South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

Higher Education
Widening Participation and Retention Policy

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Job Title / Role:	Assistant Principal Higher Education and Adult (Associate Dean)
Ref. No.: **Q/P 119** (To be entered by Quality Office)	**Date of this version:** 20 July 2020 **Review date:** 20 June 2022 * (Must be at least 1 year) **Please note**: if the document has details relating to legislation or government guidelines, the following must be added to the Review Date: (subject to any legislative change) **Upload to College website?** Yes **Upload to SGSAT Intranet?** Yes
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
Date of Approval:	08th September 2020

Mandatory Initial Equality and Diversity Impact Screening

MANDATORY INITIAL IMPACT SCREENING			
Completed by:			
Gavin Murray	Vice Principal - Performance, Standards & Effectiveness	08/09/2020	
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	Supports staff and learners to recognise abd challenge discrimination on the grounds of age
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	Supports staff and learners to recognise and address religious or racial discrimination and incitement to religious hatred
Gender	Protect staff and learners from sexism in all forms
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	Promote understanding and respect of the LGBTQQIAAP community
Gender reassignment	Work with individuals to ensure appropriate support at identified periods
Economic disadvantage	Use available resources to identify and address any issues of inequality as a result of social and economic factors. Supporting learners and staff, both academically and pastorally in order for all to be successful
Rural isolation	Use available resources to identify and address any issues of inequality as a result of rural isolation. Supporting learners and staff, both academically and pastorally in order to access College services and be successful.
Marriage	Support staff and learners to recognise and challenge discrimination on the basis of marriage
Pregnancy & maternity	Promote equality of opportunity through a supportive, inclusive environment
Carers & care leavers	Use available resources to identify and address any issues of inequality as a result of being in care or a care leaver. Supporting learners both academically and pastorally in order to be successful.
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:	Sections 1, 4 - 6
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to improve equality of opportunity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:	Section 1.3
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. 2 Non-discrimination Art. 17 Access to information Art. 28 Right to education

Which Human Right ([HRA](#)) does this policy most protect:	Art. 14 Prohibition of discrimination

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:	✓

The policy allows for the collection, analysis, monitoring and reporting of equalities related data, including data relating to a person's specific and protected characteristics. (Specifically, in relation to the operation of the WPRG Committee and other monitoring activities). This processing shall be lawful processing as it is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject (Section 149, the Public Sector Equality Duty) and in compliance with regulations determined by the Ofice for Students, pursuant to the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. Data collection in respect of NCOP funded Widening Participation activity including the Gloucestershire Aspiration Project (formerly the Gloucestershire Reaching out Wider project) and 'Future Quest' are governed by binding contractiural terms.

The Data Protection Officer has confirmed that procession of personal data, further to the aims of this policy. In respect of Article 9 of the GDPR the processing described is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, on the basis of Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject.

Processing may also be necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1)GDPR based on Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject.

Tick to indicated that this policy has or requires a Data Privacy Impact Assessment:	☐

Higher Education Widening Participation and Retention Policy

1.   Introduction (Background and context):

1.1. South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS) has a proud history of providing innovative and accessible opportunities for students to access and succeed at higher level study. SGS enables students who might not otherwise, for social, cultural, personal and practical reasons, be able to undertake Higher Education (HE) study.

1.2. SGS embraces the need to widen participation by students who are typically under-represented in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

1.3. SGS recognises the following groups as priority targets for its outreach and widening participation activity; they are:

- Students from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups
- Some black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students
- Mature students
- Disabled students (those in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and those who have declared a disability but not in receipt of DSA
- Care leavers
- Carers
- People estranged form their families
- People from gypsy, roma and traveller communities
- Refugees
- Children of military families

1.4. The Office for Students (OfS) reports that 8% of young students and 15% of mature students leave Higher Education within their first year of study[1]; and further research suggests that as many as 40% of students consider leaving in the early stages of their study due to both internal and external factors. SGS recognises the following factors as possibly triggers for withdrawals:

- Poor initial advice and guidance, resulting in the wrong choice of programme;
- Low confidence levels;
- Underdeveloped academic skills;
- A lack of preparation for independent study;
- A lack of knowledge of the support available;
- A lack of transition to being a HE student;
- Financial issues – including the need to undertake or continue employment;
- Changes in personal circumstances;
- Illness, disability or mental health issues.

