

1. Introduction

'Putting students at the centre of everything we do'

Kendal College believes that all College students should be given the opportunity to shape the College provision and contribute to the culture of continuous improvement.

Our Student Involvement Strategy enables students to be more than merely consulted and strives to find ways of working with students as equal partners and co-producers.

This paper identifies how the College will ensure that the student voice at Kendal College is heard and that students play an active role in our College to help ensure that the needs of the students are met, regardless of the type of learning they engage in whether full-time or part-time, Work Based Learning and at any level of qualification from entry to level 5.

Aims

- a) The College ensures that student views are actively sought, and offers structured opportunities for students to have direct involvement in contributing to decision making to shape their own learning experience.
- b) Quality improvement processes will be underpinned through the effective use of the views of user groups to plan, manage and improve provision.
- c) All students will be invited to contribute their views, regardless of mode of attendance, circumstances or geographical spread.
- d) The College will ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate in the wider College experience through supporting student-run initiatives.

2. Policy Statement

The College is committed to involving all students in its strategic decision-making and operational management processes and to offering an opportunity for students to have direct involvement in assessing and shaping their own learning experience. The benefits of listening to and responding to views of students are wide reaching, helping students become the central part of our College community.

3. Procedure

3.1 Teaching and Learning

Course tutors will discuss with their students during lessons and tutorials their views of the course teaching and learning. During lesson observations the observation team will endeavour wherever possible to talk to students about their learning experiences. There will be a regular item on the Student Council agenda where the Director of Curriculum will give students the opportunity to discuss the classes' views of their teaching and learning experiences. This feedback will be communicated to tutors and also used to inform the CPD programme for teaching staff.

Students will be encouraged in their ownership of their own learning programme, by for example, setting their own targets.

3.2 Student Surveys

The College will aim to achieve an 80% return on questionnaires completed at key times of the academic year in order to ensure as valid response as possible. All students will be given the opportunity to complete induction and end of programme questionnaires.

3.3 Student Representation & Activities

3.3.1 Class Representatives (reps)

Every full-time class will elect a class representative in the first 6 weeks of the Autumn Term. In some cases where the class is large, or where class representatives may need additional support, two class representatives may be elected. The class representative will attend **relevant school or** departmental meetings and a termly meeting with the relevant Head of School. The class reps will **be expected to** attend a termly Student Council and Principal's Question Time.

Departmental Representatives

~~From the existing class representatives a further 4 departmental representatives per school will be elected at Student Conference. These representatives will attend department meetings.~~

3.3.2 Student Governors

The College recognises that it is important that students are involved in decision making at all levels including at strategic level. In line with the Standing Orders of the Corporation, 2 student governors will be recruited with their position reviewed annually. **Duration of Board membership will be by agreement at election but is always terminated at the end of their course.**

The process of election will be as follows:

- **Promotion of Student Governor vacancies via Student Council, Student Hub and posters around the College**
- **Interested candidates meet with the Clerk to the Corporation**
- **Formal applications are submitted to the Clerk to the Corporation by an advertised date**
- **Applications are considered and voted on at the summer term meeting of Student Council with the top 3 being put forward to the next stage**
- **The nominated candidates from Student Council meet with a panel of the Board who will make their selection based on a range of criteria and questions put to each of the candidates.**

Ideally, the process of election will take place in June of each year to enable the new student governor(s) to join the Board at the start of the following academic year.

Whilst students will be involved in most Governor decision-making processes, there are some agenda items which may not be appropriate to include student governors and Student Governors will be asked to withdraw for these items, for example: Staff pay; performance management issues; and specific student discipline issues.

Student Governors will be encouraged, and financially supported, to attend national and regional student governor events, usually hosted by Association of Colleges and National Union of Students.

3.3.3 Student Conference

In November, a two-hour Student Conference will take place. This will be an opportunity for reps and student governors to meet other reps and College managers. Elections for ~~Department Reps and the~~ Student Council Chair and Vice Chair will be facilitated. Students will take part in cross college focus groups to collect student views on a variety of cross college areas. An action plan **from the views gathered** will be created at the first Student Council. The day will be co-ordinated by Student Services.

