

South Thames Colleges Group

STCG FURTHER EDUCATION LEARNER VOICE POLICY

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy describes our commitment of a student-involved approach in the development of excellent teaching, learning, assessment and personal development, in a safe environment.
- 1.2 All Student Representative (Rep) meetings, Council meetings and the like will be reported formally and published online (Moodle). The prime objective is to ensure that we know what our students say in terms of what we are doing well, and also what we need to work together on to improve.
- 1.3 Student Voice is reported on through the College based Student Council whom also receives evidence from all parts of the College, through Student Rep meetings/focus groups which run right through the year and also from the annual FE student survey which takes place in the spring term, along with other in-year surveys.
- 1.4 Student voice information and action plans are reported back to Matrix Groups and College Management Team (CMT) regularly and then summatively to Senior Management and Governors (QL&S Committee) in the summer term.
- 1.5 The Group approach to the FE Student Voice sets out to be inclusive, embedded and valued that empowers learners to improve standards.
- 1.6 The Group approach to the FE Student Voice supports the role that staff have to help students develop confidence, to positively contribute to their success and that of the Group and to be an active college citizen, as outlined in the Education Inspection Framework May 2019.

2. Student Representative Meetings

- 2.1 Heads of School/Deputy Heads of School/Curriculum Managers, under the guidance of the Assistant Principal Curriculum (FE) arrange for diverse and representative groups of elected students from their School, to meet termly (Heads of School/Deputy Heads of School/Curriculum Managers should not chair their own meetings but should make arrangements with Managers from other Schools).
- 2.2 Students will be asked to rate their experience and then offer their comments which will be recorded in the meeting notes. Student views will be sought on various aspects of their experience.
- 2.3 Meetings are conducted in a constructive manner. Sensitive topics should be managed accordingly with no personalised comments. Students can receive praise for taking part and this is recorded in their ILP.
- 2.4 The information produced by Student Rep meetings goes firstly to the parent School and then also to Student Council and the College Management Team.
- 2.5 The points raised by students, should be published at the earliest opportunities, with reference to action that will be taken where there is a concern that needs addressing. Where a request has been made by Student Reps that cannot be met, this should also be reported back along with the reasons why.
- 2.6 There should be due regard to ensure that the views of part time students and apprentices are captured and contribute to any improvements plans based on the feedback of students.

3. FE College Based Student Council (FE Student Council/Council)

- 3.1 The College based FE Student Council (Student Council) looks at teaching, learning, assessment and personal development and all that relates to this. The Student Council will form the key group

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for interacting at strategic level with College Senior Leaders and Managers. The Student Council will be College based.

- 3.2 Council Representatives will be made visible through poster campaigns and/or via Moodle, so that they can be identified by other students.
- 3.2 The Council advises on the key student policies and processes, for example the Student Code of Conduct and also contextualises the views coming through Student Rep meetings and surveys. In addition, the Council contributes to the evaluation of the annual self-assessment. The Council Representatives, or Student Representatives, may be called upon during Ofsted Inspections.
- 3.3 The primary output of the Council is a clear and frequently updated action plan setting out the things that students like and need the Group to sustain and those things that need working on.
- 3.4 Student Council gives FE students, from all parts of the College the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way to improving the student experience. A secondary purpose is to give the members of the Council the opportunity to develop transferable skills and experiences that will help them as individuals including in the world of work.
- 3.5 The Council is chaired by a senior member of staff. A member of the administration team lends support to the Council and ensures all Council meetings are minuted and published. Other College Managers may be invited to attend in order to focus on particular issues. Student Support Teams will support students to engage with their roles as Council Representatives.
- 3.6 The Student Council is College based and made up of Student Representatives nominated and elected from each School/Section in each of the Colleges. It is recommended there should be two Representatives elected onto the Council from each School/Section where possible.
- 3.7 All Council Representatives are briefed on their role using a role specification. If their performance is less than satisfactory in terms of attendance at Council meetings, a replacement will be nominated in-year.
- 3.8 A College Group conference will be held for Student Representatives during the Spring term.

4. Student Governors

- 4.1 Four students at any one time are invited to attend meetings of the College Governing Body. Nominations are secured from all parts of the Group and elections are normally held early in the Autumn term. The Student Services Teams facilitate these elections. There is one formal Student Governor and three of the spaces for students will formally be observers.

5. Student Union

- 5.1 There are currently different arrangements in the various Colleges within the Group. Where a Student Union currently exists, this entity should continue. The Student Union structure will be developed through 2019-20, with the view of developing the best model for the Group. Students will play an integral role in deciding the best model.

6. Student Surveys

- 6.1 The questions set in the annual surveys for FE students are approved by the Group Leadership Team and Student Council and supported by QLS.
- 6.2 The main surveys are the induction survey in September/October 2019 and then the main survey in January 2020 and results are reported back to Student Council, GLT, CMT and Schools by the end of the spring term. Results are compared against Group data from previous years to enable trends, improvements and any potential issues to be highlighted, addressed and mapped against National benchmarks where relevant.
- 6.3 The College aims to achieve satisfaction ratings of 90% or better – the results are widely publicised across the Group and reported to Governors.
- 6.4 From time-to-time other in-year surveys are created in order to gain feedback on events or training opportunities that groups of students may have participated in.

