



**South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Higher Education ‘Students as Partners
Strategy’**

Strategy Prepared by:	Gavin Murray and Kelly Gillett
Job Title/Role:	Vice Principal Quality and Performance and Assistant Principal - HE and Adult
Statement Ref. No.: Q/P 215	Date of this version: 23 rd April 2020 Review date: 23 rd April 2022 Upload to College website: YES

Approval: 02 July 2020					
Student Involvement:	SED Group	HE Steering Group	SLT Group	Executive Group	Corporation
					Corporation
Review Date Due: 23 rd April 2022					

Main aim and purpose of the policy:	To outline the process of student, employer and stakeholder involvement				
Is this policy (or its constituent parts) relevant to a general equality duty? (please tick)	This policy development will assist in the elimination of unlawful discrimination and/or harassment of identified groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote equal opportunities for identified groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote positive attitudes and participation between groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote good relations between groups?	
Age		✓			
Disability	✓	✓			
Gender Reassignment		✓			
Race or Ethnicity		✓		✓	
Religion or Belief		✓			
Marriage		✓			
Pregnancy/ Maternity		✓			
Sex		✓			
Sexual Orientation		✓			
Carers/ Care givers		✓			
Persons in care		✓			
Specify any groups for which there is evidence or reason to believe that some groups or individuals could be affected differently:					
How much evidence is there:	None	A little	Some	A lot	
Is there any concern that the policy may operate in a discriminatory way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	None	A little	Some	A lot	
	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Assessed relevance to equality (tick one row only)	High	Med	Low	None	Brief reason for this assessment
Age			✓		
Disability		✓			Ensuring the availability to advocacy
Gender Reassignment			✓		
Race or Ethnicity			✓		
Religion or Belief			✓		
Marriage			✓		
Pregnancy/ Maternity			✓		
Sex				✓	
Sexual Orientation			✓		
Carers/ Care givers			✓		
What is the next step? (tick one only)	What priority level is this policy?			Has the Policy been sent for Full EQIA, or do you believe the policy should have a Full EQIA?	
	High ✓	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I am satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy/procedure and a full Impact Assessment is not required</i>					
Completed by: Gavin Murray Position: Head of Quality, Learning Resources & Performance Date: 30/05/2017					

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 Strategy 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 Strategy 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 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 Strategy, 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)

'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 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 (2017)*

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

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.

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

4.1. Student Led Involvement

4.1.1. Student Governors

- 4.1.1.1. 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.

4.1.2. Student Parliament and Council

- 4.1.2.1. At the inception of South Gloucestershire and Stroud College the Corporation was pleased to approve the Student Union constitution.
- 4.1.2.2. The Student Council and Parliament conduct business under the Authority of the Student Union constitution.
- 4.1.2.3. Meetings are also convened with the Principal, Chair of the Corporation and Student Union to obtain views on the strategy 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 Assistant Principal Adult & HE, 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 strategy 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 Representatives²**

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

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.

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 Strategy 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 Assistant Principal Adult & HE.

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 Strategy 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 Strategy, 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 Strategy 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 Strategy 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 Strategy;

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 Strategy

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 Ambassador 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	
<p>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.</p> <p>There are several key areas of work; general events, campus tours, HE fairs or Outreach.</p>	
Key Tasks / responsibilities:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Ambassadors to reach approx. 500 students per year 	
Key Interfaces	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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					
<p>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.</p> <p>This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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