

# Using the Student Voice to Improve Quality: Features and indicators of good practice

FEATURES	INDICATORS OF FEATURES IN ACTION
Organisations have a range of representative systems that enable all students to have a voice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which there are representative systems at:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ central/organisational level</li> <li>◦ local/departamental/programme level</li> </ul> </li> <li>There is diversity of groups/associations and representatives reflect the diversity of the student body</li> <li>There are linkages between these levels/types of representation</li> </ul>
Students are resourced so that they are able to undertake representative work in a supported, meaningful and knowledgeable way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resourcing of representative groups includes elements such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Training</li> <li>◦ Job descriptions and general guidance on how to manage the role</li> <li>◦ Terms of Reference for committees</li> <li>◦ Resources to support data collection, analysis and communication</li> <li>◦ Networking opportunities</li> <li>◦ Advocacy support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Students actively engage in student representative systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students have a mandate from the people they are representing</li> <li>Students engage / respond to representative systems (reactive)</li> <li>Students contribute proactively</li> <li>Students collect and analyse their own data and communicate back to other students</li> <li>Students influence other students</li> </ul>
Quality enhancements/actions incorporate the student voice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students use and value the representative systems</li> <li>Quality enhancements are made as a result of student input</li> <li>Quality enhancements made as a result of student input are communicated back to students</li> </ul>
The organisation exhibits a culture of representation that values the student voice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisations meaningfully involve students in shaping the curriculum</li> <li>Student voice is legitimised</li> <li>Deliberate efforts are made to empower and involve students</li> <li>Students are viewed as co-producers or partners in teaching and learning</li> <li>Student contribution is recognised and rewarded</li> <li>There is codification of representation (<i>e.g.</i> in terms of reference and constitutions of committees, boards etc.)</li> </ul>



## Using the Student Voice to Improve Quality: Quick Reference Guide

# Using the Student Voice to Improve Quality: Reflective Questions

## Establishing the partnership in which the student voice is to be heard

- How do governance arrangements show that the student voice is important to and valued by your organisation?
- How are student representatives involved as partners within committees and other mid-level organisational structures?
- What consultation mechanisms exist, so that students are invited to contribute to organisational decision making and their perspectives treated with respect?
- What mechanisms exist for students to influence the quality of individual courses for their own and future cohorts?
- How are student representatives given feedback about what has happened as a result of their input?
- How can the above systems and processes be improved, to ensure the student voice visibly enhances quality at the organisation?

## Legitimising the student voice

- How is an active and independent student voice encouraged at your organisation?
- Are the mechanisms used by student representatives for gathering the student voice fit for purpose?
- How does your organisation demonstrate that it is listening to the student voice?
- To what extent are there demonstrable lines of accountability from those who speak for students back to the student body?

## Establishing clear roles for those delivering the student voice

- Are student representatives well prepared, and how do they work with other students to ensure that the views they put forward are genuinely representative?
- Who is responsible for orienting student representatives to their role(s), and how is this orientation provided?
- Are student representatives on committees given job descriptions, terms of reference etc.?
- Within committees, how are the different pressures on students' time compared to that of other committee members acknowledged and managed?
- How can these systems and processes be improved to ensure that student representatives at all levels speak effectively for students?



## Providing training for those delivering the student voice

- Is there training available for student representatives, who provides it, and what percentage of representatives are being trained?
- How is such training monitored and reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose?
- How does training account for the specific needs of different representative positions?

## Providing adequate resources for supporting the student voice

- What resources can student representatives access to speak effectively for students (rather than only on the basis of their personal experience)?
- What organisational information exists that would assist student representatives, and how is this shared by the organisation?
- If applicable, what data does any student association collect, and how is this shared with representatives, the student body and the organisation?
- How do processes for collecting student data encourage participation and avoid 'survey fatigue'?

## Hearing and heeding the student voice

- To what extent is the student voice embedded in the organisation's processes and structures?
- What evidence shows that the student voice has made a difference to organisations' decisions and the quality of provision?
- How is evidence of the student voice's effectiveness publicised to students?

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