

## **POLICY ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT**

### **Introduction**

We are committed to engaging with our students in the pursuit of activities to support quality assurance and enhancement. This policy has been developed in line with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and sets out the principles that define the participation of students in our institutional quality assurance and enhancement system.

The policy describes the opportunities for students to engage in formal and informal quality assurance and enhancement systems, both individually and collectively, at all levels of study.

### **Student Engagement At UEL.**

Student engagement is an important aspect of the partnership between the University, the students and the Students' Union. At UEL student engagement means students participating in partnership with staff and each other in the life of the University; academically, socially, culturally and in decision-making. This includes making their voices heard through the student representation systems and feedback processes available.

### **Principles**

The principles of student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement activities are:

- We are committed to ensuring student representation at UEL is a collaborative partnership in which the University, its students and the Students' Union have a shared responsibility for promoting an environment which empowers the student/learner voice
- We are committed to embedding student engagement opportunities into our quality assurance systems
- We aim to provide both formal and informal opportunities for students to provide feedback in relation to their whole student experience
- We aim to ensure that student feedback is used to inform enhancements as part of an integrated, evidence-based approach.
- We aim to provide student feedback mechanisms that are responsive, with feedback provided to students in a timely manner
- We will provide support and training to empower students to actively participate in our quality assurance and enhancement system.

### **Student Engagement Opportunities**

The following opportunities exist for student engagement in our quality assurance and enhancement system. Where applicable, further information on the processes detailed below can be viewed in the relevant section of the Quality

*Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy*

Manual at <https://www.uel.ac.uk/Discover/Governance/Quality-Assurance>:

### Student Engagement through the UEL Committee Structure

1. Student representation at UEL includes representation, via trained UEL Students' Union (UELSU) representatives, at programme, school and institutional level. This includes student representation across the whole UEL committee structure.
2. UELSU Officers are invited to contribute to the development of academic policy via membership of working groups, institutional committees and project groups.
3. Programme Committees meet once per term and are the primary formal mechanism for programme level feedback. Programme Committees are responsible to School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee. They are responsible for assuring the quality of the student experience at programme level. Programme Committees include all staff making a significant teaching contribution, students on the programme, and representatives of relevant academic services (i.e. Learning Support Services). Its role is to ensure that the programme(s) operates in a manner appropriate to its stated aims and objectives and to a standard commensurate to the award to which it leads. The Programme Committee is responsible for approving the Review & Enhancement Process report and action plan produced by the programme team prior to its consideration by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee.
4. The Student Experience Forum considers student feedback in relation to the non-academic student experience. This Forum takes an evidenced-based approach to responding to student feedback and includes representation from students as well as representatives from colleges and professional services

### Programme Approval

This section refers to the approval of a new programme. For full details of the programme approval process see Part 5 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. The views of students are actively sought and taken into account in the design, delivery and outcomes of the programme.
2. Evidence of discussions with students about the programme proposal will be considered by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee as part of the approval process.
3. As part of its role in formally validating all programmes on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee (LTQC), the Validation and Review Sub-Committee (VRSC) will ensure that all required action has been completed with regards to student engagement in the process.

### Programme Re-approval

This section refers to the re-approval of an existing programme. For full details of the programme re-approval process see Part 5 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. The views of students are actively sought and taken into account in the design, delivery and outcomes of the programme.
2. It is not necessary for the programme withdrawal process to be followed with regards to the programme that is being replaced however, discussions will take place with students regarding the proposed changes and any transitional arrangements that will be put in place.
3. Evidence of discussions with students will be considered by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee as part of the approval process.
4. As part of its role in formally validating all programmes on behalf of the LTQC, the VRSC will ensure that all required action has been completed with regards to student engagement in the process.

### Module and Programme Modifications

For full details of the module and programme modification process see Parts 3 and 6 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. Student feedback can be used to form the rationale behind the need to modify the programme / module.
2. Students currently enrolled on, or applying to, a programme who will be affected by any modifications proposed will be given the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes and advised when any modifications have been approved.
3. In relation to change of programme title, discussions will take place with all students affected, both through the programme committee and individual notifications. This will include discussions on transitional arrangements that will be put in place.
4. Evidence of discussions with students will be considered by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee as part of the modification process.

