual tutorials
- Constructive student feedback as part of the lesson observation process
- Participation in assessment processes
- Uptake of Information, Advice and Guidance and Support entitlement
- Participating in providing feedback during staff selection processes
- Involvement in course related competitions and events
- Involvement in external student focused activities such as Ofsted and QAA
- As contributors to good practice events
- Contributing to student experience days

### **4.0 Opportunities for students to engage with the wider College environment**

The College actively promotes engagement with the wider College environment through a range of opportunities such as:

- Attending discussion group meetings with the Principal and other members of the Senior Management Team
- Attending focus group meetings with the Quality Team
- Meeting with other College managers as appropriate through the year
- Meeting with College Governors during visits to curriculum areas and College sites
- Completion of satisfaction surveys at different points in the year
- Taking part in wider College events e.g. Sustainability Day
- Taking part in consultation processes e.g. Student Conference
- Making suggestions and comments to the College
- Acting as a course representative
- Undertaking an induction programme
- Where required, implementing the College complaints procedure
- Participation in sports, and utilisation of health and exercise facilities
- Taking part in extracurricular events, trips and tours
- Acting as College Ambassadors to promote the College
- Participating and contributing to volunteering initiatives.

### **5.0 Opportunities for students to engage through the College's formal committees:**

The College recognises the importance of an active student body as part of the student engagement process and so the College has the following formal arrangements for student representation:

- Student representation on the College's Board of Governors and its various sub-committees
- Student representation on a range of cross College groups e.g. Academic Board
- Student representation on and leadership of the College's Student Union.

## **6.0 Measuring the impact of student engagement activities at the College**

The College monitors and evaluates closely the key performance indicators of retention, success, achievement, value added and progression. As part of evaluating the College's student engagement process it will look at a range of measures and evidence which will allow it to evaluate the success and value of its approach to student engagement. This will include

- Evidence that students' views have been listened to and where appropriate action taken
- Evidence that students' views are considered across a range of self-assessment activities, and impact of views is recorded as part of the report
- Student surveys achieve high levels of participation
- Evidence that students' views lead to more informed decision making
- Student surveys continue to demonstrate high levels of satisfaction
- Effective working of the Student Council and high participation rate
- Student feedback within lesson observation continues to drive improvements in learning and teaching
- Participation rates in discussion groups, focus groups and Student Conference and evidence of impact.
- Student engagement participation across different modes of attendance and College sites
- Quality of feedback and communication to students about the outcomes of student engagement.

## **7.0 Responsibilities and Review**

The majority of the existing opportunities for student engagement within the College feed into many existing policies, procedures and processes. Leadership of student engagement activities will lie with the Principal and the Director of Quality and Performance will assume a coordinating responsibility across the elements of student engagement and will produce annually a high level self-assessment.

The College will review its approach to student engagement on an annual basis to priorities its activities towards:

- Giving students more opportunities to get involved
- Helping students develop the skills they need to get involved
- Giving students the support and confidence they need to get involved
- Motivating students to get involved
- Identifying and meeting the needs of groups of students who are currently less involved
- Ensuring staff have the skills support and confidence they need to involve students.