1.5. The OfS looks at the study activity of undergraduate students one year and 14 days after the start of their studies. This is called the continuation rate. Students who

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[1] Office for Students data 2016-2017

continuing, who have achieved their intended qualification of those who transfer to another HE institution are classed as continuing.

The OfS measures academic outcomes for first full degrees only but also measure employment outcomes for all students through post study surveys called Graduate Outcomes.

2. Statement

2.1. It is the overarching aim of this policy to (1) widen the participation of non-traditional entrants to Higher Education programmes at SGS; and, (2) secure high retention rates, continuation, attainment, completion and success rates for our current and future HE students. To this end:

2.1.1. This Policy aims to **raise aspirations by targeting applications from specific socio-economic demographics,** while continuing to encourage applications from all groups; and, to support those groups and assist individual progression onto Higher Education. In line with our commitments in the Colleges Access and Partication Plan (APP).

2.1.2. This Policy further aims to **support the retention, continuation and achievement of students from specific socio-economic groups**, while continuing to support all students to reach their full potential and making Higher Education accessible.

3. Objectives

3.1. SGS will seek to establish approaches to and standards of student support to effectively remove and/or otherwise minimise the barriers that pose a risk to student engagement.

3.2. SGS will actively work to meet the targets as agreed in the (APP), and deliver on the strategies outlined in the submission to achieve the targets.

3.2.1. In addition to the specifically identified priority groups at point 1.3 above, the College has identified the following barriers to entry:

- Entrants from lower socio-economic backgrounds, measured by English indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) quintiles 1-2
- Male entrants from lower socio-economic backgrounds (IMD quintiles 1-2);
- ABMO (Asian, Black, Minority Ethnic and Other) entrants

3.3. SGS will promote a pro-active approach to meeting the widening participation agendas that sit at the heart of our recruitment strategy and activity; and will evaluate such activities regularly to ensure systematic approaches to targeting appropriate advice, guidance, support and access to resources.

3.4. SGS will review activities on a regular basis, to address the reasons that lead to voluntary withdrawals. It is to be noted, that:

3.4.1. Student retention is supported by the SGS Total Support Guide (TSG), the Higher Education Students as Partners Strategy, English and Maths Extra, Learning Support and Student Wellbeing Services, Learning Mentors, HE Disability Support Coordinator and a dedicated HE Academic Support Specialist.

3.5. SGS will annually monitor, review and evaluate student outcomes. This monitoring will inform improvements to practices that impact on student experience and progression.

3.5.1. SGS will specifically monitor: achievement of a degree; degree classification variances; progression into further education or employment and continuation onto post-graduate employment or other studies.

3.6. Evaluate practice and initiatives to measure its impact on achieving APP targets.

3.7. SGS College is, and remains, resolute in its commitment to raising aspirations, encouraging applications from non-traditional routes and ensuring progression and success. SGS promotes education for all and does not, nor does it tolerate, discrimination in any form.

3.7.1. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the SGS Single Equality Policy and SGS complies with its duties, including the Public Sector Specific Duties, included within the 2010 Equality Act. SGS reports annually on its progress towards these specific duties.

4. Implementation of the Widening Participation, Outreach and Retention Policy

4.1. **Public information (**including marketing activity printed promotions, website and digital content and all other complimentary information) is assessed and confirmed as accurate and accessible. All Higher Education promotional material is approved by the Head of Higher Education Student Recruitment and Experience.

4.1.1. The College is committed to ensuring that any information given or shared with students is 'fit for purpose', accurate and trustworthy'. However, the College acknowledges that errors and omissions can occur and therefore seeks to limit its liability for inaccurate information provided in good faith.

4.2. **Recruitment and collaborative events** are organised and held regularly. The College offers a variety of HE open and other events, where visitors and prospective students can discuss programmes with current students and Programme Leads. The SGS HE Student Experience and Outreach Officer and the HE Widening Participation Officer, engages with SGS Level 3 students, local schools and communities to help promote awareness of Higher Education pathways and the programmes available at SGS College.

