

Walbrook Code of Practice for Quality Assurance

(Higher Education)

Chapter 11: student engagement

11.1 Introduction

- 11.1.1. We aim to involve our students in the development of the learning, teaching and assessment strategy, and overall student experience. We encourage students to take individual and collective responsibility for their learning and to participate actively in their studies and the wider opportunities available to them e.g., mentor schemes, employability initiatives and student representative roles. We seek to enable constructive engagement in the interests of mutual understanding, problem solving, and the continuous enhancement of the student experience.
- 11.1.2. We've therefore aligned this chapter to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code with particular consideration to the advice and guidance section on student engagement.
- 11.1.3. We define student engagement as the participation of students in our quality processes and systems, resulting in the improvement of the educational experience for all current and future students.

11.2 Principles

- 11.2.1. The wider student body is kept informed of the matters discussed at board of directors and higher education (HE) deliberative committees through the student representatives. This information is also available on the student's virtual learning environment (VLE) within the student representation forum.
- 11.2.2. We provide a range of both formal and informal processes to enable student engagement in the development of the learning and teaching experience and educational developments at the HE level.
- 11.2.3. We ensure there are sufficient opportunities for all students to engage in constructive dialogue with staff managing and teaching the academic programmes.
- 11.2.4. We provide, through student representation and feedback initiatives, an opportunity for students to express views on educational issues affecting their studies at module and programme level, as well as comment on their overall student experience. All students are encouraged to use their student representatives, peer mentors and ambassadors as a means of channelling feedback to us.
- 11.2.5. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative feedback methods, we're able to gather a range of information relating to the overall student

experience. A number of feedback approaches are actively promoted to students as part of the registration and induction processes with reminders posted on the VLE.

- 11.2.6. Collaborative partners are required to make separate arrangements to enable student representation and feedback on a regular basis, with such provision monitored by us as part of the annual reporting process.
- 11.2.7. Reviews of the arrangements for student engagement and representation are conducted to ensure that good practice is being followed and that no student is disadvantaged. The annual monitoring process enables us to consider and reflect on developments over the monitoring period in learning, teaching, and student support, and provides a chance to highlight areas of good practice.
- 11.2.8. We recognise the challenges faced in engaging hard-to-reach target audiences, such as part-time and distance learners, and we takes steps to include all students, regardless of study mode, in the planning and implementation of new initiatives, as appropriate.

11.3 Student engagement in quality assurance

- 11.3.1. We aim to involve students in our quality systems with the purpose of improving the student experience both for current and future cohorts.
- 11.3.2. Student engagement in quality assurance is underpinned through the involvement of students at validation and review events. Student representatives are invited to be part of the validation and review panel, and students are also invited to attend sessions as part of programme review.
- 11.3.3. Student feedback plays an important role in the annual monitoring process. The reports are provided to students who are encouraged to read and challenge us on them.
- 11.3.4. We review student engagement processes on a regular basis in order to ensure the continued high standard of delivery of programmes.

11.4 Student feedback

- 11.4.1. The nature of our programmes, and the different modes of study, presents a challenge in devising the most appropriate channels for effective student feedback.
- 11.4.2. We ensure that feedback mechanisms are transparent and foster active student participation in our quality systems. Such opportunities are represented by a combination of individualised and collective methods of data collection through
 - i. module / programme questionnaires about the learning, teaching, and assessment experience

- ii. participation in the National Student Survey (NSS)
- iii. participation in the destination of leavers from higher education (DLHE) survey / graduate outcomes survey
- iv. early module feedback
- v. face-to-face meetings
- vi. informative drop-in sessions
- vii. student / staff liaison committee meetings
- viii. workshop evaluation questionnaires
- ix. peer mentors
- x. student and alumni ambassadors
- xi. participation in the online forums, and
- xii. through attendance of student representatives at deliberative committees.

11.4.3. Student feedback is an integral part of the annual monitoring process and, as such, module level and NSS data is analysed by the student experience group. Summaries and commentary on the outcomes of these campaigns are made available for all students to access via the VLE.

11.4.4. We keep students informed of actions taken as a result of feedback gathered from them via a summary published on the Student Life web page. We also provide an explanation to students if no action is taken on their feedback.

11.5 Student engagement opportunities

11.5.1. We place a great deal of importance on developing a learning partnership between ourselves and our student body, from application through to graduation and beyond. Our Student Charter sets out the expectations for this partnership. At higher education level, students must be prepared to take responsibility for their learning, and actively participate in the academic and professional development opportunities made available to them.

11.5.2. The types of engagement services offered range from the professional and peer mentor schemes to student representative roles, as well as opportunities to serve as student ambassadors.

