



HE Student Voice Strategy

December 2025



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOLLOWING REVIEW

PAGE NUMBER OR HEADING NAME	DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	CHANGES MADE BY
Appendix 2	Week Commencing dates updated	Valentina Tiron

POLICY AVAILABILITY NOTICE

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Equality Impact Assessment

It is proposed that this form be included in all college policy template from hereon before the contents page..

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	September 2024
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Tracy Espinosa
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Student Services Manager (Engagement and Funding)
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	All Higher Education students
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	Update for 2025-26 academic year

You will need to consider whether its possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy /procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	None			
Disability	5	Students who may have reading impairments such as dyslexia or dyspraxia may require additional support in understanding the content and how it affects them. Students with sight or hearing impairments.	Staff will share information with students and provide information verbally. This document can be provided in different formats to support students who may have sight impairments, or reading impairments. Students with sight impairments, the College will provide systems to help translate into digital versions so they can hear the content. Ongoing throughout the academic year.	Ongoing – throughout academic year
Gender (Sex)	None			
Gender Reassignment	None			
Marriage or Civil Partnership	None			
Pregnancy / Maternity	None			
Race	None			
Religion or Religious Belief	None			
Sexual Orientation	None			
Any other element that needs to be considered.	5	Students for whom English is a second language may struggle to understand content.	Appropriate action will be taken to ensure any person who discloses English as a second language are provided with	Ongoing – throughout academic year

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
			adjustments to enable them to understand and be aware of processes	

Note:

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

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1. Introduction

1.1 South Essex College values the views of its students. Students are defined as any person studying at the College whether full time, part time, day release, distance learner or apprentice. The HE Student Voice Strategy specifically relates to students at Level 4, 5, and 6. The College believes that listening to students' views and involving them in decision making will result in engaged, inspired and empowered individuals, leading to improvements in teaching learning and assessment, enhanced learning environments, improved retention and successful outcomes and progression.

2. Key Principles

- I. To maximise opportunities available to ensure students' views are heard and responded to across all types of provision.
- II. To ensure that the student voice permeates throughout the College to support continuous improvements
- III. To proactively promote student voice mechanisms so that every student knows how to share their views
- IV. To offer a range of methods to gather the views of students
- V. To ensure students are involved in decision-making and strategic development
- VI. To establish feedback as a route that leads to improvement
- VII. To guarantee fair opportunities for all groups of students across all College campuses to engage with the student voice
- VIII. To actively engage HE students as 'participants', 'evaluators' and 'co-creators'

3. Student Voice Activities

3.1 All students will have an opportunity to provide feedback about the College either individually or collectively. Student representation provides our students with a voice to influence decision making and the feedback provides information from the student experience, which will have a significant impact on the future development and success of students, the college and the local community.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Student Services team will:

- I. Provide support and guidance to College Student Union/ Course Representatives
- II. Manage Student Union and Student Governor nominations
- III. Run semesterly Course Representative meetings
- IV. Engage Course Representatives in cross College activities/meetings
- V. Provide feedback/responses on departmental/ cross College student voice activity
- VI. Facilitate College/ external surveys eg. NSS

4.2 Deputy Executive Director (HE and Quality)/ Programme Partnership Managers/ Programme Leaders will:

- I. Appoint Class/Course Representatives and engage them in cross College activities/meetings
- II. Run semesterly Programme Board meetings
- III. Nominate Course Representatives to attend cross College meetings

- IV. Provide feedback/responses to issues raised via Programme Board and cross College based meetings.
- V. Gather student voice during observations of teaching, learning and assessment
- VI. Respond to compliments and complaints
- VII. Facilitate College/ external surveys e.g. HE Internal Survey

4.3 Compliments and Complaints are the responsibility of all College staff. Detailed information and responsibilities are published within the Compliments and Complaints Policy.

5. Student Union

5.1 All students become a member of the College's Student Union when they enrol. The Student Union is part of the National Union of Students (NUS) and exists to improve student experience at the College. All students can access advice and information, discounts for shopping and other benefits. All College students are encouraged to take an active part in shaping the Student Union.

5.2 The Student Union will run as two associations under the branding FE Student Council and HE Student Union. HE students will form an HE Student Union and vote in 4 executive officers. These Officers are elected by the HE student body. Executive Officer Roles are President and Vice President, Access and Participation and Equality and Diversity.

