HE STUDENT VOICE: ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK

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1.0   Purpose

Student engagement is multi-faceted and may involves 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 though formal committee structures, informal mechanisms and in-house and external surveys/ uestionnaires; 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 and it maps to the HE Quality Code.

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

Course representatives and Senior Course representatives

Student Participation

HE Student Council

HE Student Governor

On-Programme Module Questionnaires
Early Module Feedback Module Evaluation Questionnaire NESCOT Online Evaluation (Weblearn)

Student Surveys
Induction survey
On –programme survey
*National Student Survey (NSS) ***
*Graduate Outcomes Survey ***

Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC)

Board of Study

HE Board

HEI Executive Committees

Senior Management Team

Curriculum and Quality Committee

Board of Governors

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.   addition to these informal mechanisms, NESCOT   also operates formal mechanisms for the gathering of feedback from students. These are as follows: -

- Early Module Review
- Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) – end of module
- Weblearn module evaluations
- NESCOT Induction Survey
- NESCOT 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 NESCOT 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 NESCOT (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 Weblearn 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 Representatives. This enhanced role includes the capacity for students to -

- Act as the link between the department/faculty 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   Early Module Review

Early Module Review (EMR) provides an important opportunity for students to provide feedback to module leaders within three to four weeks of the commencement of the module; providing an opportunity to implement appropriate changes very early in the delivery of the module.

Course representatives are asked to facilitate a discussion at a time they identify within a core teaching session, which seeks to identify three positive aspects of the module and three areas students would like to change within the course of the module. Staff should provide at least ten minutes at the time that representatives feel most students would participate.

Course representatives feedback to staff either by E-mail or via Weblearn. Staff should respond within a reasonable period of time outlining any actions that will be taken. The discussion should be reviewed at the next Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) and staff and students are encouraged to seek innovative solutions together. Course Leaders and Course Representatives should agree the mechanism for ensuring that the SSCC can undertake this review.

7.0   Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs)

NESCOT undertake Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQ) in a variety of ways reflecting the requirements of respective validating partners. The core requirements is that all modules should capture feedback from students using a formal questionnaire tool that is capable of analysis and is reported back to students with appropriate actions. They ways in this happen may vary. For some programmes course teams may wish to use Weblearn survey tools to capture feedback; for the avoidance of doubt, HEI requirements take precedence.

The following points apply regarding the administration of the MEQs.

- MEQs will normally be administered electronically. It is best practice to allow students time in a class or chosen session to complete the MEQ.

- MEQs should be made available to students three or four weeks before the end of teaching, with feedback provided to students before the last teaching activity

- For those modules that are taught using a block delivery, the MEQs should be distributed at the end of the block with feedback provided to students electronically.

- 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.

- The quantitative data from MEQs may will be used to populate the relevant section of the Module Enhancement Plan (MEP) (where threshold response levels are achieved). Module leaders should also refer to the qualitative data when completing their MEPs.

- MEQ analysis should be retained and made available to external examiners. During ISR events the review team will select a sample of module boxes to review during the event.

- The individual analysis of MEQs should be made available to Directors of Faculty, Heads of Department, the Director of Higher Education an Deputy Principal (Curriclum) as appropriate and discussed at the next available Board of Study.

- Module leaders should provide feedback to students on the MEQ outcomes. This feedback should be made available prior to the end of the module.

- There is no set format for this feedback so module leaders are able to approach this in the way that they feel is most appropriate (*note: the qualitative comments should be summarised and not shared with students word for word*). In their feedback, module leaders may like to highlight to students those areas about which they were most positive, any areas in which they had concerns, and how the outcomes will be used to enhance the module.

8.0 NESCOT in-house 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.

The in-house '**On-programme' survey** is conducted during the spring term of students' programmes. . 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.

9.0 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
- Overall satisfaction

The results of the NSS are published on the Office for Students (OfS) website. 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 or closely related or overlapping group of courses. 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.

- SSCCs should comprise representatives of all years/levels of a course and all constituent courses.

- Normally the number of staff on the SSCC should be limited to ensure that student membership predominates

- It is recognised that in some courses the whole student group may act as an SSCC meeting with key staff (*e.g.* some postgraduate courses and courses with small numbers).

- 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 NESCOT HE Board.

- SSCC reports should be considered at Boards of Study and the minutes should be provided to course representatives and lodged on notice boards/Weblearn Course Pages.

- SSCC minutes should clearly detail how feedback from the SSCC will be delivered to the student body (for example, posted on notice boards and/or Weblearn pages). This should occur within two weeks of the meeting.

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 Academic Registrar.

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 6 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.

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[1]Destination of Leavers of Higher Education