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- 6.5 QLS also facilitates student completion of the Department for Education Learner Satisfaction Survey across the Group; this usually takes place from November to May.

7. Higher Education

This policy is related to the FE Student Voice. There will be a HE Policy, produced by the Head of Higher Education, which will outline how the Group approaches ensuring that there is an accessible programme linked to HE students that feeds into the student experience and quality improvement.

8. Praise and Feedback

- 8.1 The opportunity for students, parents and others to provide either praise or make a complaint is provided through a variety of routes, including online.
- 8.2 The Feedback Policy and Procedure is on the website and is available also, on request, in paper form. This policy and procedure has two stages.

9. Support and Training

- 9.1 Student Support Teams, will support the Focus Groups/Student Representative meetings and those students that participate. Support will also offer a briefing/training session/guidance to students, to allow them to develop in their role. Role specifications for Student Representatives and Student Council Executives will also be provided.

10. Summary

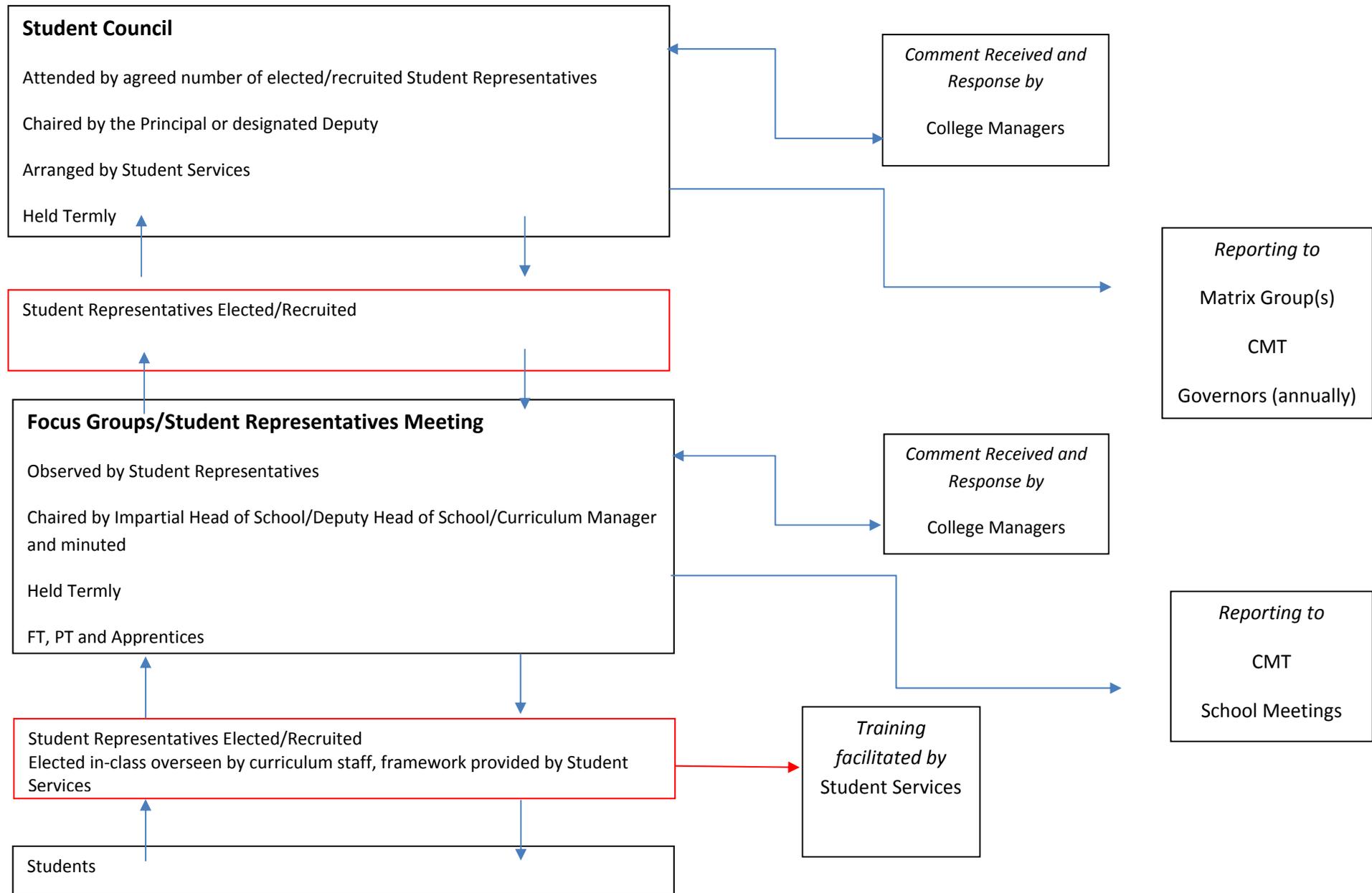
- 10.1 In making the commitment to our student-led approach there will be times when we are not able to implement aspects of the feedback we have received.
- 10.2 When a College within the Group is unable to implement, we will explain clearly why this is the case.
- 10.3 Colleges may interpret this policy to reflect local context.

11. Access to the Policy

- 11.1 All staff must be familiar with this and all other policies, which are published on all websites across the Group. The implementation of the policy will be monitored through the CMT/Matrix Group.

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Hierarchy and Information Flow



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