



## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

<b>Policy owner:</b>	VICE PRINCIPAL
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<b>Approval/Review Body</b>	Corporation
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## **1. Purpose**

This policy outlines the ways in which students are actively involved in learner voice and engagement activities to develop wider skills and all quality improvement processes at United Colleges Group. This includes a variety of channels and forums which enable students to feedback, contribute and engage in processes, policies and activity that form the quality of the student experience.

Student involvement can have a positive influence on the delivery and development of any aspect of the student educational experience. UCG is committed to ensuring that all students are empowered to co-create their own learning experience both in formal and informal learning.

The views of students, individually and collectively, should inform learner engagement plans and quality and enhancement systems with the purpose of improving the student educational experience both for current and future cohorts.

Aspects of the educational journey into which students can offer insight to United Colleges Group include:

- Application and admission
- Induction and transition into college life and higher education.
- Programme and curriculum design, delivery and organisation.
- Curriculum content.
- Teaching delivery.
- Learning opportunities in and outside the classroom.
- Learning resources.
- Student support and guidance.
- Wider engagement opportunities fostering the development of wider skills, employability and citizenship
- Assessment.

## **2. Scope**

All learners (FE and HE) are entitled and encouraged to participate in the development and application of learner engagement across Teaching Learning and skills at UCG

## **3. Policy**

### **Student Involvement in Quality**

All students, full time and part time, at United Colleges Group have the opportunity to be involved in quality processes in a manner and at a level appropriate to them.

United Colleges Group is committed to carrying out the following:

- enable active student participation in quality systems, including using individual and collective feedback from students;
- implement open and transparent mechanisms, agreed with students, for the nomination and election of United Colleges Group Student Representatives.
- provide induction and on-going support for students in their quality assurance roles;
- Monitor, review and enhance the effectiveness of their policies and processes for engaging students in quality processes.

### **Student Involvement in Learning and Teaching**

Student engagement in learning and teaching refers to students' active involvement in making improvements to the learning environment and enhancing the learning experience. This may be through involvement with students' individual studies, and/or the structures and processes that review and improve learning and teaching.

United Colleges Group recognises that student engagement in learning and teaching is important for the following reasons:

- Active participation encourages our students to take more responsibility for, and have ownership of, their learning, and this improves their academic and college experience.
- Student engagement in learning and teaching recognises the different goals, approaches and motivations of each individual student as well as the collective student voice.
- Active engagement of our students is the main channel through which we are able to get feedback from our students, helping us to develop and improve all aspects of college life.
- Partnership and collaboration between our students and staff help create mutually beneficial learning communities, improving communication and ensuring students are listened to;
- Student engagement in learning and teaching enables students to develop confidence by putting forward ideas and solutions for discussion.
- Student engagement in learning and teaching enables skills development for students, which improves their employability.

### **Student involvement in wider student engagement and enrichment activities**

Through the development of student engagement and student voice activities student input into and involvement in wider out of class engagement and enrichment activities is key to gaining the most from time at college. UCG through discussion with students and through student representative and forum structures commits to facilitating and developing a range of clubs and activities designed to support the development of wider skills with the impact of:

- Learners are likely to be better motivated and more likely to achieve their personal learning goals

- Learners' soft employability skills, such as communication, negotiation, advocacy and life skills can improve
- Learners can thrive and achieve through the promotion of health and well being
- Engagement can open horizons, develop aspiration and provide opportunities beyond the curriculum
- Involvement and engagement leads learners to develop the employability and active citizenship skills needed to be effective and successful in society

### **Developing the Student Voice - the journey from informed to empowered**

It is the aim and ambition of United Colleges Group for students to develop their voice via a mode of available channels made available to them. This will enable and empower them to take on more decision-making roles and become co-creators of their own learning. To do this, students need to be equipped with the necessary student engagement infrastructure to move from being *informed* to being *empowered*. There are a number of ways United Colleges Group enables students to be informed, be consulted, be involved and be collaborated with, ultimately with the overall goal of engaging students to the point where they are empowered:

