# Student Participation and Engagement at Queen’s.

The student body at Queen’s is larger and more dispersed than ever. Around 90 students are present on the campus during the week; another 50 have regular presence at evenings and weekends; another 20 are regularly here just at weekends; another 40 - 50 students have all or most their learning at Shallowford House; around another 200 engage in learning through or at Queen’s. How we engage with students and how students participate in decision making, are able to give feedback and engage in development matters, is an increasingly complex issue.

Currently there is:

* A community forum for staff and students which meets twice termly. It deals largely with practical, domestic matters and is not a decision making body. It draws only on those who attend learning on campus and partners who live on campus. It has only been able to meet briefly during a Tuesday evening meal.
* Students are represented on Academic Board, Programme Groups and the Graduate Research Committee, but this is not comprehensive across the range of dispersed learners.
* Students attend meetings of the Governing Body, but this has been patchy, partly because Governors meet during the day time, partly because there have not been clear ways of identifying ‘representative’ students or addressing the question of who they represent.

It is important that:

* All students from across the whole institution are able to give timely feedback and to engage in the process of decision making and development.
* All student voices are heard and that the interests or needs of some do not dominate.
* There is effective student representation on the Governing Body.

We propose that:

The Staff Student Community Forum (SSCF) is re-shaped to make it:

* more effective in engaging student views and voices;
* capable of gaining effective student representation on the Governing body

Proposed terms of reference

1. The SSCF will meet at least once a term.
2. The SSCF will consist of up to 12 students drawn from as wide a range as possible of those who are registered on programmes and courses, those who learn at Queen’s and those whose learning is dispersed.
3. Up to 2 partners of students.
4. Up to 5 academic/administrative staff members (including the Hospitality Officer).
5. The Chaplain.
6. The SSCF will be chaired by someone with expertise in diversity, equality and community formation at the invitation of the Principal. The Chair will hold this office for a period of three years.
7. The SSCF will be supported by a member of administrative staff.

Purpose

* The SSCF will be a primary place for staff and students to take counsel together about key issues affecting the life of the Foundation.
* The SSCF will gather comprehensive feedback from the student body on the overall ‘student experience’ at Queen’s using online surveys, normally twice yearly.
* The SSCF will reflect on this feedback, identifying issues and making recommendations for changes and developments that will improve this experience.
* The SSCF will maintain a Moodle presence to enable student issues to be raised and discussed in between meetings. Recommendations and minutes of meetings will be posted on Moodle as a primary way of reporting back to the student body.
* The SSCF will report to the Principal.
* The student members of the SSCF will select two students to represent the student body at meetings of the Governors of Queen’s. The students will be invited by the Chair of Governors to speak to the Forum’s work in relation to the recommendations and minutes, and to represent a student perspective on other matters before the Governors.
* Governors may remit to the SSCF specific consultation exercises, for example on policy reviews.

Meetings

* Meetings will be held at a time which will maximise student attendance from across the breadth of the Foundation. This will normally mean an evening or a weekend meeting.
* Agendas for the meeting will be determined by the Chair in consultation with the student and staff members.