South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

SGS Students as Partners Policy
Plan for Stakeholder Support Services and Engagement

If you would like this document in an alternate format

Please contact the Human Resources Department

Prepared by:	Gavin Murray	
Job Title/Role:	Vice Principal	
Ref. No.: **Q/P 164**	Date of this version:	April 2022
	Upload to Share point:	YES
	Upload to College website:	**YES**
	Upload to e-Campus:	YES

Key definition: Engagement means **the active and informed participation of all in shaping and developing their experience** through attendance and involvement in teaching and progress conversations.

At SGS, learners are expected to be representatives of their cohort, members of panels and forums, leaders of change projects or co-organisers of events or problem solving projects with staff. The goals of this plan is to continue to embed a culture and ethos of engagement throughout the College.

MANDATORY INITIAL IMPACT SCREENING			
Completed by:			
Gavin Murray	Vice Principal	02/04/2020	
I have read the guidance document: Completing a Policy Impact Assessment?			✓
If this policy has been up-dated, please tick to confirm that the initial impact screening has also been reviewed:			☐

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
Characteristic	**This policy seeks to:**
Age	No appreciable impact
Disability	Commit to making reasonable adjustments to promote equality of access and opportunity for learners, employees and members of the public with disabilities and/or learning difficulties/disabilities.
Faith or Belief	No appreciable impact
Gender	No appreciable impact
Race or Ethnicity	Commits the college to positive action to promote equality and foster good relations between members of different racial and ethnic groups
Orientation	No appreciable impact
Gender reassignment	No appreciable impact
Economic disadvantage	No appreciable impact
Rural isolation	No appreciable impact
Marriage	No appreciable impact
Pregnancy & maternity	No appreciable impact
Carers & care leavers	No appreciable impact
Vulnerable persons	Safeguarding children or vulnerable adults
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to maximise opportunities to improve diversity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:	
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to improve equality of opportunity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:	3.6 and 3.6
Is there any possibility that this policy could operate in a discriminatory way? ☐ ✗	If you have ticked yes (red), which characteristic will be most affected? Choose an item.
If yes please confirm that the Policy has been sent for a full Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment, and note the date: ☐	Click or tap to enter a date.

Note: if the policy does not seek to increase diversity or improve equality you should go back and review it before submitting it for approval.

MAPPING OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	
Which United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Right does this policy most protect:	Art. 3 Best interests of the child
	Art. 12 Respect for personal views
	Art. 13 Freedom of expression
Which Human Right (HRA) does this policy most protect:	Art. 9 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
	Art. 10 Freedom of expression

DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY BY DESIGN SCREENING	
Tick to confirm that you have considered any data protection issues as part of the design and implementation of this policy; and, that implementing this policy will <u>not</u> result in the collection, storage or processing of personal data outside of official College systems:	✓
Tick to indicated that this policy has or requires a Data Privacy Impact Assessment:	☐

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Does this policy relate directly or indirectly to any legal or regulatory environmental or sustainability standard(s)?	Yes ☐	No ☒
If so, please list them:		

Will any aspects of this policy lead to:		
Reduced miles, or provide / improve / promote alternatives to car-based transport (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling car sharing, low emission vehicles, community transport, environmentally friendly fuels and/or technologies)	Yes ✓	No ☐
Reduce waste, environmental hazards and/or toxic materials for example by reducing PVC, photocopier and printer use, air pollution, noise, mining or deforestation? Or increase the amount of College waste that is recycled or composted?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Reduce water consumption?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Reduce single use plastic?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Reduce use of natural resources such as raw materials and energy to promote a circular economy?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Improve the resource efficiency of new or refurbished buildings (water, energy, density, use of existing buildings, designing for a longer lifespan)?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Will it improve green space and access to green space?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Please list the sections of this policy which specifically target an improved environment:		

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Will any aspects of this policy lead to:		
Promotion of healthy working lives (including health and safety at work, work-life/home-life balance and family friendly practices)?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Provide employment opportunities for local people?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Promote ethical purchasing of goods or services for example by increasing transparency of modern slavery in our supply chain?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Support the local economy through the use of local suppliers, SMEs or engage with third sector or community groups?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Promote health, increase community resilience, social cohesion, reduce social isolation and support sustainable development?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Support mitigation of the likely effects of climate change (e.g. identifying proactive and community support for vulnerable groups; contingency planning for flood/snow, heatwaves and other weather extremes)?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Otherwise create incentives to promote awareness of sustainability, healthy behaviours, mental wellbeing, living independently and self-management?	Yes ☐	No ☒
Please list the sections of this policy which specifically target improved sustainability:		

