

HE Student Voice: Engagement & Feedback

For Higher Education Students

1.0 Purpose

Student engagement is multi-faceted and may involve many aspects that may take place prior to students starting their courses at open days, school and college engagement events; whilst students are on-programme through formal committee structures, informal mechanisms and in-house and external surveys/questionnaires; and it may also take place after students complete their studies via destination and alumni surveys. The primary objective of obtaining feedback from students is to enhance the quality of the academic experience of current and future students.

This document is largely concerned with seeking of students' opinions on their experience of learning, teaching and assessment whilst enrolled on a programme of study at the College and after graduation. The framework reflects the expectations of NESCOT's various higher education validating partners including universities and other awarding bodies.

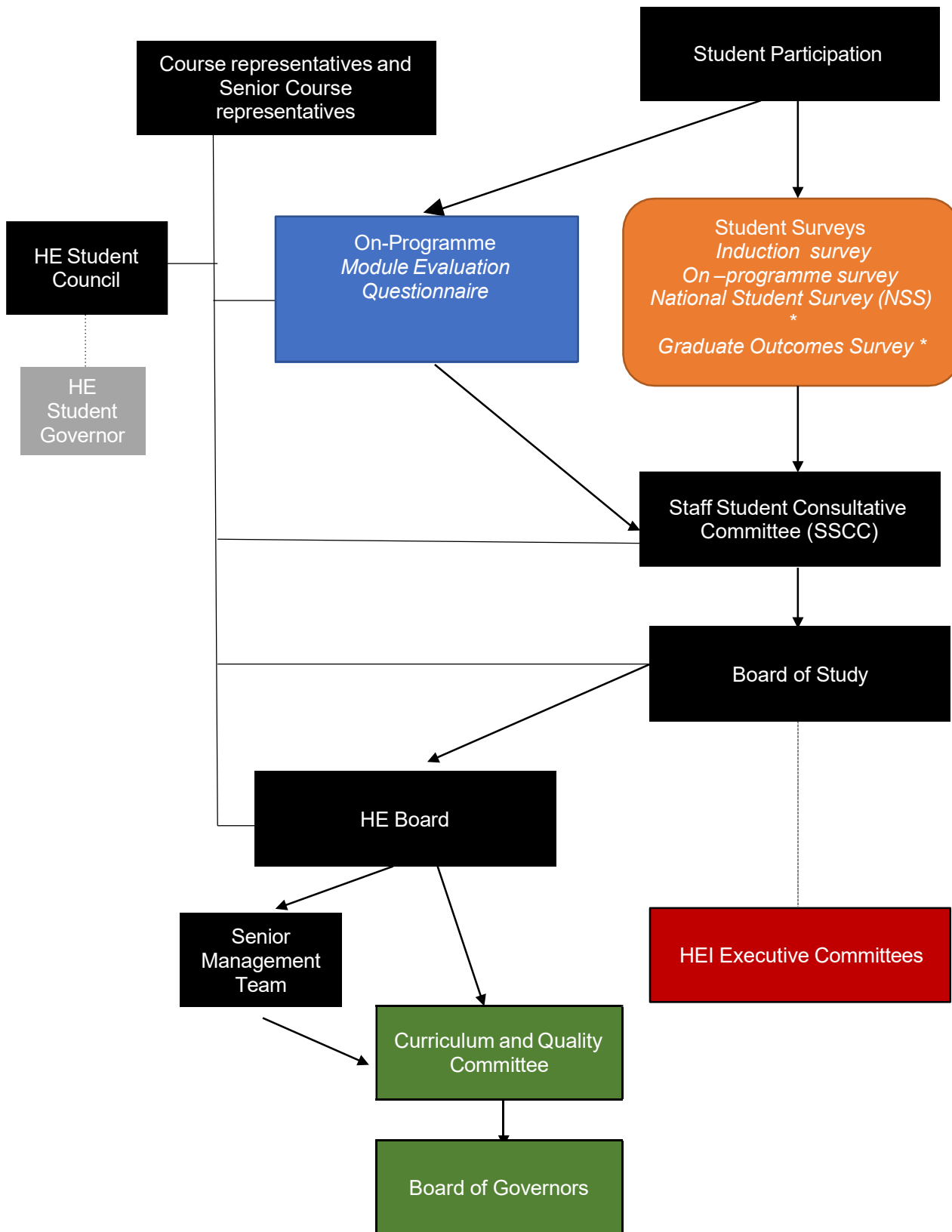
The main purposes of student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement processes are:

- To enhance the students' experience of learning, teaching and assessment;
- To contribute to monitoring and review of quality and standards;
- To ensure the effectiveness of course design and delivery;
- To identify, disseminate and share good practice.

