Hartpury University Student Voice Policy

1.0 Introduction
Our commitment to working in partnership with our students is articulated at the highest level within the University's Strategy 2030 noting that we are 'Stronger Together', and links to our values of respecting and empowering our students to ensure that their voice can positively impact our Hartpury community.

Hartpury University has a clear commitment to excellence in learning, teaching, and research and to enhancing the student experience at all levels of the student journey. To maintain a high-quality student experience, it is essential that all students have opportunities to feed into developments at the University and to provide feedback reflecting on and evaluating their experiences. To this end, we engage our students through a variety of approaches with a view to their opinions informing decision making, as well as learning from and responding to their feedback individually, collectively and through their representatives and the Hartpury Students' Union (HSU).

2.0 Purpose
This policy provides a clear understanding for stakeholders (including students and staff) as to what we mean by 'student voice', the approaches for listening to it, and how it is utilised to the fulfilment of our strategic priorities and ultimately to inform and result in an excellent student experience.

3.0 Definition
We define student voice as:

'*the individual and collective student input that impacts our strategy and delivery for positive outcomes and ultimately an excellent student experience*'.

The student voice is collected through a variety of approaches, driving our strategies and actions for enhancement and excellence in our academic provision and overall student experience.

4.0 Scope
Hartpury is committed to working in partnership with our students to gather feedback through a variety of approaches including surveys, focus groups or workshops to help us identify trends, issues and to establish priorities.

Student voice approaches come in different forms with the aim of collectively:

- ensuring that students are key participants in governance and decision making.
- ensuring that students are valued participants in quality assurance and enhancement.
- providing opportunities for students to become active participants in their learning and wider student experience.
- fostering collaboration between students and staff.

This policy is for all students across our undergraduate and postgraduate provision, including home and international students, PGR students, and those studying at partner organisations or institutions. Throughout this strategy, the student experience encompasses the learning, teaching and assessment experience and the wider student experience, including the experience of student support services, thus including:

1. Academic provision & delivery.
2. Students' Union: Supports gathering of the student voice in all areas of University matters.
3. Professional Academic Support Services e.g., Achievement and Success Centre (ASC), Innovation, Careers and Enterprise (ICE), Library/Learning Resources; IT, Digital Learning.
4. Wider Student Experience: Facilities, accommodation, catering, transport etc.

This policy is overseen by Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee (ASEC) and owned by the Head of Student Experience who is responsible for reviewing and overseeing its implementation and reviewing its impact. Implementation is achieved by linking in with external policy and good practice, wider staff and internal quality assurance approaches, including the Hartpury Quality Enhancement Framework (HQEF).

5.0 Student voice principles

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education sets out the expectation that students are actively engaged, individually and collectively, in the development, assurance, and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience. Formal structures of collective student representation and individual student feedback are both core elements to achieving this expectation.

The student voice is of fundamental importance in the monitoring and evaluation of our performance and helps to ensure the parity of experience across our provision. Engagement with the student voice is strategically led, but widely owned by both students and staff at all levels, with students considering, deliberating, and developing informed views, independent of the University.

Our principles which underpin the strategy are:

1. **Enhancement-focused**: Ensuring the collective and individual approaches have specific purpose(s), where the outcomes are considered, utilised to inform decision making, and responded to (closing the feedback loop). Each student has multiple ways (such as surveys, representation, focus groups etc.) to contribute their voice to an improved educational and student experience.

2. **Inclusive**: All student voice approaches are inclusive and accessible for all.

3. **Foster a positive and constructive culture.** All approaches value and share positive practice, as well as identifying areas for improvement. All feedback should be valued in its role to drive decision making, identify good practice, and instigate positive change.

4. **Sustainable and timely**. We commit to regularly reviewing the value, methods and timing used in the student voice, to minimise feedback fatigue for both students and staff and maximise positive engagement. Additional / changes to student voice

approaches are carefully considered in relation to value and sustainability, and would normally be approved by ASEC to ensure its relevance and alignment to this policy.

5. **Transparent and communicated effectively:** Student voice approaches are a two-way process between students and Hartpury. When collecting data from students it is essential to be clear why the data is being collected; how it will be used and by whom, and how the feedback loop will be closed. It is very important to communicate effectively when decisions or changes are made as a result of student feedback (i.e. 'closing the loop').

6. **Adhere to data protection regulations and policies**. Any activities that involve the gathering and storing of data must adhere relevant policies around the collection and storage of personal data and to UKGDPR guidelines. Where feedback results are shared, steps should be taken to protect respondent anonymity unless the student or students have consented to share their feedback without anonymity.

6.0 Approaches used in the student voice

As a minimum, Hartpury commits to offering all students the opportunity to:

1) Provide anonymous feedback on their programme and University experience in an annual student experience survey.
2) Provide anonymous feedback on their experience of all taught modules within their programme of study.
3) Elect student representatives to act as the student voice on behalf of all students within their programme of study.
4) Raise concerns or complaints through informal concerns and a formal complaints procedure.
5) Include student representation in the University committee structure wherever appropriate, to allow students to inform and be part of Hartpury's direction and decision making process.