What is the *estimated* carbon impact of this policy (in terms of tCO2e)	**Increase (+tCO2e)** ☐	**Decrease (-tCO2e)** ☐	**Net Zero CO2** ☼

Mandatory initial impact screening completed by:	Gavin Murray
Date	01/04/2022
Initial impact screening supported by (Please list each individual)	

1. Introduction

1.1. South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS) is committed to involving its Higher Education (HE) students in its strategic decision-making and operational management processes.

1.2. The College firmly believes that embracing student views and offering students an opportunity to have direct involvement in assessing and shaping their own learning experience will have a significant and effective impact on developing the College's quality improvement processes and increasing student success. The College also believes that students have key roles to play in self-assessment, self-improvement and policy-making procedures.

1.3. This HE Students as Partners Policy is intended to facilitate students to input, not only as customers of the College, but as co-producers of their educational experiences and outcomes, both individually and collectively, via the decision making processes of the College.

2. Planned Aim

2.1. The College and the Corporation are resolute in embracing student views and offering multiple, structured opportunities for HE students to have direct involvement in assessing and shaping their own learning experience and the Higher Education provision offered by the College.

2.2. All students, individually and collectively, are entitled to participate in the co-production of their College experience and the design of the provision we offer.

2.3. The HE Students as Partners Policy has a vital role to play within the Annual Review and Improvement Process and helps to validate our commitment to the idea, processes and practices of authentic self-regulation and evaluation

2.4. The College adheres to the regulatory framework of The Office For Students (OfS)[1] and actively promotes its four primary objectives: To ensure that all students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education are supported to access, succeed in, and from progress from, higher education; Receive a high quality academic experience; Are able to progress into employment or further study; Receive value for money.

3. Planned Objectives

3.1. Student engagement requires individual students to be directly involved in shaping and evaluating their educational experience. This process depends on negotiation and dialogue with students. The SGS HE Students as Partners Policy, addresses how this dialogue will be fostered to generate sustained and continuous improvements to our Higher Education offer and delivery.

4. Implementation (Mechanisms for Involvement)

4.1. 'It is widely accepted that the views of students, individually and collectively, should inform quality 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

---

[1] OfS duties, functions and powers awarded by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA)

the delivery and development of any aspect of the student educational experience, whether implemented by the higher education provider, a faculty, a department, or an individual member of staff.' *QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education; Chapter B5 Student Engagement*

4.2. With this in mind the College has identified a student facing Head of Higher Education Student Recruitment and Experience to facilitate both student and College led involvement; this role will also collate evidence of involvement for the Corporation and publish annually a calendar of activities.

4.3. The SGS HE Students as Partners Policy also seeks to clarify and confirm that all members of staff have a duty to be responsive to the views of our students.

4.4. **Student Led Involvement**

4.4.1. **Student Governors**

4.4.1.1. By virtue of the Corporation's Instrument of Government Section 2 (d)

At least one member who is a student at the institution and has been nominated and elected by their fellow students.

The Student Governors play a full part in the Board's proceedings, including the periodic review of the educational character, mission, values and strategic priorities of the College and the oversight of its activities.

4.4.2. **Student Parliament and Council**

4.4.2.1. At the inception of South Gloucestershire and Stroud College the Corporation was pleased to approve the Student Union constitution.

4.4.2.2. The Student Council and Parliament conduct business under the Authority of the Student Union constitution.

4.4.2.3. Meetings are also convened with the Principal, Chair of the Corporation and Student Union to obtain views on the Policy of the College, the determination and periodic review of the educational character and Mission of the College and the oversight of its activities.

5. Student Representative Meetings: 'Student Voice'

5.1.1. Each study programme will convene a HE Student View Focus Group known as 'Student Representative Meetings' three times every academic year. These meetings will be chaired by the HE Head of Student Recruitment and Experience or a member of the HE Team and operate via the approved agenda which will include a review of NSS surveys and External Examiner Reports where appropriate. The first and final meeting are face to face whilst the second meeting is held online to ensure students that all Class Representatives can engage with this digital meeting. Feedback will be shared with the Executive, Curriculum Teams, and the Curriculum Director, Quality Office, Student Services and form the core of the HE Student Action Plan.