11.5.3. Students who undertake any of our student engagement roles are able to hold more than one appointment per academic year, with the exception of a second student representative position. We encourage interaction between the different student role groups.

11.5.4. We take a proactive approach toward promoting these engagement initiatives amongst the student body, and encouraging students to get involved in educational enhancement and quality assurance. Throughout the academic year, the HE programmes team organises induction meetings, student / staff liaison committee meetings, conducts email message

campaigns via the weekly bulletin board and facilitates information drop-in sessions.

11.5.5. Student representatives sit on deliberative committees which allows for student input in terms of educational issues, the overall management of courses of study and wider student affairs.

11.5.6. Students receive a programme handbook, which provides detailed information about student engagement opportunities.

11.6 Student societies

11.6.1. We define a student society as a group consisting of at least five current higher education students who wish to form an organisation to participate in a particular activity or for a specific purpose. Societies and clubs play an integral role in the personal and social development of students studying higher education qualifications. Societies are a means by which students can develop transferable skills, explore interests, expand their social networks and generally contribute to a vibrant academic community. Our student societies policy provides further information.

11.7 The professional mentor scheme

11.7.1. Professional mentors are an element of our support services. They assist students in managing the transition from higher education to the professional workplace, so helping to give them a competitive advantage in their future careers.

11.7.2. We work with a group of professional members via our dedicated e-mentoring platform that hosts professionals from the banking and financial services sector. They're available to support students with issues they may encounter by giving advice from their personal experience. Their role is to serve as a critical supporter to both full- and part-time students in helping them to manage a time of significant personal and academic transition. Further information can be accessed via our website.

11.8 Peer mentor scheme

11.8.1. Peer mentors are full-time students from second- and third-year higher education programmes, who serve as a mentor to fellow full-time students. Peer mentors are tasked with hosting a series of peer assisted study sessions (PASS) designed to help newly enrolled first-year students to make friends on their course and adapt to and integrate into student life. This ultimately encourages greater social engagement across the wider student body, particularly among those students who don't live near campus.

11.8.2. Similar to professional mentors, peer mentors serve as a crucial point of contact for their mentees to assist them in their transition to higher education and to stay motivated throughout their studies. Peer mentors also inform mentees about ways to engage in academic, personal, and professional development initiatives.

11.8.3. All peer mentors complete a compulsory induction and orientation prior to being assigned a mentee.

11.9 Student representatives

11.9.1. Student representation is considered the foundation of student engagement activity and creates a collective voice amongst the student body. Student representatives are appointed to all Walbrook HE deliberative committees, including the Board of Directors. The appointment of student representatives to these committees lasts for one year and enables student views on the academic delivery of our programmes to be represented at module, programme and strategic level within the HE governance structure.

11.9.2. Representation on the Board of Directors further allows for student input in terms of the overall management of our key strategies, finances, and property and business affairs. Additionally, student representatives are invited to participate in programme validation and review events, and student / staff liaison committees provide a forum for staff and students to discuss matters of mutual interest.

11.9.3. Students who undertake any of the student representation roles are able to hold more than one engagement-focused appointment per academic year, barring a second student representative position. We encourage interaction between the student representative groups.

11.9.4. Students are able to contact their student representatives at any time via email. Contact details on the current student representatives can be found on the VLE.

11.10 Outreach and graduate ambassadors

11.10.1. Our ambassadors are appointed from the student body and recent graduate community, and play a vital role in shaping our future. Ambassadors accomplish this by representing us to new and prospective students, providing a dynamic link between us and the industry, and acting as a channel for gathering feedback on our educational and professional development programmes.

11.10.2. Ambassadors need to have good communication and networking skills, and the scheme provides ambassadors with an opportunity to develop these skills further.

11.10.3. Information on our ambassadors can be accessed via the [Alumni](#) page of our website.

11.11 Roles and responsibilities

11.11.1. Student representatives, mentors and ambassadors are expected to make themselves known to the student body they're representing and to take the opportunity to report / respond / make views known in the forum.

11.11.2. Professional and peer mentors' main responsibilities are

- i. to act as a critical friend to their mentee
- ii. to be available to listen and respond to students concerns and academic / professional issues - signposting where necessary to relevant staff
- iii. to liaise with fellow professional and peer mentors as well as staff at Walbrook
- iv. to help support the recruitment of new mentors into the scheme.