4.2.1. The College remains committed to attending regional school open events and, where invited, national sixth form events. The SGS Connect Partnership Scheme, initially available to Bristol secondary schools, offers bespoke outreach activities and benefits to the participating schools and their students. SGS also works with primary and secondary schools to help

promote self-esteem and raise aspiration and offers bespoke visits to deliver general advice and guidance.

4.2.2. The College endeavours to attend relevant UCAS conventions. These events promote opportunities to year 12 and 13 pupils and prospective students can register an interest in SGS courses; those that do are invited to open events and current student shows/productions and/or competitions at the College to gain a further insight to support informed decision-making.

4.2.3. SGS will remain actively involved in widening participation activities with schools and offer careers advice & guidance, without prejudice, on the variety of programme options available. Annual campus university-style experience days are also offered to visiting school groups.

4.2.4. The College will continue to support collaborative initiatives with its Alliance partner, the University of Gloucestershire (UoG), to promote opportunities in the local area and work towards achieving the Partnership strategic objectives.

4.2.5. As part of this collaborative work the College will support two regional initiatives for the duration of the contracts (called Gloucestershire Aspiration Project formerly called Gloucestershire Reaching out Wider) and 'Future Quest'). Both are NCOP funded Widening Participation (WP) initiatives which target specific schools and wards with historically low participation rates.

4.2.6. SGS will also continue to work in partnership to deliver career events specifically aimed at year 12 and 13 pupils. These events will continue to include all subject sector areas targeted by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and directly involve employers.

4.2.7. SGS will continue to offer student experience events to all prospective students. These events, held within specific departments, will provide an insight into what it means to be a HE student at the College.

4.2.8. SGS is a committed member of the local community and endeavours to ensure that the general public can identify with College. SGS will attend a variety of local events to help embed the College within the wider community, by allowing the engagement with a wider audience,

4.3. **Application, Pre-application and Admissions**

4.3.1. The College's HE Admissions Co-ordinator manages the application, pre-application and admissions process for HE applicants with the assistance of Programme Leads.

4.3.2. SGS will endeavour to maintain achievable, but fair, points for HE entry. Lower UCAS tariffs for entry will remain available in order to encourage engagement from those with lower grades or from diverse qualification, or non-standard routes. It remains a proviso that all individuals must meet the minimum standards required to achieve a specific award. **SGS will never**

knowingly allow a student to access a programme that is beyond their capability.

4.3.3. If deemed appropriate, HE students will be invited to an interview. Interviews are designed to provide students with an opportunity to meet and discuss their needs and aspirations with a course specialist and to ensure that this is the correct course for them. Students who do not attend an interview are encouraged to attend open events or, if available, to attend an applicant day.

4.3.4. Applicants to degree courses in Creative and Performing Arts will be asked to produce a current portfolio at interview or attend an audition. If students are not attending an interview, then they will be asked to provide a digital portfolio of current work. Students who wish to apply for a place at one of our sports academies will be required to attend trials to ensure that they are capable of playing at the required level.

4.3.5. The College recognises and gives Accreditation to Prior Learning (APL) and, if appropriate, Accreditation to Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). The APL/APEL process is managed by the HE Academic Standards Team, if deemed necessary, students may be asked, at the point of **application,** to produce a written piece of work to demonstrate their language, literacy skills and potential ability to study for their chosen qualification.

4.3.6. SGS will maintain its current (high) percentage of courses that can be studied on a part-time and flexible basis. These routes enable access to study for those who have, for example, significant external commitments.

4.3.7. The College, for as long as is necessary, will endeavour to retain Tier 4 accreditation, making our study opportunities accessible to international students.

4.3.8. SGS commits to providing support to students without the necessary entry grades and will work with such individuals, as long as funding allows, to help them reach the requisite level to access their chosen course/s.

4.3.9. SGS commits to enabling students flexibility in their HE studies and will support students wherever possible to: -

- Transfer within SGS College from one course to another;
- Transfer mode of study e.g. move from full-time to part-time;
- Transfer to SGS College from another HE provider;
- Transfer from SGS College to another HE provider.