5.1.2. A campus 'HE Student Representative Meeting' will also convene, where possible, once every academic year and will be led by the HE Head of Student Recruitment and Experience. This will give the opportunity to gain cross-campus views and

enable an opportunity for the HE student body to convene and give constructive feedback.

5.1.3. The HE Office will maintain a record of the HE focus groups and duly pass this information to the Clerk to the Corporation. This Policy extends an open invitation to each Governor, individually and collectively, who may wish to attend an 'HE Student Representative Meeting'.

5.1.4. Feedback from the meetings will be shared via Student Representatives and the college VLE (Microsoft Teams). Each student from the relevant school will receive a 'You Said, We Did' email to their student email account which will provide an abbreviated version of the key points from the meeting and the respective actions.

5.1.5. A report and HE Student Action Plan are produced twice a year to monitor progress against identified areas. This will be published and made available to Student Representatives.

5.1.5. **Student Representatives[2]**

5.1.5.1. Each programme of study or discrete group of students will nominate from their number a person or persons to act as their 'Representative', Departmental and Faculty meetings, 'Student Representative Meetings', and the HE Course Review Meetings (CRs).

5.1.5.2. The guiding principle of Student Representation is the overriding duty to understand and represent the views of peers, without fear or favour, when called upon to do so.

5.1.5.3. Each Student Representative will be issued with an SGS Academic Representative Hoodie.

5.1.5.4 Student Ambassadors are also employed by the College to encourage student involvement in academic and social activities and provide a clear line of communication between students and the College. Student Ambassadors are paid in accordance to the job description (see appendix 1).

Supporting Students to Represent Themselves

5.1.5.3.1. Some students will need support to represent themselves and their peers in the processes outlined above. This support could range from administrative support to training in the listening skills needed in gathering accurate representation.

5.1.5.3.2. Training for Student Representatives and HE Ambassadors is provided by SGS College within the first 6 weeks of term. Students Representatives can request further training.

5.1.6. **Support for Students at Meetings**

5.1.6.1. The College supports students to participate fully in meetings. This includes providing enablers for those who have a difficulty participating in meetings due to a disability. Students will be at no academic disadvantage should they wish to be a Representative and are selected to attend meetings. If a

---

[2] Referred to as Class Representatives in the arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the College and the oversight of its activities.

meeting is during lunchtime the College will provide lunch or light refreshments.

5.1.7. **College-Led Involvement**

5.1.7.1.   **Programme Review and Evaluation**

5.1.7.2.   Students are involved in the evaluation of their programme through Course Reviews (CRs). This process feeds into the College's Annual Review and Improvement Process via the Course Enhancement Reviews (CERs), feedback on External Examiner reports and annual completion of a HE Quality Improvement document (covering each Higher Education programme delivered by SGS). Student Representatives are invited to the first part of each CR and there is a standing agenda item at the beginning of the meeting to capture their input.

5.1.7.3.   The Teaching and Learning Policy encourages and facilitates the collection, evaluation and review of student feedback to inform and improve the lesson planning process in a manner appropriate to the students and the learning in question.

5.1.8. **Social Engagement**

5.1.8.1.   The College maintains an active social media network which is monitored daily and a monthly 'Perception Report' is published by the College, based on all student interaction on social media. This is also reviewed by the Assistant Principal – HE and Adult who ensures that the College follows up every individual complaint and compliment.

5.1.8.2.   The College uses social media to gather student-specific feedback; any information relating specifically to HE provision is reported on separately to the Curriculum Director.

5.1.8.3.   The College will continue to work towards improving the HE social space and building a community ethos within HE to encourage and support feedback.

5.1.9. **Student Survey**

5.1.9.1.   College-wide student surveys are distributed annually to students. The Start of Year Survey is distributed to all HE students and the End of Year Survey is sent to all students completing year one and year two of their HE studies). The results are disseminated to students via CRs, HE Student Voice, Student Parliament and the DLE, and inform the quality processes.

