

Student Engagement Plan

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Student Engagement Plan

1 Context

Northumbria University notes research and sector best practice which demonstrates that student engagement can contribute to student success. The University also notes the QAA advice and guidance¹ governed by Office for Students (OfS)² for University Conditions of Registration that Higher Education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational provision. The University is therefore committed to promoting effective student partnership and engagement and this Plan summarises key objectives, principles and activities to support effective student engagement.

2 Objectives

The primary objectives of the Student Engagement Strategy are to:

- Optimise student satisfaction and experience
- Enhance student support and achievement
- Enhance the reputation of the Institution
- Maximise the Total Student Experience

3 Northumbria University Principles of Student Engagement

Five Northumbria student engagement principles provide the foundation for the Plan:

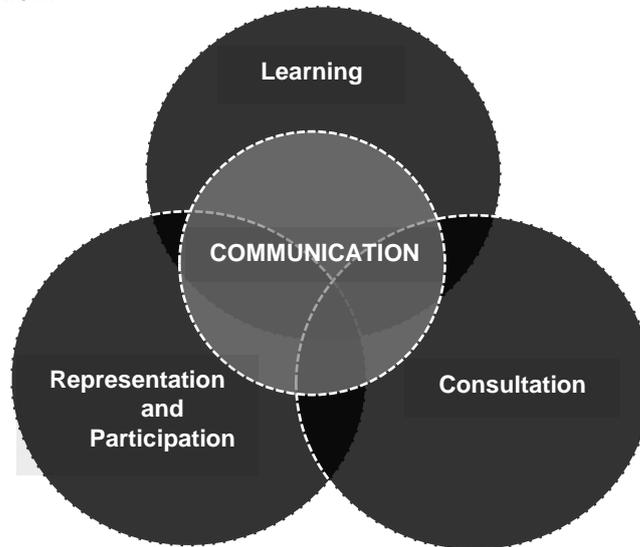
1. The University will develop an approach to student engagement that pervades the institutional culture, and within which students view themselves as partners in enhancing their learning and higher educational experience.
2. The default position is that there will be student representation at all relevant Academic Boards, and Committees at University and Faculty level that relate to Learning and Teaching
3. All students will be made aware of formal and informal mechanisms for making their views on their learning and higher educational experience known to the University.
4. The University will analyse all student feedback, develop relevant action plans to respond to the issues raised, and ensure that students involved are made aware of the proposed actions.
5. The University will ensure that all underrepresented groups, including international students, have an effective voice at all levels of the University.

¹ See: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance>

² See: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/conditions-of-registration/initial-and-general-ongoing-conditions-of-registration/>

4 Core elements

The Northumbria Strategy has been built around the overlapping themes of learning, consultation, representation and participation; tied together with a coherent approach to student communication.



Key activities under these areas are summarised below. The University recognises that effective student engagement is an ongoing process and is committed to regular review in order to ensure that activities are fit for purpose and optimised. The approach is to simplify, standardise and scale; ensuring a clear and consistent approach that can be applied across the University to deliver maximum benefits.

5 Learning

- On each programme there is support for students to take responsibility for successful learning; to empower students to shape their own and future learners' experiences, and to be active members of a learning community.
- Student Engagement is a prominent aspect of all learning and teaching activities and is enabled by the University's principles for programme design.
- Effective academic guidance and personal tutoring arrangements are in place across the University. (See the Personal Tutoring Policy³).

6 Consultation

The University welcomes feedback from students and seeks to maximise opportunities for feedback whilst noting the impact on student time. The University seeks feedback from students in a number of ways - key activities include:

³ See: <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/university-services/academic-registry/quality-and-teaching-excellence/student-engagement/academic-engagement/>

- Feedback via formal and informal meetings. (See point 7, Representation and Participation).
- Participation in externally managed surveys which also provide sector rankings - notable surveys are the National Student Survey (NSS), the International Student Barometer (ISB), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- Internal University surveys. In particular, module surveys are administered at a mid-point and end of a module and there is consistency in approach across all modules, together with a programme perspective. Pulse surveys are run three times a year.
- Attendance at and engagement with the Students' Union Go Out and Listen (GOAL) events.
- The University prioritises opportunities for student feedback on learning and teaching. Surveys covering the wider student experience will therefore be minimised.

7 Representation and participation

- The University actively supports Northumbria Students' Union in its system for Student Representation and offers assistance where required, e.g. support for elections, contributing to Student Representation training.
- Student representation is facilitated at all levels of the Board and Committee structure of the University, which includes: the Board of Governors, Academic Board, Periodic review panels, University Education Committees and relevant Faculty/Groups associated with Learning and Teaching and Student - Staff Programme Committees. The default position is that there will be student representation at all relevant fora at University and Faculty level. University staff will ensure that students are enabled to participate effectively at these meetings.
- All students are able to attend a Student Engagement Forum - an informal opportunity, managed by the Students' Union / Student Representatives, for students to engage with staff on their experiences on their programme or wider student experience at the University.
- Via their Student Representative/s, all students are able to contribute to Programme Management Committees - local and formal opportunities, managed by the University, for students to engage with staff on their experiences on their programme or wider student experience at the University.
- The University is committed to dynamic and focussed engagement with the Students' Union on the Student Charter⁴ and clear statements of student rights and responsibilities.
- Module and Programme leaders are required to reflect on student feedback and develop actions plans where appropriate. Module and Programme leaders are required to update students on actions taken in response to feedback.

⁴ See: <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/university-services/academic-registry/quality-and-teaching-excellence/student-engagement/>

8 Communication

The University aspires to and will develop an action plan in order to:

- provide easy access for students to essential, useful and engaging information in the most appropriate and effective format;
- provide essential information to students via their preferred channels – to reduce the burden on students to regularly maintain multiple channels;
- provide effective two way channels of communication to encourage student feedback to help the University to continuously improve the student experience;
- provide appropriate support and training to drive a self-serve approach to communications where possible
- comply with data protection legislation in the use of student personal data;
- communicate quickly and effectively with students during a serious incident.
- The University will provide effective two way channels of communication to encourage student feedback to help the continuous improvement of the student experience.
- The University will develop a clearer student facing website for current students.