4.4. **Internal Progression**

4.4.1. The College offers a wide range of progression activities to existing learners to promote positive destinations into HE from a wide range of subject and course types. SGS Careers Services offers general advice and guidance sessions, one to one support for UCAS applications and interview workshops, amongst other support. Our programmes feature a

comprehensive tutorial system and progression events aimed at current SGS Level 3 students.

4.4.2. SGS is committed to keeping tuition fees as competitive as possible. Students that are self-funding or sponsored are able to set up an instalment plan for making payments.

4.4.3. Students are referred to the SGS Bursary, Scholarships and Hardship Fund Policy & Procedure (2020-22) for the financial support available.

4.4.4. SGS will continue to offer, as long as is viable, a variety of Foundation Degrees and Higher Nationals allowing students to gain a qualification in 2 years. Whilst many students will continue directly onto a 1 year 'top up' (at Level 6) to achieve a full honours degree, the 2 plus 1 model (i.e. Foundation/Higher National plus 'top up') provides the flexibility to return to education and complete a degree at a later point. Students may choose to have a study break for personal, employment or travel purposes and the flexibility of our programmes allows students, to potentially 'top up' their degrees to full honours level at a variety of universities throughout the UK (subject to interview).

4.4.5. SGS offers assistance to students wishing to apply for Disability Support Allowance (DSA) via our dedicated HE Disability Support Coordinator and a HE Academic Support Specialist. Students can also apply for a one-off payment from the Hardship Fund to help with the cost of the DSA report.

4.5. **Retention and Achievement**

4.5.1. SGS expects HE students to **engage positively with the College and in academic life.** Positive interaction is encouraged at each identified stage of the study programme. The ability of students to achieve their full potential is always at the heart of the College's ambition. We are committed to the delivery of high standards of teaching and learning and aim for excellent student feedback to encourage the retention of students on their courses.

4.5.2. The College has developed a HE Personal Tutor **Programme** to ensure meaningful relationships are forged with tutors and help support students to reach their goals. Course tutoring and additional student support offered by the HE team is vital in identifying early signs of disengagement.

4.5.3. SGS operates a student-centred approach to education**. Students as Partners Strategy** allows for decision-making and engagement at all academic levels. Positive promotion and engagement with the Students as Partners Strategy empower Student Representatives, enables positive change and builds a collegiate 'team' ethos between staff and students. Identifying early signs of complaints allows for intervention and action to support students and to overcome barriers to learning.

4.5.4. The **SGS Total Support Guide (TSG)** seeks to provide students with a wraparound support service that provides support and interventions via the Learning Mentors, cross-college Learning Support and Student Wellbeing Services, Careers Services, English and Maths Extra, counselling and

finance. HE students have access to the HE Disability Support Coordinator and the HE Academic Support Specialist who can (respectively) advise and monitor specific support needs and enable students by assisting with the development of the skills necessary to independent learning (as applicable to higher HE levels).

4.5.5. **Student mentoring and skills support.** Through the development of Level 6 programmes, SGS will structure a peer mentoring scheme which will provide students at this level with opportunities to support their employability. Additional study skills sessions are provided, on a group and/or a one to one basis, by our teams in the Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) and by the Study Skills Coordinator. This scheme will be known as the **SGS Inspiring Futures Scheme.**

4.5.6. **Monitoring and tracking of students.** The Higher Education Team will regularly monitor attendance and inventions will be made if attendance falls below 80%. Once identified as 'at risk', students will fall subject to the Non-Engagement Process (Appendix 4).

4.5.7. **Assessments -** The College has recognised that a large majority of students have difficulty with examinations and has, therefore, introduced (where possible) coursework-based assessments which allows for 'real-time', regular formative and summative assessments of varying types (e.g. presentations, written essays, group work etc.).

4.6. **Bursaries**

4.6.1. A variety of bursaries are available to encourage participation in Higher Education at SGS, as detailed in the **HE Bursary, Scholarships and Hardship Fund Policy and Procedure**. Bursaries are paid on a pro-rota basis over the 3 terms and are dependent on regular attendance. Bursaries are paid during the second part of each College term (not semester). Failure to maintain regular attendance could result in non-payment.

