STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY POLICY

1 This policy is informed by the Office for Students Regulatory Framework, particularly Condition 2 (Resources and Support). Additionally, the University of Law adheres to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education which sets out Expectations, Advice and Guidance in relation to quality and standards processes and procedures. This policy sits within the University of Law's Quality and Standards Code which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of The University of Law and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

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Introduction

2 The University of Law (the University) aims to create an active partnership between staff, students and the University to ensure a commitment to treating all as intelligent and respected partners of an academic community within the University.

3 This policy deals with student representation and proactive participation in the evaluation and improvement of teaching, learning, and assessment at the University. This includes providing written and oral feedback and student participation and advocacy through formal and informal forums.

4 There are various ways for students to be involved as part of the process. Students can participate in democratic elections for representation on the Students' Union Student Parliament, and be involved with, but not limited to, Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs), clubs and societies, and the student pool, and the Academic Board subcommittees. Students receive regular communication from teaching and support services, can talk to their academic coach, Student Journey Advisor (SJA) or Student Union staff or sabbatical officers, as well as part time student representatives.

Definitions

5 Students' Union Manager – the full-time staff member who assists the Co-Presidents in the running of the Students' Union (see below for further information).

6 Students' Union Co-Presidents – the full-time staff members who are student sabbatical officers, elected for a year long term. They assist the Manager in the running of the Students' Union (see below for further information).

7 Students' Union Student Engagement Coordinator – the full-time staff member who strategically directs the Student Pool and the 'social reps' (Campus Vice-Presidents, Equalities Officers, and International Student Representatives) who partially comprise the Student Parliament.

8 Students' Union Clubs and Societies Coordinator – the full-time staff member who leads strategically on clubs and societies within the Students' Union.

7 Student Parliament- main decision-making body of the Students' Union, comprised of part time student representative roles.

8 Student Representative- encompasses all part time student representative roles within the Students' Union

9 Student Pool- the colloquial name given to the scheme that allows for student voice and input to be provided in University committees and on various projects. It is run by the Student Engagement Co-ordinator.

Responsibility for this policy

9 Specific responsibility within this policy lies with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Students.

10 Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the maintenance of standards and quality assurance of academic provision and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board.

Expectation

11   The University actively engages with all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the development, suitability and implementation of academic practices. Specific areas include employability, assessment, teaching and learning, inclusivity and diversity, safeguarding, sense of belonging, mental health and wellbeing, value for money, freedom of speech, and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience overall.

Key aims and principles

12   The University, in partnership with staff and students:

12.1   has a Students' Union to increase student engagement across the University, which has amongst other things, a defined representation system in place;

12.2   defines and promotes opportunities for student representation

12.3   enables student participation in discussions relating to the evaluation and improvement of the academic experience

12.4   provides opportunities for all students to be involved in a manner and at a level appropriate to them;

12.5   ensures the continual improvement of the learning experience for current and future cohorts

Procedural approach

13   The University:

13.1   provides representation opportunities to all students. The University takes into account the timing of course-related academic demands when scheduling representation opportunities. The University ensures that, where practical, sufficient time is allowed for students to take part in representation, and that the demands on student time are proportionate to the feedback sought;

13.2   works in partnership with students and listens to their views (individually and collectively) and acts upon them in order to tangibly improve the student experience and academic outcomes;

13.3   uses a variety of tools to engage with students, to ensure different forms of feedback and advocacy. This enables all students to engage at a level and time commitment which fits their interest and availability;

13.4   seeks student representation and advocacy in the following areas using appropriate processes:

      13.4.1   application and admission;

      13.4.2   induction;

      13.4.3   programme design, development and approval, including delivery and organisation;

      13.4.4   learning and teaching;

      13.4.5   enabling student development and achievement (learning resources, employability, disability support, pastoral care, mental health and wellbeing);

      13.4.6   assessment;

      13.4.7   external examining;

      13.4.8   programme monitoring and review;

      13.4.9   working with other institutions;

      13.4.10 policy development;

13.4.11 higher education review.