2.0 Flowchart

The following flowchart illustrates the sequence of events in relation to encouraging student engagement and obtaining student feedback.

Student Engagement and Feedback Flowchart



3.0 Process

Students have the opportunity to provide on-going and informal feedback as part of their studies. This feedback is highly valued by the College and appropriate action should be taken in response. Informal feedback is usually gathered by the Course tutor as the primary point of contact with students, however conversations during Learning Walks also provide a valuable source of information about the current status of student satisfaction with particular aspects of the programme. In addition to these informal mechanisms, NESCOL also operates formal mechanisms for the gathering of feedback from students. These are as follows: -

- Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) – end of module
- NESCOL Induction Survey
- NESCOL On-Programme Survey
- Staff Student Consultative Committees (SSCCs)
- Boards of Study
- Course Representatives
- HE Student Council
- National Student Survey (NSS)
- Student representation on validation and review panels
- Student participation in Internal Subject Reviews (ISRs)
- Student representation on HE Board
- Student Governors

4.0 Course Representative Scheme

The role of course representatives on higher education programmes at NESCOL is to ensure that all students have the status and mechanism to articulate their view on a variety of issues but specifically learning, teaching and assessment. A course representative is responsible for engaging in discussion with fellow students and capturing their views so that they can be presented to the relevant College forums.

Staff should arrange elections/nominations of course representatives in a timely way to ensure that the representatives can then undertake training to prepare them to fulfil their role.

Names of course representatives should be forwarded to the Quality Office at NESCOL (quality@nescot.ac.uk) as close to the commencement of the academic year as possible and in accordance with published deadlines.

Courses that commence at times in the academic year other than September and October should forward names of representatives to the Quality Office within one month of the course start date.

Representatives' terms of office last for one year and elections should be held/nominations sought annually. Representatives may be encouraged to continue, but there should be an opportunity for others to come forward.

College departments should support representatives in their work by facilitating course representative consultation with their constituents, e.g. a notice board, time in classes for consultation, or a student led or other consultation module for all constituents to communicate with their representatives.

5.0 Senior Course Representatives

Course representatives who have been in the role for at least one full academic year and want to take on a bigger role in the course representative system can apply to be a Senior Course Representative. This enhanced role includes the capacity for students to -

- Act as the link between the department/curriculum area in which they study and the HE Student Council
- Become involved in the induction, training and support of new course representatives;
- In some cases represent students on Boards of Study;
- Provide feedback to other University working groups and committees as appropriate;
- Be trained as a student validation/review panel member.

6.0 Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs)

NESCOT undertake Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQ) through a standardised form for all qualifications which allows for both qualitative and quantitative data analysis at both institution and programme level.

The following points apply regarding the administration of the MEQs.

- MEQs are administered electronically. It is best practice to allow students time in a class or chosen session to complete the MEQ.
- MEQs should always be available to students on the VLE to allow them to complete as each module concludes.
- Module leaders are responsible for analysing the outcomes of the MEQs, including the discursive comments from students, and feeding these into the annual monitoring and enhancement of the module and the programme overall.
- Any subsequent or planned actions as a result of MEQ feedback should be shared with students during SSCC meetings.
- MEQ analysis should be retained and made available to external

stakeholders.

- The individual analysis of MEQs should be made available to the HE Quality Team, Heads of Curriculum and the Assistant Principal for Quality and Innovation as appropriate and discussed at the next available Board of Study.

7.0 NESCOT Induction Surveys

NESCOT routinely conducts in-house **induction survey** within the first 6-8 weeks of the start of the programme. This is administered by the Quality department typically using a formal survey tool (currently QDP). This permits benchmarking against other UK providers. The results of the survey are reported at Boards of Study, HE Board and the governing body.

8.0 National Student Survey (NSS)

All final year undergraduate students are invited to complete the National Student Survey (NSS) administered by Ipsos/Mori, an independent market research company. Students who have completed the survey in the previous year e.g. for a HN or Foundation Degree are excluded from the survey scope. Students on one year programmes are also outside the scope of the NSS.

