

University Centre Sparsholt Student Engagement Policy

Our Mission

Raising Aspirations, Unlocking Potential, Advancing Futures

Our Values

Excellence, Passion, Teamwork, Integrity, Innovation,
Sustainability, Valuing Others and Supportiveness

Sparsholt College Group

The Sparsholt College Group (the College Group) includes Sparsholt College, Andover College, University Centre Sparsholt, Sparsholt College Services, Westley Enterprises and Andover Town Football Club. College Group policies apply to each part of the group unless specified otherwise.

The ***UCS Student Engagement Policy*** was approved by the Board of Governors in July 2025. This supersedes previous versions.

Originator: Dean of Higher Education
Located: College Group Intranet & Website
Due for review: July 2025

UCS STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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UCS STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.2 Sparsholt College (University Centre Sparsholt - UCS) is an Associate College of the University of Portsmouth and a registered Higher Education provider with the Office for Students and, as a consequence, is responsible for Student Engagement.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to define our intentions to involve and empower students in the process of shaping their learning experience, in their journey towards becoming autonomous, independent learners.
- 1.4 UCS is committed to working with all students, either as individuals and/or as groups, to help them develop the skills and confidence to be actively involved in the organisation of their own learning and student experience, regardless of their mode of study, or the protected characteristics contained in the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.5 UCS is committed to achieving the twelve sector agreed principles of the QAA UK Quality Code 2024 to meet both the UK and European standards and guidelines.
- 1.6 The Office for Students (OfS) requires higher education (HE) providers to engage meaningfully with students as part of their responsibility for maintaining the quality of degree courses. This expectation is set out clearly in the **OfS Regulatory Framework**, particularly under Condition B2.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. The **UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024)** explicitly highlights the importance of student engagement in quality assurance. Under **Principle 2: Engaging Students as Partners**, providers are expected to:
 - Embed student engagement within institutional culture.
 - Clearly define and support student representation.
 - Ensure diverse student voices are heard and influence decision-making.
 - Act on feedback and communicate outcomes to students.
- 2.2 **In OfS Condition B2: Resources, support, and student engagement**, there is an expectation that providers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that students receive the academic support and resources necessary for a high-quality experience, and crucially, that providers must *engage effectively with students* to promote their academic success both during and after their studies.
- 2.3 The University Centre Sparsholt Student Charter states its commitment to student engagement in that we will:

- *Provide regular formal and informal opportunities for you to comment on any aspect of your studies and University Centre Sparsholt life.*
- *Tell you what action we have taken as a consequence of your feedback.*
- *Support course representatives to undertake their activities.*

3. The Policy

3.1 All Higher Education students will be actively encouraged and supported to be involved in student engagement activities to improve quality processes in a manner and at a level that is appropriate to them.

3.2 UCS will foster an appropriate range of Student Engagement activities to establish a culture and environment where the student voice is forthcoming, heard and responded to.

3.3 QAA Principle 2 states that *'providers take deliberate steps to engage students as active partners in assuring and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience. Engagement happens individually and collectively to influence all levels of study and decision making. Enhancements identified through student engagement activities are implemented, where appropriate, and communicated to staff and students'. In particular, there are key principles that we recognise and action:*

3.3.1 Student engagement through partnership working is strategically led, student-centred and embedded in the culture of providers.

This is achieved through our internal and external surveys, Student Association and Facilities meetings. as a well as events that promote a culture of engagement through both 1-to-1 and group tutorials.

3.3.2 Student engagement and representation activities are clearly defined, communicated, resourced and supported. Transparent arrangements are in place for the collective student voice to be heard and responded to.

This is achieved through our student representation system which is promoted through induction activities with open and fair elections taking place each year. Each cohort is able to elect two representatives for each year of the course. In addition, the student body is able to elect one to become a full member of the Sparsholt College Group governing body.

3.3.3 Providers demonstrate effective engagement with students, ensuring any representative groups or panels reflect the diversity of the student body. Students understand that their voice has been listened to and are aware of how their views have impacted the assurance and enhancement of the student experience.