4.6.2. Hardship Funding is available for students in financial difficulty. All students can apply for a small grant if they meet the criteria outlined in the **HE Bursary, Scholarships and Hardship Fund Policy and Procedure**.

4.6.3. The College offers a bursary towards the cost of a formal DSA report, supporting students to access the individual support required to reach their academic potential.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of Data

5.1. SGS College commits to monitoring this Policy on through the Widening Participation and Retention Group (WPRG) (see Appendix 7)

5.1.1. Information on student attendance and performance shall be available centrally via live Powerbase reports. Programme Leads and Learning Area Managers (LAMs) can view this information and additional reports on SharePoint. This is reviewed at termly Programme Review meetings.

5.1.2. SGS will actively involve students in termly, HE 'Student Representative meetings. These meetings are specific to each curriculum area, with significant items identified being recorded via the Course Enhancement Review (CER)/ Annual Programme Review (APR) process which feeds into the HE Improvement Plan and the overall College Plan.

5.1.3. Data is collected from a variety of surveys during the academic year, is reviewed and appropriately actioned in order to improve the student experience.

5.1.4. Student achievement is recorded on each individual's record page on ProMonitor. Information on individual students and courses can be accessed by curriculum and support staff to review progress.

5.1.5. Student progress is monitored and discussed during one to one tutorial, Programme Reviews, Module Boards of Examiners (MBE) and Award and Progression Boards.

5.1.6. Student progress is also monitored by the HE Academic Standards and Support Team who oversee the Extenuating Circumstances (EC) process for all HE students. The team liaises closely with the relevant Programme Leads, LAMs and individual students to provide extra support, make reasonable adjustments and/or apply acceptable concessions in certain cases. Progress and decisions are logged via ProMonitor and referenced during the MBE.

5.1.7. Student attendance is considered in the release of payment for any SGS bursaries, to positively promote attendance, professional standards and to provide a secondary checking system to support the student engagement process.

6. Employability and Progression

6.1.1. All SGS validated degrees have been reviewed at design stage by industry practitioners to ensure that programme content is current and relevant to industry requirements.

6.1.2. All programmes have a work placement element and students are encouraged to seek part-time employment and/or volunteering opportunities during their time with SGS. This is supported by the College's central Work Experience/Placement team who work across sites to support students.

6.1.3. The curriculum is enriched, at programme level, through talks from guest lecturers, educational visits and engagement with subject-specific events (such as competitions and conferences).

6.1.4. SGS offers focused employment sessions focusing on preparing students for employment.

6.1.5. The Higher Education Careers Advisor will offer 1:1 advice and guidance sessions to all Higher Education students.

7. Student Involvement

7.1.1. The Careers Office will seek to offer advice and guidance to all students. The HE Careers Officer will offer a variety of employability workshops including CV writing, maintaining professional digital presences and making job applications.

7.1.2. SGS will offer an annual HE employability conference (Next Steps Undergraduate Conference) which will feature a range of inclusive workshops, talks and activities aimed at promoting different progression routes in industry and further study.

7.1.3. Students are also informed of progression opportunities through programme delivery, the tutorial system, specific workshops/lectures, visits from guest speakers and guidance offered by the Higher Education Team.

7.1.4. Each academic programme has a work experience/ professional practice requirement in the relevant subject area. Students are supported at every level of their study to help develop the skills needed to help them progress to the next level and following graduation.

8. Responsibilities

8.1. SGS Corporation and Executive Team

8.1.1. Will ensure, through the budgetary process, and in-line with any existing policy statement and/or obligations stated within approved public information; make available such funds as are reasonably necessary pursuant to this Policy.

8.2. SGS Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

8.2.1. Will ensure that sufficient resources are available to administer the activities, to those eligible learners, as stipulated in this Policy.

8.2.2. The responsibilities of the Senior Leadership Team may be delegated as appropriate to any member, or group of members, of the SLT who shall report back to the SLT in quorate. The SLT will secure representation on any such steering groups or committees as may from time to time be constituted.

8.2.3. Will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy and subsequent reporting on it to the SGS Senior Leadership Team, College Executive and the Education Corporation.