The approaches are designed and scheduled to ensure we meet the student voice principles (section 5) and examples are outlined in Figure 1. Some of the approaches are defined externally (such as the NSS, PTES, GO etc.). Many are Hartpury owned and defined in areas such as the HQEF. The Student Voice Procedure underpins this policy and provides detailed information regarding the different approaches utilised and/or refers to other underpinning documents. The procedure document may be updated annually and should be referred to for current guidance on how to implement the student voice approaches.
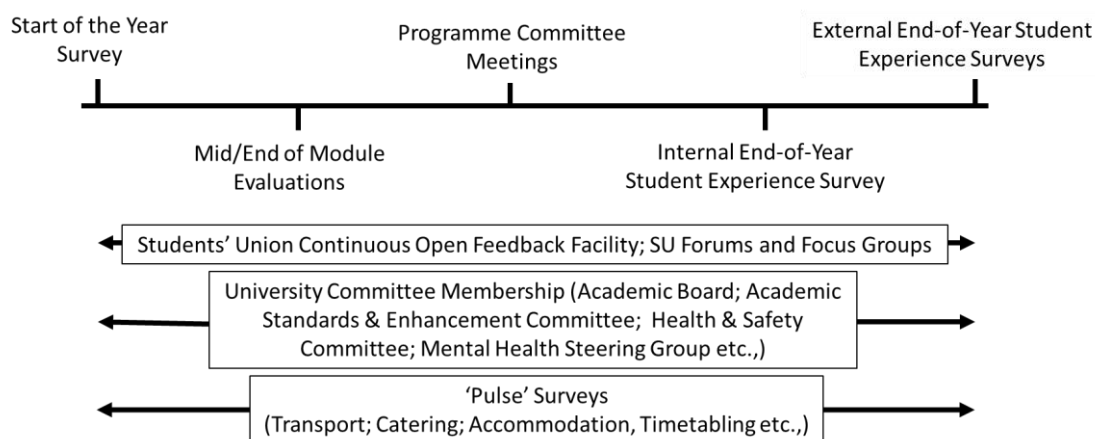
Figure 1. An overview of the student voice approaches used at Hartpury[1]

7.0 Ensuring the effectiveness of the student voice policy.

An annual report focusing on the student voice will be presented to ASEC, reflecting on the success of this policy, its associated approaches, and any enhancements for the future. Measures considered within that report include:

- Levels of engagement in the delivery of, and response to, student voice approaches by staff in accordance with the relevant procedural guidance.

- Levels of student engagement and participation with student voice activities.

- The number of students applying to be, and actively participating as, Course Representatives (including committee attendance).

8.0 Responsibilities

To ensure we effectively achieve the ambitions outlined in the student voice policy, the following roles and associated responsibilities have been co-created and agreed with relevant stakeholders, including our students.

Role	Responsibilities
Students	- To actively engage with and give open and constructive feedback in alignment with the Student Charter.
Students' Union and Representatives	- Recruit, train, and support student representatives to effectively represent their cohort. - Ensure that officers and representatives contribute to programme and relevant University committees so that the student voice is represented. - Support representatives to actively disseminate the outcomes of student feedback to the wider student body. - Capture the student voice through a variety of informal (e.g., spontaneous chats) and formal (i.e., student forums) channels and share this feedback with relevant departments, seeking responses and facilitating the closing of the feedback loop.

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[1] The content of figure 1 is likely to evolve overtime. Current approaches are described in detail within the relevant underpinning procedure documents / processes.

Module Leaders	• Provide opportunities for students to give feedback on modules, through the implementation of mid- and end of- module evaluations where applicable. • Engage with students in the co-design of student voice outcome reporting. • Effectively communicate the outcomes of feedback mechanisms to the student body (i.e., 'close the loop'). • Summarise the module student voice inputs and any associated actions within the Module Enhancement Report. • At the launch of a new module, explain how the student voice is reflected in any changes to the curriculum and/or assessment design.
Programme Managers	• Create opportunities, and promote high levels of engagement, for students to provide programme-level feedback via student programme committees, and the annual student experience survey. • Engage with students in the co-design of student voice outcome reporting. • Effectively communicate the outcomes of feedback mechanisms to the student body (i.e., 'close the loop'). • Collate module-level information to inform Programme Enhancement Reports, and raise areas relevant to Department activities.
Heads of Department	• Set out the Department's approach to collecting programme and Department level feedback, ensuring that the principles in this Policy are followed. • Ensure that Department level outcomes and approaches to student feedback are reported and reflected upon in the Department's Enhancement Report (DEP).
Associate Heads of Department	• Support programme managers and module leaders in promoting high levels of student engagement in all student voice initiatives.
Head of Student Experience	• Oversee the effective implementation of the student voice policy, reporting annually to ASEC.
Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee (ASEC)	• Ensure that there are a range of student voice mechanisms that allow students to provide feedback or engage in dialogue. • Oversee the HQEF section on continuous enhancement to ensure that student voice activities are aligned to the expectations in this Policy. • Ensure the student voice is represented and responded to including through annual quality and teaching enhancement reports.

Approval and Review Cycle

Version Number	1.2
Date Last Approved	October 2024
Policy Owner	Head of Student Experience
Approving Committee	Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee
Status	Approved
Effective from	October 2024
Next Review Date	July 2027

Change Log

Version Change	Description of change
1.2	Addition of "Students' Union Continuous Open Feedback Facility" to Figure 1