



# Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



## Student Voice and Representation

### *Framework*

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • ENSURING COMPLIANCE  
SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



GOVERNANCE



QUALITY



COMPLIANCE



EXCELLENCE

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## Student Voice and Representation Framework

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### **Note on Development Status**

*This policy is adopted as a working document. Oakswood acknowledges that not all mechanisms described herein are fully established at the date of first adoption. Appendix A sets out a structured Action Plan for developing and embedding these mechanisms across academic years 2025–2026. Progress will be reported through the College's annual quality assurance cycle and reviewed by the Academic Board and Board of Governors.*

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## 1. Introduction and Purpose

Oakswood College is committed to placing students at the heart of its educational experience. This policy sets out the College's approach to capturing, responding to, and acting on student feedback and student voice across all aspects of college life from academic quality and curriculum design to the wider student experience.

The policy has been developed in line with OfS registration conditions B1–B5, the **UK Quality Code (2024) Advice and Guidance: Student Engagement**, and the BNU Academic Framework for validated degree programmes. It reflects the expectation shared by the OfS, QAA, BNU, and AdvanceHE that student engagement is embedded in quality assurance, programme management, and institutional governance, not treated as a standalone or optional activity.

The College's approach is framed by the following principles, drawn from the UK Quality Code (2024) and the AdvanceHE Student Engagement Through Partnership Framework:

Principle	What This Means for Oakswood
<b>Engagement as Partnership</b>	Students and staff work together through open and respectful relationships. Student representatives are treated as legitimate contributors to governance and quality processes, not merely as recipients of decisions. The Student Voice is not limited to academic representation; the College sees students as partners in all aspects of the student journey.
<b>Inclusivity</b>	Engagement mechanisms are varied and accessible. The diversity of the student body including mature learners, widening participation students, and those with caring responsibilities, is reflected in how the College designs its engagement activities.
<b>Transparency and Communication</b>	Students are kept informed about how their input has been considered and what action has been taken. The College operates a "You Said, We Did" approach across all formal feedback channels and communicates this to students.
<b>Integration with Quality Assurance</b>	Student voice is a mandatory input into programme review, annual monitoring, approval, and modification processes. Feedback that reveals systemic issues is escalated through formal quality channels. Intelligence suggesting a matter or area requires attention that comes to light through informal and formal complaints, is addressed regardless of whether it is an issue of complaint.
<b>Evidence and Continuous Improvement</b>	Engagement is monitored and evaluated. Evidence of impact is collected, reported, and used to drive iterative improvements in teaching, services, and governance.

This policy covers four core engagement areas:

1. **Student Representation;**
2. **Student Life and Academic Feedback;**
3. **Curriculum Design and Development; and**
4. **Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement.**

Each is addressed in the sections below.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students enrolled at Oakswood College, including those on BNU degree programmes and Awarding Organisation (ATHE) programmes at Levels 3–7.
- All full-time and part-time academic, quality assurance, and student services staff.
- The Board of Governors in its oversight and approval capacity.
- Any partner organisations involved in the delivery of Oakswood programmes.

## 3. Mechanisms for Engagement

Oakswood uses a range of mechanisms to engage students across the four core areas set out in Section 1 above, and we continuously monitor this so as to pivot and adjust to a fast-evolving world and maximise the potential for student engagement. Student feedback and representation activity (academic or otherwise) is not limited to immediate response; it is formally channelled into the College's quality assurance processes and reported at programme and institutional level.

### 3.1 Student Representation

The College operates a formal system of **Student Representatives** and **Student-Staff Liaison Forums (SSLFs)** providing structured forums for students and staff to discuss academic and operational matters. Students are introduced to the College Student Representation system during Induction, and summary information is also included in the Student Handbook.

**Student Representatives** are elected for each programme cohort through a transparent process coordinated by the Head of Academic Affairs. During weeks one and two of the academic year, students are invited to put themselves forward or nominate a peer. Where more than one candidate comes forward, a class vote is held and the candidate with the most votes is appointed as Student Representative for that cohort. The process is communicated to students at induction and documented in the Student Handbook.

#### *The Student Representative Role*

Each Student Representative is expected to:

- attend Student Rep Training to ensure they fully understand the role, its requirements, how it links with employability, and how to make the most of it (see Section 5 of this Policy)
- gather and represent cohort views;
- attend Staff-Student Liaison Forum (SSLF – see below) meetings, with rights in decision-making for actions agreed at any Forum meeting;
- Attend Academic Board meetings as a voting member where requested;
- contribute to programme review discussions; and
- feed outcomes back to peers, supporting the ‘feedback loop’ to be closed.