3.3.4 Student Council

The Student Council will meet at least once a term. Class reps and Student Governors attend and have voting rights. A member of the College Management Team and Student Services provide support and the Chair may invite other staff members if relevant. Student Council will be in two parts:

- i) College feedback & discussion, including gaining feedback on:
 - ~~Teaching & Learning to discuss with the Director of Curriculum~~ **Student-led initiatives**
 - ~~Theme of the Term (related to the College Strategic Plan)~~ **Update and feedback and actions to date on cross college issues**
 - ~~General feedback in preparation for the Principal's Question Time~~
 - **Elections to NUS National Conference and local forums**
- ii) ~~Planning of student-led initiatives, with decisions on how the profits from the NUS Extra Card and hoodies are spent to benefit the student body.~~ **Principal's Question Time**

~~3.3.5 Principal's Question Time~~

~~A Principal's Question Time will take place at least once a term, a week after Student Council. Class reps and student governors will attend, and the wider student body is also invited. After each Question Time an action plan will be produced, which will then be reported on at each Student Council. A final report at the end of the academic year, incorporating the actions from the Student Conference, will be produced and communicated to students via 'You Said We Did' posters.~~

3.4 Focus Groups

The College will at times of specific need create focus groups to involve students to address specific areas.

3.5 Representation on Committees

Key cross-College committees All committees will endeavour to include student representation and students will be invited to volunteer to attend committees, especially;

- Health and Safety committee
- Sustainability committee

These students are not required to undertake any specific representation as class or departmental representation but will be volunteers with a specific interest in the topic.

3.6 College Email **Feedback Button**

~~For those students who feel that the above methods are not suitable feedback is also possible via the Colleges confidential email voices@kendal.ac.uk. This email address is managed by the Student Services Manager will pass on any feedback received without revealing any student names.~~ **Students can use a feedback button on the college HUB to raise concerns or issues about the College. Content is monitored by Student Services.**

3.7 Student Ambassadors

The College recruits volunteer Student Ambassadors to promote the College. Student Ambassadors are encouraged to be involved in the development of the strategy and materials for school liaison and open days. Senior Ambassadors are actively involved in the recruitment and training of the new Ambassadors.

3.8 Enterprise and Enrichment Activities

The College runs a range of events and activities throughout the year to engage students and enrich their student experience. Opportunities are available to both organise the events and participate in them.

3.9 HE representation

The College Quality team/Heads of School will undertake to visit the relevant programme to talk to students, as the class rep system/ Student Council are often not accessible to these learners. Within the Kendal College website there is a page for Higher Education Student Voice which gives full details of how higher education students can be involved.

3.10 Regional & National Voice

Views from the Student Council will not only inform College decision, but will also be presented as part of the community view via the County Council District Youth Councils and National Union of Students conferences.

3.11 Views of vulnerable students

It is crucial that students with a range of additional needs, including those with English as a second language, are offered the opportunity to give their views. Such students will be encouraged to become representatives and **can** may be offered a range of support to achieve this; support from their Learning Support Assistant, translator or other advocate. The Head of School for Health and Social Care will visit courses for Entry Level students at least termly to give the group an opportunity to pass on views in a supportive and familiar environment.

3.12 Support for Students

Students will be supported in a variety of ways, including:

3.12.1 ~~Helping students to be involved through training~~ **Class Reps Handbook**

~~We believe that students participate more effectively, making better contributions, if they receive training in the role of a class representative. We will therefore provide a 2-hour training session for all representatives. This will be available on different days at different times in November, to make it as accessible as possible.~~

A handbook will be provided for all class reps and Student Governors including information on the role, meetings structures and contact details of College Managers. Student Governors are also expected to attend an induction session on the role of governors.

3.12.2 Support for students at meetings

The College will support students to participate in meetings by providing lunch if meetings fall in the lunchtime period, and paying travel costs if the meeting falls on a non-timetabled day and their participation will incur additional travelling expenses.

Meetings will be in venues that are accessible to all. Where a student has identified support needs, services and facilities will be provided at the meetings eg paperwork will be printed on aqua blue paper for students with dyslexia.

Consideration will be given to dates of religious festivals and the timings of meetings to ensure that the maximum numbers of students are able to attend meetings, including those who are in part-time work.

Online and email opportunities will be available to give feedback.

3.12.3 Support for students day-to-day

All students will have access to a personal tutor and will be able to access advice and guidance through Student Services.

3.13 Communication

The College will communicate with students through a range of media - 'Moodle' (VLE), **The Hub**, email, WordPress, SMS, Facebook, posters and plasma screens. Communication channels will be open wherever possible to encourage student feedback. **"You said...we did" posters will be produced and displayed around the College to communicate actions taken following issues raised by Students.**

3.14 Review

At the last annual meeting of the Student Council, students and College managers will review the **effectiveness of Student Involvement Strategy and propose changes to improve the process** ~~make adjustments in collaboration with Heads of School and the Management Team~~ **that in turn will be reflected in policy updates.**

The College will review the involvement of students in the College's activities annually as part of the Self Assessment Review. An action plan will result, identifying the main areas of new or continued development or maintenance of good practice.

4. **Documentation**

Appendix 1 Student Representation Flow Chart

5. **Reference to other policies**

Equality Policy
Corporation Standing Orders

Student Representation Flow Chart

