

SPARQS Framework Mapping

The following is a mapping exercise, cross-referencing College practice in relation to Students' Association activity, student engagement, student voice and representation, and general college practice in enhancing student experience, against the SPARQS *Features of Effective Student Engagement* framework.

The mapping exercise was carried out by John Clarke (Head of Enhancement & Assurance), Jon Craig (Student President) and Arlene Sweeney (Learner Engagement Officer), with further contributions from Gary Sharp (Student Support Services Manager).

Framework Element	Criteria	College Practice	Comments/ AfDs/ Actions
A culture of engagement	Student membership at all levels of institutional decision-making committees and processes, with exceptions only when clearly justified.	Student President contributes to most college groups and committees, including: Board of Management, Learning & Teaching Committee, Academic Board, Professional Development Forum, Learning Teaching & Learner Experience Working Group, Health & Safety Committee, EDI Committee, Health and Wellbeing Working Group. Class rep feedback from Course Team Meetings informs actions and improvements. 'You Said We Did' notice are typically used by both Faculty and SA to communicate resultant actions. Three student surveys take place each year – Stop & Check, Learning & Teaching, and the national Student Satisfaction Survey. Student President represents the college on the STEP programme.	Ensure 'You Said We Did' responses are consistent across course teams.

		Meet the Managers meetings held with student reps each block. Learners were represented during the recruitment process for the new Principal.	
	Processes for overall responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring student engagement in quality.	Responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring student engagement in quality lies with Head of Enhancement & Assurance, involving the following processes: Student satisfaction data is analysed and actioned in SCM SEAP reports, and is reported on to Academic Board and Learning & Teaching Committee. CM reports require analysis of student feedback survey data. Learner focus groups are carried out regularly with a range of classes.	
	A culture of regular engagement at informal level between representatives and staff	Meet the Managers meetings held with student reps each block. Student President is embedded in staff team and able to communicate informally with all relevant staff. Most classes have a class tutor or guidance tutor who is a first point of contact for any learner enquiries or feedback. Students may make direct enquiries or via their class reps. Class reps are	

		empowered to raise matters informally with course teams. SA hosts informal 'drop-ins', events and pop-ups to engage with student body.	
	The recognition that staff and students have much to learn from each other's perspectives and hard work.	The SA is introducing a certificate for Class Reps who contribute over and above the standard requirements, to recognise their contribution. Student President presence on many boards and committees illustrates the institutional drive to encourage mutual listening and respect.	Introduction of a Student Awards scheme could recognise the input of students and fortify positive relationships.
	A culture of honest learning and sharing both within and between institutions.	Sector sharing networks such as CDN, SPARQS, NUS etc allow sharing of practice, mutual advice and support, benchmarking etc. External reviews (e.g. Education Scotland, QAA etc_ provide input for learning and development.	This is an area that could be developed to ensure a culture of openness and enhancement
	Strong leadership on the student engagement culture and ethos from senior management and senior student officers.	Leadership by Learner Engagement Officer and Student President who provide training for, and meet regularly with, class reps. The Student Executive Team consists of 12 elected officers and provides leadership in student representation. Overall leadership provided by Student Services Manager and Director of Student Experience & Business Development. There is also frequent engagement with the Student President by the Vice Principal for Curriculum and the Head of Enhancement &	

		Assurance. Student President also meets the Principal on a monthly basis.	
Students as Partners	In the development of individual students as active participators in learning	All learners have Individual Learning Plans and are active partners in their development. All FE learners have scheduled guidance appointments and access to a guidance tutor/ course tutor. Learners can contribute to developments in course design and learning and teaching approaches via class rep feedback at Course Team Meetings, usually followed by 'you said we did' activity.	
	Between the institution, its students' association and the student body.	Class reps are provided with training and regular access to support Learner Engagement Officer. Class reps meetings are held each block for every full-time course as a matter of process. Students can work with the Students' Association to create and join clubs and societies,, currently including faith clubs, LGBTQIA+ society and several hobby clubs. Student body engages actively with the SA, e.g. re mental health support, food bank, clothing bank, issues and problems, ideas for clubs etc.	Engagement between the SA and student body is strong at Springburn campus, where SP and SA are visible and accessible. However, access could be improved at other campuses. Improvements are currently being made to improve monitoring and quantifying interactions with students or SA activity. Recent improvements include monitoring usage of food bank and clothing bank use,

		SA uses teams site as a communication too, which is formatted in a 'social media' style to encourage informal communication.	and a log of interactions with office bearers has now been introduced. Possible action: Develop a log of student interactions, enquiries etc.
	Between students, their associations and national agencies	The colleges liaises with SPARQS, in the provision of training for class reps. The Student President represents the college on the STEP programme. The Student President and Learner Engagement Officer have monthly calls with NUS, who offer support and advice.	
	At the level and type of discussion between students, their representatives and the institution	Engagement activity as outlined above, e.g. class rep training, meet the managers sessions, course team meetings, class reps meeting course colleagues to gather feedback. MS Teams is also used positively as collaboration and communication too.	
Responding to Diversity	Institutions may need to adapt their approaches to learning and teaching to meet the needs of a diverse population – therefore the engagement of these students in commenting on and working with others in shaping the direction of learning is particularly important	Regardless of how a student accesses support, including disclosure at application, self-referral, staff referral, or direct contact, the same individualised, needs-led assessment, support planning, and review process applies. This process is reviewed annually by Student Support Services. Where a student discloses a disability, difficulty, or barrier to learning during the application	Consider greater input from faculty staff to creation of Learning Support Plans.