8.2.4. Will work with the College's Marketing Department to ensure that Public Information remains up-to-date and accurate, whilst undertaking such

training and continuing professional development necessary to assure the quality and accuracy of the advice and guidance provided to prospective, current and past students.

8.2.5. Will ensure continued compliance with the SGS Inclusion Policy; and ensure that all concerns, including complaints, relating to the eligibility to and payment of bursaries or hardship funding, Outreach and Widening Participation activity is reported in line with process.

8.2.6. Will ensure compliance with the SGS Financial Regulations which are in force.

8.3. **Heads of Faculty, Learning Area Managers, Programme Leaders, Teaching and Support Staff:**

8.3.1. Will ensure that advice, guidance, support and referral to the points and mechanisms outlined in this Policy, including applications to the Bursary and Hardship Fund (including DSA claims), is given in a timely way.

8.3.2. Will undertake such training and continuing professional development as is reasonably necessary to assure the quality and accuracy of the advice and guidance provided to prospective, current and past students.

8.3.3. Maintain the accurate and up-to-date recording of student attendance and other disciplinary and contextual information related to enrichment, widening participation activity, progression and employability.

8.4. **Higher Education Students:**

8.4.1. Will engage positively with the College, its agents and employees. Students will at all times maintain regular contact with their tutors and commit, through positive engagement, to fully participating in outreach and Student Representative activity.

9. **Related Policies, Procedures, etc.**

- SGS Higher Education Access and Participation Plan (APP)
- SGS Applications, Admissions & Enrolment Policy
- SGS Assessment Policy
- SGS Higher Education Attendance and Engagement Policy
- SGS Higher Education Bursary, Scholarships and Hardship Fund Policy & Procedure
- SGS Fee Policy
- SGS Financial Regulation
- SGS Fitness to Study Policy
- Guidance, Inclusion, Support and Transition Policy
- SGS Professional Development (Staff) Policy
- SGS Inclusion Policy
- SGS HE Student Code of Conduct
- SGS HE Students as Partners Strategy
- Total Support Guide

- **Appendix 1**: Higher Education Interview Guidelines
- **Appendix 2**: Induction Checklist for New HE Students
- **Appendix 3**: Induction Checklist for Returning HE Students
- **Appendix 4**: Widening Participation and Retention Group (WPRG) Terms of Reference

Appendix 1

Higher Education Interview Guidelines

Types of interviews at most Higher Education institutions are usually one of the following:

1) A 1.1 interview with a student and one or two tutors. This could be conducted in person, or digitally via Microsoft Teams or Skype.

2) A group interview (with a small number of other applicants) and one or two tutors.

3) An interview with a panel of tutors

Interview types will be agreed ahead of time between the Learning Area Manager, the Programme Lead and the Higher Education Team to ensure parity of experience for each student. For those students engaging in a digital interview, correspondence will be sent prior to the interview to inform the student of the expected software to be used and to ensure that the student can fully engage in the process. A mutually convenient time will be arranged, and the interviewer will contact the applicant to commence the online interview at the allocated time slot. All the key points below will be covered in this online meeting. Please note that it is the expectation that cameras will be turned on for the duration of the interview process. Where the student is providing a portfolio of work to support their application, then this should be submitted electronically to the interview organiser, at least 48 hours prior to the appointment.

For campus interviews, on the day:

1. Collect students from Reception, take the register and introduce yourself, point out fire exits, and toilets.
2. Talk about the course – cover all key points:
   - Start dates: usually commence 3rd week of September; enrolment and induction; teaching starts the week after.
   - Expected taught days – average of 3 days (for full-time students).
   - Ambition for the course.
   - Importance of independent study.
   - Additional expenses: **material fees** and **trips**. Ensure that costs given are accurate (please check with the Higher Education Team). **Other costs:** as relevant to your specialist subject area (e.g. portfolios for art and design).
   - **Entry qualifications: varies from course to course: (see current tariff tables). Students are also expected to have GCSE English and Maths grade 4 (equivalent to a C in the old grading system)**. They will be unable to do a BA/BSc or a Level 6 course without their GCSE English. Both English and Maths are important indications of readiness for study on the course, and for employability in the future.
   - **Course fees:** give current price. There is currently a **£500 bursary** per academic year for those HE Students studying a full-time, available for each year of study for students who progress directly from an SGS Level 3 course. This bursary is given on a pro-rota basis for those studying a part-time route. This bursary is payable in instalments and is dependent on attendance and progress. Please note: bursary payment is reliant on attendance and is not available for re-sit years
   - **Support:** Students apply for finance as they would on any undergraduate course. Any queries about **Student Finance** or **Admissions/ Applications and General Support needs/ Accommodation** – please ask them to contact our HE Admissions - Co-ordinator (highereducation@sgscol.ac.uk) 0117 909 2376. Students should not work full-time hours outside of College whilst studying their course.

- **Disability, Care Leavers and Carers:** Financial, academic and welfare support available for students with a disability or students who are care leavers, or carers.
- Discuss course structure (hand out a draft course map).
- Progression opportunities – Level 6 'top ups'/ postgraduate study/employment routes etc.
- Give an opportunity for a tour of the Department following the interview.

The interview (if in group format):

A. Explain next step: Each student to introduce themselves (who, from where, why this course, what they are currently studying/ doing).
B. (For art and design students). Ask them to leaf through their portfolio (subject specific) and isolate one page and explain what they did/ ideas development etc. Q&A (approx. 5-10 minutes each). Use the questions below.

The interview (if in 1.1 format)

Question	Response	Grade (A=excellent, B=very good C=good D=satisfactory E=undeveloped answer)
1. Why have you chosen this course?		
2. Why have you chosen this college/ department?		
3. What has been your most successful piece of recent work?		
4. What do you most enjoy about your current course? (if applicable)		
5. What are you looking to learn and develop through studying for a degree course?		
6. Tell me about some recent research you have done.		
7. Where will you be in 5 years' time?		
8. Do you have any questions for me?		

Applicant: _____

Course Applied for: _____

Interviewer: _____   **Date interviewed:** _____

Unconditional   Offer   Conditional   Offer   Reject

And finally:

- Give an opportunity to ask questions; give them the Higher Education email address (highereducation@sgscol.ac.uk) if they want to get in touch (confidential issues); give the email address of the Programme Lead too and HE Learning Support (learningsupporthe@sgscol.ac.uk).

- **Let them know that we are making offers extremely quickly – <u>you can offer a place on the spot</u> - and that they will get a formal letter within a few days.**

Appendix 2

Induction Checklist for New HE Students

General Induction:

- [ ] SGS College enrolment completed
- [ ] Ensure all students have had a copy of the Student Handbook
- [ ] Introduction to Learner Services
- [ ] College/Department tour (including toilet facilities/refectory/student areas)
- [ ] Fire & Emergency evacuation procedures
- [ ] Learning Resource Centre (LRC) Induction
- [ ] HE Student Code of Conduct
- [ ] Complaints Policy & Procedure
- [ ] Safeguarding and Prevent
- [ ] Higher Education Learning Excellence Framework
- [ ] Student Voice – Student Reps/SSLC's/Student Forums/Election of Student Representatives/ Student Ambassadors.

Course-Related Induction:

- [ ] Higher Education term dates (course specific)
- [ ] Course/Module Handbooks issued
- [ ] Programme content, structure and staff
- [ ] Rooms/practical workshops
- [ ] Identify Personal Tutor for current academic year
- [ ] Agreed method of communication with students e.g. Teams/email/text.
- [ ] Pastoral/Tutorial arrangements
- [ ] Timetable/modules explained
- [ ] Introduction to Teams/relevant DLE.
- [ ] Feedback/turnaround times on work
- [ ] Assessment methods/schedule
- [ ] Reading List, equipment required, field trips etc.
- [ ] Study Skills
- [ ] Consequences of non/late submission
- [ ] Opportunity to meet students in other years of programme
- [ ] Explanation of 2nd marking/moderation etc.
- [ ] Mitigating circumstances & extensions (where appropriate)
- [ ] Briefing regarding work placements
- [ ] Health & Safety (First Aid, accident reporting, safety precautions applicable to course, late/holiday, working, smoking, personal vehicles / parking, personal property, litter)