The representatives are elected by students and those wishing to be considered

are encouraged to put themselves forwards and are supported in the role by staff. Minutes and actions arising from the student meetings are circulated to all students. NSS survey results are posted to students and “you said, we did” posters are circulated.

3.3.4 *Student engagement opportunities and processes are inclusive of students’ characteristics and responsive to the diversity of each provider’s student population. They involve student representative bodies, where applicable, and Providers and student representative bodies, where such bodies are in place, recognise and celebrate the contribution of students to the enhancement of teaching and learning and the wider student experience.*

We value the impact of the student voice and are proud to promote our students at open events where they lead on activities enabling prospective students to better understand the student experience at UCS. These sessions are conducted on a voluntary basis and do not include staff. Students are also invited to contribute towards activities such as development of the Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) or the Access & Participation Plan (APP), as relevant.

3.3.5 *Students are enabled and encouraged to actively engage in the governance and enhancement of the wider student experience beyond the formal curriculum.*

Our governing body for the wider Sparsholt College Group includes one elected student representative from the UCS community. This student is a member of the full board, as well as a selected sub-committee(s). Chairs of the meetings actively encourage the student governors to speak from their own experience which leads to insights that promote positive change for all UCS students.

3.4 Aspects of the educational journey into which students will be invited to offer insight into include:

- Application and Admission
- Induction and progression, programme and curriculum design, delivery and organisation
- Teaching and learning
- Assessment
- Learning resources
- Student support and guidance.
- Regulatory compliance.
- Other areas identified by the student body

3.5 UCS will provide student engagement opportunities which will ensure equality of access for the entire student cohort, both collectively and as individuals, activities will include:

- Student representation on the College’s Governing Body
- Student representation in the awarding institutions quality processes.

- Student consultation and contribution to compliance with Office for Students regulatory framework (including Access and Participation Plan, Student Protection Plan and TEF).
- Course representatives with appropriate training
- UCS Student Association
- UCS Resources and Facilities meetings
- UCS internal and external student surveys, including the National Students Survey (NSS)
- Consultation on Course modification and development
- Group tutorials
- Residential Student Voice

4. Implementation

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of all staff and managers involved in the delivery of teaching, learning assessment and support to Higher Education students to foster and promote student engagement opportunities across the College. The Dean of HE will lead the process, supported by the Assistant Principal–HE, with responsibility for ensuring that all students are aware of and able to access student engagement opportunities.
- 4.2 The Assistant Principal - HE with responsibility for student engagement has a major role in working with the student body.
- 4.3 The Assistant Principal - HE will be responsible for organising Student Association activities, Resources and Facilities activities, and Course rep training activities in conjunction with University of Portsmouth Student Union staff.
- 4.4 Higher Education students will be informed and empowered to become involved in student engagement activities as a result of effective communication through the Assistant Principal – HE to the staff involved in teaching, assessing and supporting Higher Education students. The communication strands include the L-Edge online platform, the College’s Virtual Learning Environment, group and individual tutorials, HE Student Handbook, and resources made available on MS Teams and course representatives.
- 4.5 Appropriate training and briefing activities will be provided relevant to the level of student engagement for all students. These will range from induction briefings, to course representative and UCS Student Association training.
- 4.6 UCS teaching staff will be responsible for engaging with training and briefing activities to ensure effective dissemination and promotion of student engagement activities to students.

5. Staff and groups with specific responsibility

- Quality & Standards Committee of the Governing Body
- Higher Education Strategy Group
- Dean – Higher Education
- Assistant Principal - Higher Education
- UCS teaching staff
- External Examiners
- University of Portsmouth collaborative partner links
- Business Support managers
- Residential Services team
- UCS Student Association

6. Associated documents

- QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education June 2024
- University of Portsmouth Associate College agreement
- UCS Strategic Plan
- UCS Complaints and Feedback Policy
- UCS Student Charter
- UCS Student Protection Plan
- Access and Participation Plan 2026-2030
- UCS Student Conduct Policy

7. Monitoring, review and evaluation

- 7.1 The Higher Education Strategy Group will monitor the effectiveness of the UCS Student Engagement Policy to ensure that all Higher Education students are supported and informed to provide feedback that is instrumental in Quality processes.