11.11.3. Student representatives' main responsibilities are

- i. to help proactively shape institutional policy and decision making in relation to Walbrook's HE programmes
- ii. to participate in deliberative committee meetings, validation and review events, and student / staff liaison committee meetings
- iii. to be available to listen and respond to fellow students' views, concerns, and academic issues, and report these back to us
- iv. to feedback relevant information from us to fellow students either directly or through the student representative forum on the VLE
- v. to liaise with other student representatives and our staff members
- vi. to be an active participant in the quality assurance and enhancement of our learning and teaching
- vii. represent us at external events (e.g., QAA events)
- viii. build a network of contacts / stakeholders within our committees.

11.11.4. Outreach ambassadors' main responsibilities are

- i. to demonstrate and be an advocate for professional education in financial services, and for the value of our qualifications
- ii. to represent us at UCAS fairs, open days, and new student inductions
- iii. to assist with induction programmes
- iv. to participate in online talks or discussions via social media
- v. to blog about the student experience
- vi. to speak at events
- vii. to respond to specific student queries.

Outreach ambassadors may also appear in promotional material.

- 11.11.5. Alumni ambassadors' main responsibilities are
- i. to demonstrate and be an advocate for professional education in financial services, and for the value of our qualifications
 - ii. to participate in online talks or discussions via social media
 - iii. to blog about the student experience
 - iv. to speak at events
 - v. to assist with finding work experience placements and internships
 - vi. must be eager to share their learning and experience with others on a voluntary basis
 - vii. to participate in information sessions and open days, writing testimonials, and attending school visits on our behalf.

11.12 Training and development

- 11.12.1. Each student representative is expected to perform their duties responsibly. To help them to do so, representatives are required to attend a student representative induction workshop to cover the purpose of a student representative, responsibilities, key skills, and attributes of an effective student representative and Walbrook's governance structure.
- 11.12.2. Student representatives who are enrolled as part-time distance learners, as well as those students studying at collaborative partners, receive an initial briefing either by telephone / email or through their collaborative partner. There are opportunities to follow up with our staff via annual monitoring and validation visits.
- 11.12.3. Ahead of attendance at their first deliberative committee meeting, student representatives are provided with a briefing pack and receive an induction with the committee secretary.
- 11.12.4. Student representatives are invited to attend various other developmental events throughout their period of appointment as identified by the quality, policy and regulation team.
- 11.12.5. Prospective members of the professional mentor scheme are invited to use the online mentor platform, which features guidelines and resources to perform their duties responsibly. Professional and peer mentors are expected to keep regular contact with us and attend mentor and mentee networking events, featuring a short training / support session beforehand. Mentors are required to maintain regular contact with each mentee, and liaise with the HE programmes team upon completion of the mentorship.
- 11.12.6. New student ambassadors are given an informal introduction to the role and what's expected of them. Ambassadors are provided with support from us for the duration of their appointment with information and updates sent via email.

11.13 Appointment to student engagement roles

11.13.1. Student Representatives appointment process

- i. students will be invited to apply for the role of student representative on the Board of Directors and / or HE deliberative committees on an annual basis
- ii. invitations may be via the student representative online forum, by email to the student body or by other appropriate means of communication
- iii. there are normally two student representatives on each committee, where possible drawn from the different levels of study represented by Walbrook's programmes
- iv. students apply by submitting a current CV and a supporting statement to the HE programmes team, outlining what they'll bring to the role. Students who don't have a CV are advised to contact the HE programmes team
- v. where there's more than one application received for an available position, once the closing date has passed, all applications are reviewed by a selection panel. The panel includes the Registrar, Policy & Regulation, the HE Quality Officer, an independent representative and a student representative (either past or current). Input is also sought from the chairs of the HE deliberative committees
- vi. student representatives are appointed for a minimum period of one year. To provide consistency of representation, appointment to the Board of Directors is for an initial three year term, which may extend post-qualification.

11.13.2. Professional mentor appointment process

- i. the part-time student cohort and our membership community are invited to volunteer to serve as professional mentors to the undergraduate student body. Each summer, the Alumni Development Manager issues a formal e-shot to the PT students and membership community encouraging them to participate
- ii. mentors can hold the role for as long as they desire (assuming they abide by the mentor guidelines)
- iii. professional mentors are required to create a profile in the e-mentoring online platform.

11.13.3. Peer mentor appointment process

- i. the full-time student cohorts are invited via emails and posters on campus to serve as mentors to their fellow students
- ii. mentorships will be maintained as agreed upon by the mentor and mentee. We encourage the relationship to be developed throughout the academic year at minimum.

11.13.4. Student and alumni ambassador appointment process

- i. we send invites to active members of the student and alumni community to join the scheme
- ii. current students interested in becoming an outreach ambassador should contact the HE programmes team to make a formal enquiry
- iii. prospective alumni ambassadors should contact the Alumni Development Manager to learn more about the role.

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