Appendix 3

Induction Checklist for Returning HE Students

General Induction:

- ☐ SGS College enrolment completed
- ☐ Ensure all students have had a copy of our Student Handbook
- ☐ Re-cap on the support available from our HE Learning Services
- ☐ Re-introduction to the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) (including accessing books / journals etc.)
- ☐ Student Voice – Student Reps/SSLC's/Student Forums/Election of Student Representatives
- ☐ Fire & Emergency evacuation procedures
- ☐ HE Student Code of Conduct
- ☐ Complaints Policy & Procedure

Course Related Induction:

- ☐ Higher Education term dates (course specific)
- ☐ Course/Module Handbooks issued
- ☐ Timetable/Modules explained
- ☐ Programme content, structure and staff
- ☐ Identify Personal Tutor for current academic year
- ☐ Pastoral/Tutorial arrangements
- ☐ Confirm feedback/turnaround times on work
- ☐ Confirm arrangements of 2nd marking/moderation etc.
- ☐ Opportunity to meet students in other years of programme (first years and top-up students)
- ☐ Student Retention Strategy
- ☐ Consequences of non/late submittal
- ☐ Extenuating/Mitigating circumstances & extensions (where appropriate)
- ☐ Reiterate method of communication with students e.g. Teams, email, text etc.
- ☐ Confirm use of Teams/ relevant VLE's
- ☐ Rooms/practical workshops
- ☐ Reading list, equipment required, field trips etc.
- ☐ Assessment methods/schedule
- ☐ Briefing regarding work placements
- ☐ Study Skills English & Maths qualifications
- ☐ Reiterate the need to engage with HE Careers Officer
- ☐ Health & Safety (First Aid, accident reporting, safety precautions applicable to course, late/ holiday working smoking, personal vehicles/parking, personal property, litter)

Appendix 4

SGS College

University Level – Higher Education
Terms of Reference for HE Widening
Participation and Retention Group (WPRG)

OUTSTANDING BY STANDING OUT

Widening Participation and Retention Group (WPRG) Terms of Reference

1.   Membership

1.1   The membership of the group shall comprise of:
- Lead Student Representative
- Vice Principal, Quality and Performance
- Assistant Principal, Higher Education and Adult
- Head of Higher Education Student Recruitment and Experience (Chair)
- Head of Higher Education Curriculum and Standards
- Head of Higher Education Data Reporting
- Head of Faculty (HE course areas)
- Head of Careers and Schools Services
- Higher Education Academic Support Specialist
- Higher Education Programme Leader (2 representatives)
- Higher Education Admissions Coordinator
- Higher Education Careers Officer
- Higher Education Student Experience and Outreach Officer
- Representative from the Marketing Team
- Inclusion Manager and Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Head of Additional Learning Support
- Higher Education Faculty Coordinator

1.2   Members shall serve for a period of one College year and will be eligible for re-appointment.

1.3   The Lead Student Representative shall be elected by fellow students and appointed by the College.

2.   Quorum

2.1   The meetings shall be quorate if at least five staff (excluding the Faculty Coordinator) are in attendance.

3.   Frequency of meetings

3.1   The Group shall meet at least four times each academic year; once in November, February, June and August.

4.   Responsibilities of the Group are:

4.1   Review data against OfS Access Participation Plan targets and Milestones.
4.2   Agree actions to make progress against the Access Participation Plan targets and Milestones.
4.3   Review the retention data and progress against the student engagement process.
4.4   Identify and plan outreach activity.
4.5   Review and make recommendations regarding student support.
4.6   Consider processes used to support students with DSA needs and make recommendations if required.
4.7   Review and agree the HE Student Bursary approach.
4.8   Review and action plan the annual Undergraduate Next Steps Conference.
4.9   Make recommendations on matters relating to the success of students and their educational experience.
4.10   Review progress and make recommendations regarding the two regional NCOP projects.
4.11   Consider approaches to HE Careers Services.
4.12   Report progress to SLT being made in the areas overseen by this group.
4.13   Other items of business that is bought to the attention of this group.