		process, an automated Learner Support process is triggered once the student enrolls on their course. The student is contacted by the Learner Support team and provided with information about the service, including the types of support available during their studies. They are invited to complete and return a “Tell Us About Your Needs” questionnaire if they wish to engage with Learner Support. This allows the team to gain a fuller understanding of the student’s individual circumstances, rather than relying solely on a ‘tick box’ at application. If the questionnaire is returned, the student is then asked to book an appointment with a Learner Support Adviser at a time that suits them. This meeting provides a confidential space for a detailed discussion and a Needs Assessment, completed with the student and for the student.	
	The level of engagement. We wish to encourage students to take on active student engagement roles. Students filling in a questionnaire or module feedback form are engaging, as are course reps or full time elected officers. Systems need to recognise that some students will for various reasons choose to limit their engagement to a level appropriate for them.	There are methods for diverse students to engage with the SA and the college at a level suitable for them, including: Volunteering opportunities (food bank, clothing bank etc). Clubs and societies (examples as above). Mental health peer to peer support club. Contribution to learner focus groups.	Consider introduction of a more accessible, perhaps anonymous, means to ensure representation of views; e.g. suggestion boxes.

		Communication via class reps.	
	Systems and opportunities being appropriate. Whilst students may choose their own level of engagement, the development of opportunities and systems need to allow all students who want to, regardless of their background, to participate fully	The college has some methods in place to remove barriers to full participation, including: Simplified versions of class rep presentations and training material are available for non-native English speakers and anyone else who needs them. Travel expenses are provided as required to encourage participation in representative activity. The College now provides an extensive range of community, online and self-directed learning content via its digital presence, to allow for flexible and accessible modes of engagement, and ideally lead to more formal or active engagement.	Remaining barriers to full participation include: lack of time due to work, caring or other commitments; money; childcare.
	Methods of engaging particular groups of students' need to feed into representative structures. Students' associations need to ensure they can represent all students as far as possible, and this will require the support of their institutions	The SA is typically a diverse body without the need for any pro-active encouragement to particular groups to participate. However, some such examples include the diverse range of clubs and societies as above (which are usually created by students according to their needs), and a specific call to ESOL students to encourage representation. Student Support Services run regular focus groups to include voices from under-represented students or those with additional barriers.	Consider steps to better monitoring of, and encouragement of, participation by diverse learners, diverse representation among class reps etc. What more can we do to encourage students with additional barriers to get involved?

Valuing the Student Contribution	Ensure students are supported in their efforts and do not have unrealistic demands made of them.	The class rep handbook includes a checklist that makes expectations clear and sets realistic goals. SA training involves identifying the skills of each rep and involving them in specific appropriate activity and development. SA advises that the course is always first priority and encourages management of workload.	
	Make clear the difference their contributions have made.	Class rep training emphasises the difference their contribution can make, using examples of previous changes brought about by the SA. Current examples of change brought about student reps include the introduction of the Springburn student hub, free breakfasts, food banks, inclusive toilet reallocation, and period products in all bathrooms.	
	Recognise, reward and accredit their contribution.	Class reps and SA officers earn college certificates for achievement and completion of the duties and activities laid out in the class rep handbook.	
	Value the expertise they bring without expecting them to have the same expertise as others.	Identification of skills in reps and targeting to the right situations, and activities as above.	Student officers (i.e. Student Presidents) are sometimes assumed to know context of discussions in various committees and working groups, when this may be unrealistic.
Focus on Enhancement &	In the students themselves	All students have Individual Learning Plans, and all FE students have scheduled guidance.	Practice related to learner progress review, feedback

Change (Outcome focussed)			and monitoring is mixed across the college.
	In the student experience	Systems of representation and their impact on student experience, as detailed above.	
	In the institution and in the sector as a whole	Student President represents the college on the STEP programme as referenced above. There is extensive student representation on the projects, which are intended to improve the learner experience.	
Appropriate Resources & Support	Representatives having the ability to do their job – for instance through the ability to communicate with those they represent.	Class rep training addresses appropriate communication methods for particular situations – social media, MS Forms, display screens etc. Class reps are allocated time with course colleagues to prepare feedback for Course Team Meetings.	Note that Class rep handbook was recently updated to provide clearer guidance on the role, and additional awareness-raising with curriculum staff will reinforce the importance of learner representation within employer-led and work-based programmes.
	Student members of committees being given inductions and being supported through a “before, during and after” approach to their role in meetings.	Class reps are provided training through SPARQS. Information from training is refreshed and ongoing throughout the academic year. Student executive committee brings together student volunteers.	
	A joined up and centrally resourced co-ordination of representative support.	Committees, events etc as detailed above, as well as named roles within the SA and central coordination by Learner Engagement Officer.	

	Networking opportunities with other representatives.	Student Presidents across colleges communicate via WhatsApp groups, and through meetings administered by NUS and SPARQS. Class reps meet through rep training and are encouraged to meet socially. Communications between class reps is facilitated via an MS Teams site. Class reps and other co-opted student advocates are brought together as part of the ILQR process.	
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