

## LEARNER INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

### Context

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The College's strategy should be viewed in the context of the College's Corporate Strategy 2011-2014 and the Quality Improvement Strategy.

This strategy has been developed in the context of the College's Corporate Strategy 2011-14 as a key priority for the College to be learner centred:

*'Improved learner success and achievement through a personalised high quality learner journey and experience, underpinned by listening and responding to the voice of the learner'*.

This strategy has been developed within a national context such as:

*FE white paper 'Creating Opportunity, Releasing Potential, Achieving Excellence'*

Which states that learner involvement requires a steady state of continuous self improvement and recognises that this will be achieved when learners, employers and other stakeholders are routinely systematically and successfully embedded into the College self-assessment and improvement processes (July 2011).

Framework for Excellence (January/February 2011)

Identifies listening to the learner voice as a key strategy in its quality improvement strategy and identifies the learner as an active partner in performance improvement.

Ofsted: Handbook for the Inspection of Further Education and Skills from September 2009 (reviewed September 2011) states that the views of learners are central to inspection to quote:

*'To be outstanding the user engagement strategy is highly effective, with the views of learners systematically collected and acted upon to bring about improvement, and subsequent actions clearly communicated to these users'*.

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the College's Strategic Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011-14 and its associated policies and the Voice of the Learner Policy.

It is contextualised through the College's Voice of the Learner Framework (FE). (Appendix 1)

### Mission Statement

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'Meeting learner needs and aspiring to excellence'.

### Rationale

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This document sets out the strategy for Learner Involvement at Doncaster College. It will foster and promote a culture of learner involvement. This will be achieved by supporting learners to be more actively involved in:

- Governance

- learning, teaching and assessment
- life of the College
- operational and strategic planning
- quality improvement and processes
- equality and diversity
- safeguarding.

It will encourage independence and self motivation in learning so learners become active participants in their own learning at Doncaster College and encourage them to develop an interest and commitment to the wider College community.

## **Fundamental Principles**

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The facilitation of learner involvement is of paramount importance therefore we will:

- Actively listen to the voice of the learner
- Ensure that the College's decision making process is driven by assessing the impact upon the learner
- Provide a curriculum that is relevant and connects to young people's lives, particularly their tutorial experience
- Promote a flexible pedagogy that understands the complexity of learners' lives
- Ensure that the personalisation agenda is integrated into all aspects of the learner journey
- Avoid creating a powerful student elite by developing methodologies for retaining and encouraging disadvantaged learners
- Involve the whole student body, including work based learning students and modern apprentices
- Empower and enable learners to contribute to the decision making process as it impacts upon their learning experience
- Encourage learners to be involved in their community through volunteering, Youth MPs and community consultations.

## **A College Strategy**

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This strategy will be responsive to the changing profile and needs of College students, national developments and comply with government legislation.

All members of staff should be individually responsible for ensuring that they actively listen to the voice of the learner.

This strategy should cover all aspects of College business which relates to and affects students including:

- admissions, initial assessment and induction
- learner voice
- development of the individual learning plan
- all policies and procedures as it relates to the student's experience
- Group Tutorial, Enrichment, Every Child Matters
- student retention
- curriculum content and development
- student representation
- Student Parliament

# POLICY DOCUMENT

- Governance
- equality and diversity
- complaints and compliments
- volunteering activities.

## **Structure and Systems**

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The College operationalises its strategy through its Learner Involvement Action Plan, which is monitored by the College Executive. Voice of the learner reports are provided to the College's Curriculum, Quality and Performance Committee. Learner involvement objectives for each aspect of the College's work will be determined and agreed.

Voice of the learner data will be analysed and priority areas for action and improvement targets set, within its programme area SARs, QUIPS and College SAR and QUIP.

## **Critical Success Factors**

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- Visible commitment of senior management and Governors to active listening to the voice of the learner
- Active participation and involvement of all staff in the promotion of learner involvement
- At all levels, there is a commitment to provide the appropriate resources to enable and encourage students to contribute to operational and strategic issues which affect their learning experience
- Provision of training for course representatives so that they can fully participate in learner involvement activities
- Provision of space for learners to meet, organise and contribute their views
- Acceptance of learner involvement/voice as key components in the evaluation of College services
- Ensuring that all College policies and procedures are regularly reviewed in line with learner feedback
- Provision of an effective initial assessment and induction process linked to the development of an ILP
- Need to involve whole student body, including work based learning students and modern apprentices
- Allocation of an appropriate budget and resources to facilitate learner voice.

## **Next Steps**

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The College has translated its Learner Involvement Strategy in key objectives:

1. Involve learners and respond to individual needs through a personalisation agenda by:
  - Meeting the needs of all the learners
  - Providing a comprehensive range of induction activities to enable learners to understand how they learn
  - Providing a one-to-one tutorials to encourage learners to reflect on overall progress against targets
  - Effective involvement of learners in the development and use of their ILP
  - A comprehensive and consistent approach to group/individual tutorial programme
  - Effective monitoring of attendance and the provision of appropriate support.

2. Involve learners in College decision making processes thereby strengthening learner participation and active representation through:
  - A programme of Academy Student Focus Groups with the emphasis on learning and teaching, equality and diversity and inclusion
  - Twice-yearly cross-college surveys of learners
  - The College's course representative system within each Academy and Academy Student Council Forums
  - A Student Parliament
  - A Student Conference
  - Election of two Student Governors
  - Complaints and compliments
  - SMT Focus Groups
  - Meet the Executive/Governors Events.
  
3. Involve learners individually and collectively in the College's quality improvement processes through:
  - Participating in the interview process for lecturing staff
  - Inclusion in the College's lesson observation scheme
  - Inclusion of student feedback into Quality Improvement Plan
  - Inclusion in the Self-Assessment Report validation process.
  
4. Allocate appropriate resources to enable and encourage students to contribute to operational and strategic issues which affect their learning experience through:
  - Providing space for students to meet
  - Providing resources for student representatives training.