**Student-Staff Liaison Forums (SSLFs)** operate at programme or cohort level. SSLFs meet at minimum once per semester. Notes are taken and shared with the relevant cohort. Unresolved matters are escalated to the Head of Academic Affairs or Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems.

**Academic Board** operates at institutional level. Membership includes student representation, from a selection of student representatives. Student representatives at all levels of study with the College are invited to attend Academic Board as voting members. However, the College recognises the additional burden for student reps of undertaking this work. To this end, whilst we encourage continuity of attendance, what is more important is ensuring student representation at this body and therefore we welcome a diversity of student voice attending Academic Board.

Where Oakswood delivers BNU programmes, SSLF structure and outputs are aligned with BNU's student engagement requirements, including their contribution to programme management and annual monitoring processes.

### ***Board of Governors***

At this stage Oakswood does not operate a Student Governor position on the Board of Governors. This position will be kept under review as the College's student engagement framework matures.

### **3.2 Feedback Channels**

The table below sets out the College's feedback mechanisms, their purpose, frequency, and the formal quality channel through which they are processed:



Mechanism	Purpose	Frequency	Quality Channel
<b>Module Evaluation Survey</b>	Structured feedback on module delivery, teaching, and assessment	End of each module	Programme review; Annual Monitoring Report
<b>Programme Satisfaction Survey</b>	Broader satisfaction across the full programme	Annual (end of year)	Annual Monitoring; Senior Leadership Team review
<b>National Student Survey (NSS)</b>	Office for Students data gathering and institutional benchmarking	April, in final year of the programme (Higher Education only)	Academic Board, with monitoring summary report to Board of Governors
<b>Student-Staff Liaison Forum (SSLF)</b>	Formal structured discussion of academic and operational matters	Minimum once per term	Programme Board / Academic Team; escalation to HoAA or HoGQC&IS
<b>One-to-One Tutorials</b>	Individual progress and pastoral check-in	Minimum once per term	Student Support register; escalation for welfare concerns
<b>Informal Feedback (verbal / Blackboard/ Support Through Studies)</b>	Immediate, session-level feedback	Ongoing	Logged by tutor; raised at SSLF where pattern identified
<b>Student Complaints</b>	Formal escalation route for unresolved issues / expressions of dissatisfaction	Can arise any time; formal complaints must normally be raised within 2 months of the issue/incident of complaint occurring	Complaints log; Annual Monitoring Report
<b>Academic Appeals</b>	Formal appeal route to request a review of confirmed academic results and/or decisions	Raised within 10 working days of the formal publication of results	Academic Board, with monitoring summary report to Board of Governors

Mechanism	Purpose	Frequency	Quality Channel
Leaver / Withdrawal Survey	Understanding reasons for non-completion	Upon withdrawal	Retention analysis; Annual Monitoring Report

### 3.3 Curriculum Design and Development

Oakswood aspires to engage students as co-creators of the curriculum, consistent with UK Quality Code (2024) guidance on student engagement as partnership. In practice this means:

- **Consultation:** seeking student views on proposed changes to module content, assessment methods, or programme structure before changes are finalised.
- **Involvement in design:** where feasible, involving Student Representatives or student focus groups in the early stages of new programme development or significant curriculum refresh.
- **Feedback integration:** using module evaluation data and SSLF feedback to inform annual module updates, with outcomes documented in the Annual Monitoring Report.

A structured approach to co-design will be developed as a pilot exercise in AY 2026–27. See Action Plan, Appendix A.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Board of Governors	Approves this policy and receives an annual report on student engagement, which covers effectiveness, feedback, initiatives and proposals (see Section 6 of this Policy). Oversees compliance with OfS conditions in respect of student engagement and represents the institutional accountability for student voice at the highest level.
Chief Executive Officer (Accountable Officer)	Holds overall institutional accountability for the quality and effectiveness of student engagement. Escalation points for systemic student experience concerns.