The NSS is intended to give final year students an opportunity to report back on their experience, and to help future students choose the right course and institution.

The survey runs across all publicly funded higher education providers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and participating higher education providers in Scotland. Additionally, since 2008, further education colleges with directly funded higher education students in England have been eligible to participate.

The survey asks students questions relating to the following aspects of the student learning experience:

- Teaching on my course
- Assessment and feedback
- Academic support
- Organisation and management Learning resources
- Personal development

The results of the NSS are published on the Office for Students (OfS) [website](#) and as widgets on the College's course pages.

Consideration of feedback from the NSS takes place at:

- Programme/course level through CEPs and Boards of Study (BoS)
- As part of Internal Subject Review
- At HE Board
- At Governing Body level

10.0 Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC)

SSCCs are a requirement for each course. They make use of the course representative system. The key features of SSCCs are that: -

- SSCCs are sub-committees of Boards of Study.
- SSCCs are held at least twice per academic year and must be minuted.
- Due to small class sizes, SSCC's comprise the whole student group
- Staff membership should include course leader(s) and other staff with key responsibilities.
- The committee should agree a chair from amongst its members (this may be a student if appropriately experienced individuals are elected to the committee and committees may wish to consider alternating the chair between staff and students).
- Chairs and clerks of SSCCs must ensure that agenda are agreed on the basis of consultation, information for students and feedback on previous items.
- The committee should take clear decisions (carefully minuted) about items that can reasonably be addressed to the parent Boards of Study or by the SSCC itself, reserving other matters to be raised at the NESOT HE Board.
- SSCC reports should be considered at Boards of Study and the minutes should be provided to course representatives
- Any outstanding actions from SSCC meetings should be addressed in the following meeting to highlight relevant actions and closure.

11.0 Boards of Study (BoS)

All courses are required to report to a field/course Board of Study meeting. A standard BoS agenda is normally used. The standard items do not preclude any other agenda items being added.

BoS have responsibility for the overall academic management, development and quality assurance of a course. Where fields/courses are delivered in a different way, for example an alternative calendar or mode of delivery, the same agenda items must be used in the most appropriate way for the particular delivery pattern concerned.

BoS are required to meet at least twice in a year. It is at the discretion of course teams whether to hold a third optional Board of Study following the assessment boards to consider the performance of the course and any modifications to the course of individual modules proposed for the next academic year.

The course annual monitoring and enhancement process is primarily a forward-looking process, however, it is also based on analysis of past performance and reflection on course performance. The effectiveness of the process depends on clear agenda setting, accurate minutes (including the recording of action notes, responsibilities, timescales and accountability), the recording of matters arising, and adequate referencing to supplementary papers, such as the CEPs. In summary, there should be a clear audit trail in the Board of Study papers and minutes of all issues considered during the meeting and their subsequent follow-up.

12.0 HE Board and other deliberative Committees

The role of students in articulating the student voice in formal strategic forums such as HE Board and the Governing Body is very important to the College. The terms of reference and membership embody this commitment and students serve as valued members of these bodies. Formal eligibility rules may apply in respect of these bodies. Further details are available via the Head of Academic Standards for Higher Education.

11.0 Student representation on, and participation in, Internal Subject Review

A key feature of Internal Subject Review (ISR) events are the meetings with students and, where possible, recent graduates. During these meetings the panel has an opportunity to meet with a sample of students from all levels and programmes of the areas under review, including some course representatives. The outcomes of these meetings usually form the basis of any further discussions held with the subject team during the event.

On occasion, where it is identified that there may be difficulties in meeting with an adequate number of students, other ways to gather student feedback may be employed, such as sending out questionnaires in advance of the event, or holding telephone interviews.

A student representative will also join the review panel at the main ISR events. Students are included as full and equal members of review teams with the same remit as other panel members.

13.0 Graduate Outcomes Survey (previously DLHE)¹

NESCOT is within the scope of the Graduate Outcomes Survey. This take place 15 months after students leave the course. The survey is administered externally by an independent survey company. The results of the survey feed into the Teaching and Excellence Framework (TEF). NESCOT encourages students to participate in the survey.

¹Destination of Leavers of Higher Education

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