### Programme Withdrawals

For full details of the programme withdrawal process see Part 6 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. Discussions will take place with students who are currently enrolled on, or intermitting from, a programme that is being withdrawn and will be affected by the proposed changes. This will include discussions on transitional arrangements.
2. Where students currently enrolled on, or intermitting from, a programme will not be affected by the withdrawal, i.e., the programme will continue as normal until all students are complete; the students will be notified both at the programme committee and via individual notifications.
3. Evidence of discussions with students will be considered by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee as part of the programme withdrawal process.
4. As part of its role in formally validating all programme withdrawals, the

VRSC will ensure that all required action has been completed with regards to student engagement in the process.

### Academic Review

For full details of the Academic Review process see Part 8 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. As part of Academic Review, programmes are measured against the Quality Criteria which requires that the views of students are actively sought and taken into account in the design, delivery and outcomes of the programme.
2. A student representative appointed by UELSU will normally form part of the panel. The student selected for each review will not be a student on one of the programmes under review, but may be from another school or another department within the school.
3. The programme for the review will include at least one meeting with existing students and former students.
4. Student feedback received through internal and external surveys such as Module Evaluation Questionnaires, the National Student Survey and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey will be included in the documentation presented to the review panel.

### Collaborative Review

For full details of the collaborative review process see Part 11 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. The Collaborative Review provides an opportunity to appraise the nature of the link; to gain an overview of the quality of the programmes offered by the link and to review the academic and administrative infrastructure of the link to ensure that it continues to be able to offer a suitable learning experience for students.
2. A student representative appointed by UELSU will normally form part of the panel.
3. The programme for the review includes a meeting with existing students.

### Student surveys

1. Students have the opportunity to give feedback on each module anonymously. A centrally administered automated module evaluation system is used for undergraduate and postgraduate taught modules delivered at UEL. The standard questions cover the following areas: Teaching sessions; Module support; Module Organisation; Module Resources and Module Satisfaction, with up to five additional questions per Department Area. Results are provided to Module Leaders and relevant school staff for action and reported on in Review and

- Enhancement Reports and Module reports.
2. Further opportunities for anonymous feedback are provided via ad hoc questionnaires from UEL service providers.
  3. Students have the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback at programme and institutional level through internal and external surveys such as the National Student Survey, the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey.

### Short Courses

For full details of the short course withdrawal process see Part 10 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. For short course withdrawals considered and validated by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee, discussions will take place with all students affected and will include discussions on transitional arrangements that will be put in place.
2. Evidence of discussions with students on the proposed withdrawal will be considered by the School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee as part of the withdrawal process.
3. Short courses will include opportunities for students to provide feedback on their experience.

### Review and Enhancement Process

For full details of the review and enhancement process see Part 7 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. The Review and Enhancement Process (REP) aims to identify opportunities for enhancement and includes the use of feedback from student surveys, student contributions to programme committees and programme teams to do this.
2. Reports should be uploaded onto Moodle and shared with students directly or through student representatives.

### External Examiner System

For full details of the external examiner system see Part 9 of the UEL Quality Manual.

1. Students have access to external examiner reports via the virtual learning environment (VLE) and are provided with advice from the UELSU on the interpretation and use of these.
2. As part of our external examiners system, students may be invited to meet with external examiners to provide general feedback on the programme experience.

### Response to Student Feedback

1. We provide feedback to students via a range of methods. These vary depending on circumstance but include 'You Said, We Did' posters, Programme Committees, Review and Enhancement Process reports and announcements on module and programme VLE and in module guides.
2. Where programme or module modifications take place, students affected by the changes will be notified of any modifications once they have been approved
3. We recognise the efforts of students engaging in quality assurance and enhancement and the UELSU has an established awards system for student representatives.

### **Student engagement at collaborative partners**

1. Collaborative partners are required to ensure adequate student feedback mechanisms are in place.
2. Collaborative partners are required to adhere to UEL policies and as such will fulfil all student engagement activities outlined in UEL quality assurance and enhancement policies.

### **Monitoring of policy**

Monitoring of our student engagement policy is undertaken annually in the following ways:

- The Review and Enhancement Process incorporates reporting at programme, department, school and institutional level and will confirm that systems are working appropriately and ensure a formal reporting of survey results.
- The annual Quality Enhancement Report which reviews UEL's quality enhancement activity in learning and teaching, the student experience and the sharing of best practice.
- UEL and UELSU jointly review the student representation system against The Student Engagement Partnership (TSEP) Academic Representation Benchmarking Tool.

### **Performance Indicators**

Outcomes from internal and external surveys such as the National Student Survey, The UELSU Student Lifestyle Survey and Module Evaluation Questionnaires will act as indicators of the effectiveness of this policy.

This policy will be periodically reviewed.