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Head of Academic Affairs</b>	Operational lead for this policy. Coordinates the student representation system; oversees all feedback mechanisms; manages SSLF processes; leads on the integration of student voice into annual monitoring and programme review. Ensures student voice is embedded in programme management, module delivery, and academic team meetings. Supports Student Representatives and acts as the escalation point for academic concerns raised through SSLFs.
<b>Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance &amp; Information Systems</b>	Manages and maintains the Action Plan at Appendix A, data reporting and produces the annual Student Engagement Report.
<b>Programme Tutors and Lecturers</b>	Administer module evaluations; respond to feedback at module level; participate in SSLFs; prepare and disseminate "You Said, We Did" communications; raise welfare concerns through appropriate channels.
<b>Student Representatives</b>	Gather and represent individual student and cohort views at SSLFs and other forums; communicate outcomes back to peers; participate in training and induction; contribute to programme review discussions; attend Academic Board meetings where requested.
<b>All Students</b>	Participate in feedback mechanisms; engage with the College's representation structures; access information on how their feedback has been used.

## 5. Training and Support

Oakswood is committed to supporting Student Representatives and relevant staff so that they can fulfil their engagement roles effectively. We broadly do so in the following ways:

### 5.1 Student Representatives

- **Induction briefing:** all Student Representatives receive an induction covering their role, the SSLF process, communication channels, and how to gather peer feedback. This is provided at the start of each academic year or upon election/selection.
- **Ongoing support:** Student Representatives have a named point of contact in the quality team (Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems) for queries, guidance, and escalation.

- **SSLF preparation:** prior to each SSLF meeting, representatives are briefed on the agenda and invited to submit items for discussion.
- **Student Representative Handbook:** [To be developed by end of AY 2025–26 — see Action Plan, Appendix A. Will cover role overview, SSLF process, how to gather peer feedback, escalation routes, and key contacts.]

## 5.2 Staff

- Staff involved in SSLF facilitation, module evaluation, and student engagement activities will receive guidance on the College's quality expectations and best practice in student engagement.
- Relevant training materials will be included in the Staff Induction process and the Staff Handbook.

## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

### 6.1 Key Performance Indicators

The effectiveness of student engagement will be assessed against the following indicators:

- Proportion of modules with completed module evaluation surveys (target: 100%).
- Representation rate: proportion of programme cohorts with an active Student Representative.
- SSLF meeting frequency: minimum once per semester per programme/cohort.
- Response rate on annual programme satisfaction surveys.
- "You Said, We Did" completion rate: proportion of feedback themes addressed and communicated back to students within a specified timeframe (normally termly).
- Additional KPIs to be developed and agreed with the Senior Management Team for implementation 2026-2027. Subsequent monitoring plus the agreement of any additional KPIs will be undertaken by Academic Board.

### 6.2 Annual Student Engagement Report

The Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems in coordination with the Head of Academic Affairs will prepare an annual **Student Engagement Report** as part of the institutional Annual Monitoring cycle. This report will be presented to Senior Leadership and the Board of Governors and will include:

- A summary of all feedback received across mechanisms during the academic year.
- Evidence of actions taken in response to student feedback (including "You Said, We Did" outcomes).
- Progress against the Action Plan at Appendix A.
- Areas of good practice and areas for development.

- Proposed updates to engagement mechanisms for the following year.
- Student suggestions and/or requests, for consideration

### 6.3 Awarding Body Reporting

A copy, or summary version, of the annual Student Engagement Report will be made available to Awarding Bodies, as relevant and applicable. Student engagement evidence (including SSLF outputs) will be incorporated as requisite and appropriate into Awarding Body annual monitoring submissions and periodic review documentation, in accordance with Awarding Body requirements (including any requirements set out in the respective partnership agreement).

## 7. Recognition and Reporting

### 7.1 Closing the Feedback Loop

The College is committed to communicating the outcomes of student feedback clearly and promptly. This is achieved through:

- **"You Said, We Did" summaries:** published on Blackboard at module and programme level within four weeks of each SSLF meeting or survey cycle closing.
- **SSLF Notes:** formally recorded and shared with the relevant student cohort, normally within two weeks of each meeting.
- **Programme communications:** where significant changes result from student input, these are communicated to the relevant cohort by email or programme newsletter.
- **'Town Hall'** meetings with cohorts and/or cross-sections of the College's student body

### 7.2 Recognising Student Engagement

Oakswood values the contribution of students who engage beyond their studies. The College will:

- Formally acknowledge Student Representatives' contribution in their academic record and in personal statement support.
- Recognise student engagement activity at end-of-year events and in institutional communications.
- Take Student Representatives' individual contribution into account when considering applications for college-organised or sponsored events/activities

### 7.3 Reporting to the Student Body

The College will publish an annual summary of student engagement activity including key feedback themes, actions taken, and improvements made on relevant VLEs (including partner VLEs where relevant) and in the Student Handbook. This ensures that all students, not only representatives, are aware of the impact of Student Voice on the College's policies and practices.

