

# Student Voice First Policy

<b>Policy/Procedure Title</b>	<b>Student Voice First Policy</b>
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<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Curriculum, Quality &amp; Students committee</b>
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## **1. Introduction**

Abingdon & Witney College is committed to consulting with its students on all aspects of the organisation, including teaching and learning, facilities, support services and overall strategic direction. This enables the student voice to be heard at every level within the college, making a valuable contribution to its leadership, raising the quality of its provision and working towards our shared values that drive what we do;

Authentic, honest and trustworthy

Bold and ambitious for ourselves and others

Welcoming, warm and supportive

Inclusive, fair and caring

Transformative, innovative and creative

## **2. Scope**

The College is diverse, and includes full and part-time students on Further, Higher Education and Adult Learning courses, at all college sites, as well as apprentices and work-based learners. It is our intention that all students have an equal voice, and we aim to provide a variety of feedback methods through which they may exercise that voice.

## **3. Purpose**

The systematic collection of the views of students is a rich source of valuable feedback and when acted on effectively this can influence the shape and availability of services to ensure maximum benefit to the students. The college is committed to delivering on the AoC Charter for Student Engagement, which views students as active partners in the education process and advocates for the need for engagement meaningfully at every level. As such this policy seeks to:

- Create and nurture a culture of partnership and engagement and treat our students as partners in learning.
- Treat our students with respect and listen to their views.
- Value, promote and embed student engagement across our college's work and ensure that college processes build in opportunities for student feedback and action on that feedback.
- Create inclusive student representative structures and commit sufficient resources, training and development to support them.
- Help our students develop the skills and confidence needed for participation, leadership, advocacy and deliberation.
- Encourage high participation in all student elections and consultations
- Promote equality, celebrate diversity and ensure that student engagement reflects our student cohort in all its diversity.

- Provide opportunities for student involvement in Youth Social Action, volunteering, personal development and leadership activity.
- Encourage our students to become informed, critical and active citizens. Make the connection between student engagement and values of equality, democracy, the rule of law, respect and tolerance, individual freedom, political literacy and broader social issues. (AoC Charter for Student Engagement\_0.pdf)

#### **4. Working in Partnership**

The College Leadership teams work with Student Voice First to ensure the student voice is captured and that feedback leads change to meet the needs of the student body. Students have the opportunity to:

Influence the strategic outcomes – thorough feedback via surveys and meetings.

Attend the annual Student Conference- with SMT, CLT and College Governors.

Meet with College Governors – Termly Governor & Student meetings on each campus.

Influence the appointment of senior staff- Students invited to sit on interview panels

Inspections- Student invited to share valuable feedback during college inspections and accreditations.

#### **5. The Strategy**

All students, individually and collectively, will have an opportunity to participate in feedback about the college through the following mechanisms:

##### **5.1. Student representation**

The Student Voice First Lead Team is in place to represent all students. This consists of lead roles and focus groups, including but not limited to:

Lead Roles:

Campus Leads

LGBTQI+ Leads

Curriculum Leads (two per curriculum area)

Focus Groups (with key members of staff from the relevant area and students):

Teaching & Learning

Facilities- Sustainability

Governor Feedback

Student lead roles change and evolve annually dependent on the voice of the student and what it is they feel they would like to champion each year. Focus groups are reviewed and implemented annually, based on student feedback and in line with the needs of the business.

The students in the Lead roles are the link between the students, and key staff. Tasks include:

Attending student Lead meetings.

Meeting with the Student Governors and other key staff as required.

Listening to fellow students' views.

Feeding back results of views and concerns to fellow students

Liaising with other student representatives across college.

This body of representatives provides a democratic model through which we gather and feedback the views of students on a wide range of business and learning objectives, to ensure the college is addressing the needs of all students at all times.

## **5.2. Course review and evaluation**

Students will be provided with a range of opportunities and appropriate formats to evaluate their course. These evaluations will feed into Self-Assessment Reviews and Quality Improvement Plans.

Student surveys: College-wide student surveys for our study programme students will be carried three times per academic year. The surveys are themed:

Induction survey during the first two weeks

Term 1: I have settled into college life

Term 2: I am making progress

Term 3: I know my next steps

For the majority of students these will be administered electronically, but paper based surveys and other alternative formats will be made available if appropriate. The results of the surveys will be shared with students and suggestions for improvements will be reflected in action plans. Appropriate managers will monitor the implementation of action plans. Other surveys into specific areas and issues (e.g. Induction, IT Services, Learning Resource Centre) are carried out throughout the year. Students will also be asked to participate in national surveys, such as FE Choices and the National Students Survey (NSS) for HE students. Adult students and Apprentices collect feedback on a regular basis and this is all fed into the PowerBi platform.

## **5.3. TSA & Student Focus Groups**

The Student Voice Coordinator and the Teaching Skills Academy work with students on each campus to capture face to face feedback around the quality of teaching and learning. This gives students the opportunity to discuss what works well and what could be improved. This feedback directly influences TSA training for teachers.

## **5.4. Informal collection of student views:**

Students can contact the Student Voice Coordinator via an ongoing feedback form, in person or via Teams with feedback and ideas.

Students can express their views through 1-1 tutorials with staff or in formal group meetings with the Head of Faculty.

Lesson Observations: Students are asked for their feedback on how lessons are meeting their needs during formal lesson observations.

Student Conference: Representatives of the student body will be invited to an annual student conference.

Student Governors: Up to two Student Governors, elected by students, will be appointed to the Governing Body, each to serve a term of office of up to two years.

Complaints Procedure: Students are made aware of the complaint's procedure through Induction and the college website.

Monitoring and Review of the Strategy: The strategy will be reviewed annually as part of the self-assessment review in relation to its effectiveness and the difference that it makes to students. The review will draw on feedback from students and will result in an action plan identifying new areas of development whilst also highlighting good and outstanding practice. A report on the strategy will be provided on an annual basis to the senior management team, and to governors through both the Curriculum & Quality Committee and the Board.