- Inform – presentations, meetings, online dissemination of information notice boards
- Consult – survey responses, focus groups, student forums
- Involve – student representatives and ambassadors, Student Council, Student Governors, Staff appointments
- Collaborate – students on management committees: students attend meetings and contribute to institution-wide management decisions
- Empower - student organised peer consultations, peer support - students help one another in their education,

The many features of student engagement are outlined below in a series of “Learning Principles”. These Learning Principles demonstrate the practical ways in which student engagement in learning and teaching can be understood at United Colleges Group and how we ensure accessibility and fair representation of all students and all cohorts.

### **Learning Principles**

- We are aware that it may be more difficult for some students to engage, so we are committed to making sure all students have an opportunity to contribute - we make sure we listen to all voices.
- So that students become involved in decision-making processes, we make sure students have enough background information to become involved and make contributions. We actively seek and value and encourage students to make suggestions that we listen and respond to.

- By giving students regular, constructive feedback, students are able to review their own performance and progress. With staff, they develop their own learning goals and have a clear pathway to success.
- We encourage students to learn and develop their skills in lessons and outside of them, to build confidence, improve communication skills and to become a valuable member of the College community.
- Students are able to identify and articulate the skills they gain from these opportunities. By becoming a valued member of the College community and developing relationships with staff and other students, employability skills are developed as well as the professionalism of students.
- We want as many students as possible to contribute and get involved, so we make sure we publicise opportunities and ensure they can access them at times and in ways that suit all students.
- We train students so they can carry out formal roles – this includes an induction and ongoing support. There is also the opportunity to take up informal roles, such as being a member of the Students' Council, for example. In this role students can speak on behalf of their Curriculum area, career cluster or entire College.
- As student engagement is such an important part of College life for students, staff also get involved in engagement activities and have training to make sure activities are suitable and accessible to all students.
- We recognise and appreciate student involvement and will make sure that students are recognised and rewarded for their contributions.
- So that we can continue to make improvements and improve the learning environment for all students, we will continue to review the effectiveness of student engagement and the impact it has on learning and teaching and larger outcomes.

## **Framework for Student Engagement**

The Teaching, Learning & Skills Committee will oversee the College's student engagement strategy and ensure it continues to be relevant to students and the College Group. The aim of which is to ensure that our engagement with students enables student empowerment in their time at United Colleges Group.

This includes:

**Student Engagement with Institutional Committees** – these include the College Governing body and appropriate committees where students contribute valuable opinions and suggestions to Governors and senior managers, based on their student experience and learning

**Student Engagement at Qualification Programme Level** –one student from each class group is elected by fellow classmates to represent them as a Student Representative. They will carry out duties as follows:

- Find out the opinions of other students in their class and then feed this back in Class Representative meetings with staff members.
- Make sure all opinions, concerns and questions are raised in Class Representative meetings on behalf of fellow students.
- Engage with other students and make time to speak to them.
- Meet with curriculum managers, tutors and support staff to share views.
- Provide two-way feedback between curriculum managers and classmates.
- Work with Student Support team members to produce a Calendar of Events and deliver a range of extra-curricular activities.
- Contribute to reviews of courses, curriculum and assessment.

**Student Support Team Management** - Student Support Managers (with the Student Support Teams) will provide on-going training to the Student Representatives and act as a key liaison point between Student Representatives and senior management and teaching staff so that Student Representatives are fully supported.

### **Monitoring and Review Processes**

The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this Policy effectively and is committed to reviewing this Policy on a regular basis, in consultation with the recognised trade unions, statutory organisations and in line with models of good practice.

To further enrich the experience of students and ensure they collaborate in all aspects of improvement in the College, a programme of Student Engagement activities and opportunities will be developed and embedded via a Learner Engagement Action Plan with the objective of the student body achieving greater control over their own learning experience and shaping all aspects of College policy and the direction of travel for student engagement.

The Learner Engagement Action Plan will be monitored by the Teaching, Learning and Skills Committee