5.3 The Union Council which consists of The Executive committee and Class/Course representatives including the Class Representatives from Higher Education is the supreme decision-making body of the Union and responsible

for raising issues that are a concern to its members to the Senior Management team of the College

5.4 South Essex College Group Student Union will meet termly with representation from both the FE and HE along with student governors and relevant staff members.

For further information please refer to the Student Union constitution.

6. Feedback, Reporting and Impact

The College provides feedback to students in a variety of ways through social media, College website, meetings, letter or email (where appropriate) and via infographics. Impact will be measured through timely responses to compliments and complaints, positive distance travelled in survey results and improved engagement and outcomes.

7. Monitoring and review of the Strategy

The Student Voice Strategy will be reviewed at the end of each academic year by the Deputy Executive Director (HE and Quality) and the Student Services Manager (Engagement and Funding).

Appendix One

Student Voice Activities

HE Course Representatives: At the start of the academic year, each class will elect a course representative (rep) and deputy course representatives to liaise with their lecturers and Student Engagement team to put forward ideas and suggestions. Representatives are invited to attend Programme Board meetings each Semester to feedback the views of their class regarding course specific issues. Representatives are also invited to attend a Faculty Wide Course Representative meeting each semester to discuss HE/ College wide issues. The Faculty Course Rep meeting is chaired by the Student Engagement Officer with HE representatives from the Student Union in attendance. Minutes of meetings, feedback and responses are posted on the Course Representative Canvas/ Teams page.

Programme Boards: Higher Education students attend programme boards which provide an opportunity to feedback, evaluate the effectiveness of, suggest improvements to, and recognise good practice related to their programme of study, as well as monitor the progress made on their feedback and suggestions in subsequent programme board meetings. This approach recognises students as 'participants', 'evaluators' and, to an extent, 'co-creators'. The programme boards include student feedback templates that are contextualised to the annual student journey across all levels and years of study.

Student Surveys: A Start of Year Survey is carried out in October and an In Year Survey in March. The College undertakes and participates in a number of HE student surveys, including the annual National Student Survey (NSS) for

students, conducted in the final year of their level 5 and 6 programmes and also undertakes its own internal student survey at levels 4 and 5.

Programme/module feedback survey: Each Higher Education subject discipline undertakes an annual programme/module feedback survey which feeds into the annual monitoring and review (AMR) of programmes and modules

Focus Groups: A variety of focus groups will take place throughout the year facilitated by members of the HE Student Support team and Student Union.

Student Governors: The College appoints two Student Governors each academic year, one FE and one HE. The Governors do not have to be an elected SU Officer but must proactively engage with the Student Union

Committee/Board Meetings	Student Representation
Governing Board (5 times a year plus 2 x board development days)	HE Student Governor
HE College Executive Board (Termly)	1 x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Audit and Finance Committee (Termly)	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Access and Participation Committee (Termly)	HE Student Union Access and Participation Officer
HE Student Experience Committee (Termly)	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer

HE Curriculum and Quality Committee (Termly)	1x HE Student Union Executive Officer
HE Programme Board meetings (Semesterly)	1x Course Rep from each year of each Programme
HE Course Rep Meeting (Semesterly)	1x Course Rep from each year of each Programme

Appendix Two**Timeline HE Student Voice**

Month	Activity	Week commencing
September	HE Enrolment	15/09/2025
	HE Induction	18/09/2025
October	Course Representatives appointed	07/10/25
November	Start of the Year Survey (Induction)	10/11/2025
	HE Course Representatives Meeting	20/11/2025
December	Programme Boards Semester 1	03/12/25
	Student Focus Group	10/12/25
	Drop in with the Deputy Executive Director (HE & Quality)	10/12/25
January	Programme Boards Semester 1	12/01/26
February	Student Focus Group	13/02/2026
	HE Course Representatives Meeting	24/02/2026
March	Programme Boards Semester 2	19/03/26
	SU Officers/HE Governor Nominations	26/03/2026
April	Drop in with the Deputy Executive Director (HE & Quality)	17/04/2026
	Student Union Elections	23/04/26
May	HE Course Rep Meeting	05/05/2026
	Student Union Training	



Senior Leadership Responsibility	Adam Fahey, Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality
Policy Author	Tracy Espinosa, Student Services Manager (Engagement and Funding)
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Valentina Tiron, Student Engagement Officer Tracy Espinosa, Student Services Manager (Engagement and Funding) Sharon Dunphy, Deputy Executive Director (HE and Quality)

Issue date of current version	16 January 2025
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Type of Policy	Public / Internal