## 8. Review and Updating the Framework

This policy will be reviewed every two years by Academic Board, or earlier if there are material changes to the OfS regulatory framework, the UK Quality Code, relevant Awarding Body academic frameworks and/or requirements.

Advancements in the area of student engagement and representation (eg sector body reports; academic study findings) may also prompt an earlier review to ensure ongoing currency and fitness for purpose. Any revised version will be approved by Academic Board before adoption, with a copy circulated to Board of Governors for information.

Progress against the Action Plan (Appendix A) will be reviewed annually as part of the institutional Annual Monitoring cycle. The Action Plan will be updated to reflect completed items, revised timescales, and new development priorities, and will be reported to the Academic Board for monitoring. Once monitoring has been completed, Academic Board will submit a copy of the Action Plan together with any relevant commentary, to the Board of Governors each year as part of its assurances to the Board.

Minor operational updates that do not change the substance of the policy (e.g., contact names, minor process clarifications) may be approved by the Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems and recorded as a version amendment, without requiring full Board approval.

### 8.1 Related Policies and Documents

Document	Stream
Quality Handbook	All
Policy Register	All
Assessment, Marking and Internal Verification Guide	All
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy	Oakswood; BNU (as applicable)
Student Complaints Procedure	All
Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Policy	All
Suicide Prevention and Response Policy	All
Academic Regulations Framework and Annual Monitoring requirements	Awarding body specific
ATHE Centre Agreement and Quality Assurance requirements	ATHE



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Document	Stream
UK Quality Code (2024): Advice and Guidance — Student Engagement	All
AdvanceHE Student Engagement Through Partnership Framework	Reference

## Appendix A — Student Voice Development Action Plan

This Action Plan sets out the steps Oakwood will take to develop, formalise, and embed its student engagement mechanisms in line with the commitments in this policy. It is a living document, reviewed annually as part of the Annual Monitoring cycle and reported to the Board of Governors.

Area		Current Position	Action Required	Target	Owner	Success Measure
1	<b>Student Representative System</b>	No formal, documented representative system in place at date of policy adoption.	Implement cohort-level election / selection process; brief all students on rep system at induction; establish and provide training for student reps; document in Student Handbook.	By end of AY 2025–26	HoGQC&IS	100% of programme cohorts have at least 1 named, active representative.
2	<b>Student-Staff Liaison Forums (SSLFs)</b>	Informal staff-student contact exists; no formalised structure with Terms of Reference or meeting records.	Establish SSLFs for each programme stream; agree Terms of Reference; schedule minimum one meeting per semester; note-take at all meetings, recording	By Semester 1, AY 2025–26	HoGQC&IS / HoAA	SSLF notes on file; meeting frequency met; Meeting notes shared with students normally within two weeks of meeting date.



Area		Current Position	Action Required	Target	Owner	Success Measure
			clear items discussed and actions agreed, and share with cohorts.			
3	<b>Module Evaluation Surveys</b>	Some module feedback collected but not systematically via formal channels.	Design standard module evaluation survey template on Blackboard; roll out to all modules; set minimum response rate target; analyse and report results.	By end of AY 2025–26	HoGQC&IS	100% of modules have a completed survey; results inform Annual Monitoring Report.
4	<b>"You Said, We Did" Feedback Loop</b>	No formal mechanism for communicating outcomes of feedback to students.	Introduce a "You Said, We Did" format for all SSLF meetings and annual survey cycles; publish summaries on Blackboard per programme within four weeks.	From AY 2025–26	Programme Tutors / HoAA	YS/WD summaries published within four weeks of each SSLF; students confirm receipt.



Area		Current Position	Action Required	Target	Owner	Success Measure
5	<b>Integration with Annual Monitoring</b>	Student feedback not formally referenced in Annual Monitoring Reports.	Add mandatory student feedback section to AMR template; include SSLF outputs and survey data, and NSS data and feedback, as evidence.	By Sept 2026 (next AMR cycle)	HoGQC&IS	AMR templates updated; evidence accepted by BNU/AO within annual monitoring process.
6	<b>Student Representative Handbook</b>	No handbook or formal support materials for representatives.	Develop a concise Handbook covering role overview, SSLF process, how to gather peer feedback, escalation routes, key contacts.	By end of AY 2025–26	HoGQC&IS	Handbook produced; shared with all elected representatives at induction. (Rep feedback to be sought for input into review of handbook)
7	<b>Student Governor</b>	Not planned at this stage (AY 2025-26). Position will be kept under review as the College's student engagement framework and	No action required at present. Review as part of annual policy update.	Ongoing	CEO	Position reviewed annually; decision documented in Annual Monitoring Report.



