

Student Engagement Policy

Document Summary

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Statement of policy

The City College has made a commitment to involve its students in all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, resources and support systems. The importance of an increasing level of student involvement in the development and enhancement of high-quality individual and group learning experiences is recognised as a precursor to successful retention, course completion, progression and career development. As such, the City College aims to provide effective mechanisms of student engagement and to promote initiatives that encourage students to engage with both their course and the wider, College environment.

The current student group is predominantly mature, and the College believes that these students will be particularly receptive to the opportunity of being involved in the enhancement of their learning experience.

Context

Chapter B5 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QAA, 2018, updated 10 May 2023) defines student engagement in two ways:

1. As “improving the motivation of students to engage in learning and to learn independently”
2. As “the participation of students in quality enhancement and quality assurance processes, resulting in the improvement of their educational experience”

Based on the College Higher Education Toolkit (QAA, 2021), the scope of student engagement includes opportunities for involvement at any point of the educational journey into which students can offer insight. For The City College, this is likely to cover:

- Application and admission
- Induction and the period of transition into higher education
- Programme delivery and organisation
- Teaching and learning
- Learning opportunities
- Learning resources
- Support and guidance
- Assessment.

Benefits of effective student engagement



To students:

- Students as individuals and groups will benefit when the education and service they are given are responsive to their needs and increasingly engaging. This will contribute to improved educational outcomes
- If they feel that their views are listened to, that their views are valued and, where possible, acted upon, then the result is likely to be increased self-worth and a feeling of empowerment through positive feedback
- When students are involved in discussion about their learning and the demands of their chosen programmes then they will be able to develop an understanding of their learning needs and what they have to do to meet those needs
- Involvement in planning, decision making will benefit students as these are transferrable skills
- Students are likely to develop a feeling of ownership in their programme if they are involved in shaping the way it is run
- To become more active with a group, or classroom, setting and increasing participation and attendance
- Increased involvement in course-related events, such as visits or group discussions
- Gaining information, advice, and guidance from events, such as induction
- Increasing retention, success rates and a more rewarding student experience
- Helping create a sense of community.

To the College:

- Student involvement in the form and evaluation of teaching and learning activities and approaches will lead to improvements in the quality of programmes and the levels of student engagement
- Student involvement in the design and delivery of support services will lead to more responsive services better able to give support to students on their journey through the College
- Student involvement leading to higher levels of engagement will lead to improved outcomes in relation to retention, grade levels and progression leading to successful final awards.

Student engagement strategy

Aims:

The overall aim of the strategy is to work actively to meet the two QAA definitions of student engagement. The intention is to achieve this by:

- Further active development of the City College student representation system
- Promoting, via formal and informal systems of communication, a culture where constructive feedback, from both sides, is listened to, considered in-depth and acted upon
- Being proactive in seeking the views and opinions of students on all aspects of their experience in The City College
- Encouraging students to become involved in their own learning.



Objectives for every new academic year (Sep-July):

- To circulate details of elections for vacant student representative positions
- To hold elections
- To hold meetings where student representatives are required to attend
- To use one designated tutorial for each group for focus group discussion and feedback
- To strategise through discussion with student reps and the SSLC
- To seek early feedback on any new course units via Programme Team meetings
- To develop the use of the VLE for complaints, compliments and suggestions
- To publicise results of the end of academic year student survey via the VLE
- To review existing, and develop new, mechanisms for student engagement in cooperation with student reps.

Mechanisms for student engagement

- Student representation on committees at all levels
- Ongoing informal interaction between student reps, senior staff members, and other staff
- The Student-Staff Liaison Committee
- Evaluation of induction and the first two weeks for new students
- End of term/semester evaluations for all course units and tutorials
- Interaction between students and lecturers in-class sessions and group tutorials
- Individual interaction between students and staff through the 'open door' policy
- The appeals and complaints procedures
- Opportunities for group and individual formative feedback on assignment work
- Student surveys (both internal and external)
- Tutorials/reviews and Exit Interviews