5.1.9.2.   The College also facilitates HE students' participation in the NSS (National Student Survey). Results of this survey are shared on the College VLE and at CRs to bring about improvements.

5.1.9.3.   The College will incorporate the core questions from the NSS within in house student surveys and benchmark results accordingly. Benchmarking will enable the College to better develop the impact measures that are used to inform our Key Performance Indicators.

5.1.9.4.   The College supplies an 'Instant Feedback' tool on the DLE to encourage students to share ideas with the College.

Additional and Supplementary Provisions:

5.1.9.5.   Short, Very Short and Professional programmes will be surveyed a minimum of once per academic year.

5.1.9.6.   SGS College offers a flexible and dynamic curriculum within a vibrant learning community and as such nothing in this document is intended to frustrate the involvement of students or prevent their engagement. In furtherance of this plan the Assistant Principal - HE and Adult can request an ad hoc survey.

5.1.9.7.   The College licences proprietary software capable of meeting institutional requirements with regard to surveys.

5.1.10. **Review of the Student Involvement Plan**

5.1.10.1.   At each stage of the academic year and following each opportunity for College-led student involvement, the College will endeavour to ensure that actions taken in response to Class Representative Feedback will be communicated to all HE students. This may be done centrally or locally but in every case this communication will form part of the Student Voice campaign.

5.1.10.2.   At the final HE Student Representative Meeting of each academic year, Representatives will be asked to review the Students as Partners Policy as well as the College's approved OfS Access and Participation Plan (APP) and feed this review directly into the HE Quality Improvement Plan. The HE Lead Representatives will also be consulted.

5.1.10.3.   In the preparation, operation of or amendment to the Students as Partners Policy, the College will also consider its impact on any other College procedures, the Instrument and Articles of Government. If these require changes, the Clerk to the Corporation will be notified for consideration by the College Corporation.

5.1.11. **Measuring and Reporting on the Impact**

5.1.11.1.   The evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of the Students as Partners Policy will form an integral part of our Annual Review process. This will include outcome measures and process measures. All programmes will use internal College survey results and NSS survey results to assist in course evaluation.

5.1.11.2.   The College will measure outcomes and the wider impact of the feedback and actions arising from HE Student Representative involvement. This will be reviewed in the Higher Education Steering Group meetings as a standing agenda item. Progress and themes will be reported to the Governors in an annual report.

5.1.11.3.   The College will rigorously assess the process surrounding Student Representative Involvement. We will assess if Student Representatives are successfully and consistently participating, if inclusion of diverse groups, reporting back to students themselves and their satisfaction with the processes in place and of being involved.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. This Policy makes the Corporation's desire to respond to the Student Voice incumbent upon each member of corporate and curriculum staff.

6.1.1. The Assistant Principal – HE and Adult, working with the Head of Quality, Learning Support, the Quality Office and College Management (departmental and faculty) will be responsible for delivering this Policy;

6.1.2. The HE Student Experience Team are responsible for ensuring that Student Representatives are in place and that the schedule of activities are delivered as required;

6.1.3. The HE Student Experience Team will produce and publish an annual calendar of events and will liaise with Learning Area Managers (LAMs) and Heads of Faculty, the Assistant Principal – HE and Adult, and the HE Head of Student Recruitment and Experience to secure the delivery of this plan;

6.1.4. The Quality Team will produce, as required by the Compliments and Complaints Policy, a summary report of all complaints on a termly basis for review by the Senior Management Team and the College Corporation.

6.1.5. Feedback on Student Involvement will be produced against three Impact Measures.

6.2. **Impact Measures**

6.2.1. First: The 'Student Voice' feedback will be produced to measure the positive impact of the student's role as co-producers of their own educational experience and outcomes. HE students will be full participants in the management and development of HE education at SGS.

6.2.2. Second: We will endeavour to ensure full and effective HE student participation with educational and programme enhancement through this plan.

6.2.3. Third: We will measure the effect of Student Involvement on our Strategic Priorities and Key Performance Indicators.

7. Related Policies and/or Procedures, Statements, Guidelines etc.

The Higher Education Calendar

Course Review Meetings Terms of Reference

Improving Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedure

The Quality Policy

The Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

The South Gloucestershire and Stroud College arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the College and the oversight of its activities.