13.5   works in partnership with students, in conjunction with the Students' Union, to jointly agree the evidence which is shared with students, and the processes for student representation and advocacy and of resulting actions, and dissemination and recognition of them. Mechanisms for the analysis of feedback, and how the University proposes to share the outcomes and actions resulting from this feedback, are advised at the time of engagement, along with the timescales involved;

13.6   introduces agreed actions expeditiously, with a view, where possible, to provide direct benefits to the cohorts of students who have given relevant feedback. It is not always possible to address issues while the students who have raised them are still attending the University, although changes will be ensured to benefit future cohorts;

13.7   has in place processes to:

13.7.1 encourage student participation in the University's development and enhancement of academic provision

13.7.2   implement transparent mechanisms, agreed with students, for the nomination and election of student representatives;

13.7.3   provide induction and on-going support for students and staff appropriate to their roles in supporting student representation and advocacy

13.7.4   monitor, review and enhance the effectiveness of policies and processes for engaging students in development and enhancement of academic provision

14   The University is regulated by various bodies and student feedback cannot always be acted upon. Where appropriate, this feedback may be passed on to regulators as part of the processes for sector-wide programme updates.

15   The University has a Students' Union by which students are represented at all levels. The Union is headed by a Students' Union Manager and two Co-Presidents (Academic Affairs, and Union Development). Furthermore, there are

five Coordinator roles who are tasked with the day-to-day operations of the Union.

15.1   The Students' Union Co-Presidents are the public face of the Union in interacting with the University and are the main point of contact in regard to the Union. The Manager and the five Co-ordinators function as the SU Staff Team.

15.2   The Students' Union Manager assists the Co-Presidents in the running of the Union and deals with the administrative and financial side of the Union, including reporting back to the University at the Academic Board. The Manager also acts as the Students' Union Returning Officer and is the line manager for all five co-ordinators.

15.3   The Student Engagement Co-ordinator strategically directs the Student Pool, and acts as the line manager for students on the pool. They also direct and act as the line manager for the Campus Vice-Presidents, Equalities Officers and International Student Representatives, who sit on the Student Parliament.

15.4   The Students' Union Clubs and Societies and Communications Coordinator leads strategically on clubs and societies for all University campuses and the relationship between the SU and University Student Information Teams.

15.5   The Students' Union Advice Coordinator runs the Students' Union Advice Centre and resolves student queries and concerns.

15.6   The Students' Union Communications and Marketing Coordinator acts as the conduit for all Students' Union communications across all platforms and leads on Students' Union promotion for events and campaigns.

15.7   The Students' Union Academic Representation Coordinator strategically directs the Skills Development Programme, liaises with SSLCs and class reps, and acts as the line manager for the Programme Reps who sit on Student Parliament.

Monitoring and evaluation of provision

16 Formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of this provision lies with the Academic Board, through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Students.

Version history

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	VP – AGQS	Initial drafting group	31/05/13
V1.1	Head of Students – Moorgate	QA group	30/07/13
V1.2	External Consultant	Coherence activity amendments	27/08/13
V1.3	Student Officer	Review	16/09/13
V1.4	VP – AGQS	Review	17/09/13
V1.5	Academic Registrar	Review	24/09/13
V1.7	Academic Board	Approval	03/10/13
V1.8	VP – AGQS	Chair's sign-off	13/12/13
V1.9	Disability Support Officer	Updates	11/11/14
V2.0	Working Party	Updates	26/04/16
V2.1	Academic Board	Approval	19/05/16
V2.2	Academic Registry	Final amends	23/05/16
V2.3	Project Working Group	Revisions and amendments	24/02/17

V2.4	Students' Union Executive Officer	Initial draft updated to reflect the QAA's Advice and Guidance on Student Engagement.	25/01/2019
V2.5		Approved by Academic Board	14/02/19

V2.6	Registry Officer	Change to the document coding convention	
V.3	Student Engagement Co-ordinator and Deputy Academic Registrar	Revisions and amendments	7/7/23
V3.1	Student Engagement Co-ordinator and Deputy Academic Registrar	Revisions and amendments	6/9/23