Area	Current Position	Action Required	Target	Owner	Success Measure	
	systems mature.					
8	<b>Curriculum Co-design</b>	Student input limited to reactive feedback; no structured co-design process.	Pilot structured student involvement in one programme development or review exercise; develop a repeatable process based on outcomes.	AY 2026–27	HoAA / HoGQC&IS	Pilot completed; student input evidenced in programme review documentation.

This Action Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Completed items will be marked as closed; outstanding or revised items will be carried forward with updated ownership and timelines. The annual update will be approved by Senior Leadership and reported to the Board of Governors.

## **Appendix B — Staff Student Liaison Forum: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Purpose**

The Staff Student Liaison Forum (SSLF) provides an informal, structured space for students and staff to discuss matters relating to academic provision, the learning environment, and the wider student experience at programme or cohort level. The SSLF is not a formal College committee, but a deliberately relaxed format so that it reflects Oakswood's community approach to partnership working with students and is designed to encourage open, candid discussion that a more formalised environment could inhibit.

Student Representatives gain formal committee experience through their membership of the Quality and Standards Committee and Academic Board. The SSLF complements this by creating a space where not only Student Representatives, but also other students are welcome to participate, with Student Representatives having 'voting rights' on actions and decisions raised and discussed at the SSLF. This allows for an agile and flexible approach to ensuring Student Voice can be heard as widely as possible.

### **2. Scope**

The SSLF operates at programme or cohort level for each active programme stream. Standing agenda items include but are not limited to module delivery and teaching quality, assessment and feedback, learning resources and the learning environment, student support and welfare, and any other matters raised by students or staff.

### **3. Membership**

Membership of each SSLF comprises:

- Student Representative(s) for the relevant programme/cohort (voting members)
- Any other students from the relevant programme/cohort who wish to attend (non-voting participants)
- Programme Tutor(s) / Lecturer(s) for the relevant programme
- Head of Academic Affairs
- Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems (or nominee).

Other staff or external guests may be invited to attend on an ad hoc basis where a specific agenda item requires it.

### **4. Frequency of Meetings**

Each SSLF will meet at least once per semester. Additional meetings may be convened where there is a pressing issue to discuss or at the request of Student Representatives.

### **5. Conduct of Business**

Items for discussion are typically agreed in advance. Student Representatives are briefed on the agenda before each meeting and are invited to submit items. Any student may suggest agenda items through their Student Representative.

Meetings may be co-chaired or collaboratively led by the relevant Programme Tutor (or other designated staff member) and a Student Representative, reinforcing the partnership ethos that underpins the Forum. Where co-chairing is adopted, both the staff and student co-chairs share responsibility for guiding discussion and ensuring all attendees have the opportunity to contribute.

Discussion is conducted informally and all participants are encouraged to contribute. Where consensus is reached, the agreed action is recorded in the notes. Where consensus cannot be reached on a proposed action, the matter is put to a vote of the Student Representatives present; the outcome of that vote is binding for the purposes of the SSLF's recommendation. Staff retain responsibility for determining operational feasibility and for escalating matters that fall outside the SSLF's remit.

## **6. Notes**

Notes are taken at each meeting, recording items discussed, actions agreed (with named owners and target dates), and any matters to be escalated. Notes are shared with the relevant student cohort normally within two weeks of the meeting date.

## **7. Escalation**

Matters that cannot be resolved at SSLF level are escalated to the Head of Academic Affairs or Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems in the first instance. Issues with wider institutional implications may be referred onward to the Academic Board or Quality and Standards Committee as appropriate.

## **8. Reporting**

SSLF notes and a summary of actions and outcomes feed into the College's programme review and Annual Monitoring processes. A summary of SSLF activity across all programmes is included in the annual Student Engagement Report (see Section 6 of this Policy).

## **9. Review**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed alongside the parent Student Voice and Representation Framework, or earlier if operational experience indicates that changes are required.