Appendix 1 - HE Ambassor Job Description

Job Title	HE Student Ambassador
Department	Higher Education
Reporting to:	Head of HE Student Recruitment and Student Experience
Post reference:	

Main Purpose of the role

The role of student ambassador is an important one as not only will you be able to positively talk about the SGS Higher Education and your experiences, you will act as a role model for young people, encouraging them to consider future options within HE. Student ambassadors are key to delivering a range of activities and events through our HE Recruitment and Student Experience Department. Activities include open days, applicant days, tasters, HE fairs and school visits. SGS College is committed to ensuring all people have access to higher education (HE), regardless of background.

There are several key areas of work; general events, campus tours, HE fairs or Outreach.

Key Tasks / responsibilities:

- Act as a HE Ambassador to a very high standard to enthusiastically encourage progression from Level 3 students.
- Work at general events
- Campus tours
- HE Fairs and Outreach.
- To help set up open day events and other public facing and promotional activity to promote the HE at SGS.

Role Dimensions

- HE Ambassadors to reach approx. 500 students per year

Key Interfaces

- Head of HE Student Recruitment and Experience
- HE Student Experience and Outreach Office
- Head of Departments SGS
- HE Experience and Social Media Officer
- HE Administrator
- SGS Level 3 students
- Local secondary and primary schools

Supporting College Goals and Values – all roles

In addition to the particular requirements and characteristics of individual roles, all people employed by SGS College are expected to actively support the achievement of the College's goals and, at all times, both internally and externally, to behave in a manner consistent with the College's mission and values.

This means:

- Performing your role and delivering your service in a way that helps the College achieve its strategic objectives and annual development and improvement plans - taking account of available resources and national developments.

- Promoting the image of the College as one that is committed to the highest standards of delivery and service.

- Sharing the College's commitment to safeguarding and prioritising the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and demonstrating it in your day to day work.

- Sharing and prioritising the effective implementation of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.

- Promoting and implementing best practice in Health and Safety.

Measurable Performance Standards for this role

- HE recruitment across college
- Promotion of Higher Education at SGS in the public domain

Level of Disclosure and Barring (DBS) disclosure required

2: Enhanced

Author and Date

Joanne Priest 2019 V2

Job Evaluation *(for HR Completion)*					
Score		**Profile**		**Level**	

As the needs of the College change, so the above job profile, duties and location of the role within the College may be adjusted accordingly.

Where an employee indicates a disability, every effort will be made to make reasonable adjustments. If, however, a certain task proves to be unachievable, job redesign will be given full consideration.

Person Specification

HE Ambassador

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessed by
Qualifications and attainments			
GCSE Maths, English grade C or above	✓		Application form
Level 3 qualification	✓		Application form
Experience and knowledge			
Sound knowledge of Degree programmes	✓		Application form/interview
Good knowledge of HE Sector	✓		Application form/interview
Working with young people of secondary age in a position of responsibility		√	Application form/interview
Speaking/presenting to a group	✓		Application form/interview
Sales and promotion through conversation	✓		Application form/interview
Skills and abilities			
Understanding of the UK Home Student UCAS application process	✓		Application form/interview
Confidence in public speaking to groups	✓		Application form/interview
Excellent verbal communication skills	✓		Application form/interview
Customer service skills	✓		Application form/interview
Excellent interpersonal skills	✓		Application form/interview

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessed by
Willingness to participate in a wide range of activities.	✓		Application form/interview
Dedication to increasing knowledge base	✓		Application form/interview
Capacity to inspire trust and enthusiasm	✓		Application form/interview
Empathy with young people and the general public	✓		Application form/interview
Essential College attributes			
Initiative: Demonstrating the willingness and ability to use initiative – whether that means deciding on necessary action and following it through - or suggesting ways to work in a better way.	✓		Application form/ interview
Influencing skills: The ability to persuade others.	✓		Application form/ interview
Interpersonal Skills: The ability to communicate and interact with other people in a way that promotes cooperative relationships.	✓		Application form/ interview
Teamwork: The willingness and ability to collaborate and work closely with colleagues in a mutually supportive manner.	✓		Application form/ interview
Circumstances of role (if applicable)			
A current or past SGS undergraduate student.	✓		Application form/interview
Available to fulfil the minimum role requirements.	✓		Application form/interview