| #                        | POLICY TITLE  |   | POLICY AREA:  |   | VERSION:                       | DATE ADOPTED :  |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------|---|
| SINICHOLAS<br>MONTESSORI | 7.1 STUDENT E | NGAGEMENT   | SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS  |   | 2.0                            | AUGUST 2020   |
|                          |               |   |   |   |                                |   |
|                          |               | Admissions &<br>Induction   | Governance<br>&<br>Management   | Teaching<br>Learni  |                                | Assessment  |
| SN                       | NMCI          | Provides timely &<br>necessary<br>information. Seeks<br>feedback  | Support learner<br>committee and<br>include learner<br>representation on<br>relevant Boards &<br>Committees | Hire qualified<br>promote colleg<br>deliver enga<br>programmes,<br>and listen<br>feedback | giality,<br>ging<br>seek<br>to | Ensure transparency<br>and fairness. Follow<br>policy and<br>guidelines. Seek and<br>react to feedback. |
| LEA                      | RNERS         | Supply necessary<br>information on<br>time. Reply to offers<br>and decisions.<br>Attend induction &<br>feedback | Take part in election<br>of learner reps.<br>Engage with the<br>engagement officer<br>and learner reps.     | Demonstra<br>commitment t<br>take responsi<br>for own learr<br>Attend & a<br>ethically    | o and<br>bility<br>iing<br>ict | Abide by<br>assessment rules,<br>policies &<br>guidelines. Engage<br>with feedback<br>process.          |

## Introduction and Context

Student Engagement is increasingly being seen as a defining characteristic of quality teaching and learning in higher education. Research indicates however that it is difficult to come to one definitive definition of student engagement, and that the meaning of student engagement shifts and changes across place and time. An institutional understanding of student engagement is shaped by the context in which it operates and by the meaning of 'non-engagement' (Vuori, 2014).

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define SNMCI's position with regard to student engagement;
- To outline the areas where the student voice will be heard;
- To outline SNMCI and Learner responsibilities with regard to Student Engagement;
- To outline the procedures involved in seeking and responding to student feedback.

SNMCI's sees Student Engagement as an on-going and staged process that firstly seeks to foster understanding between the College and the Learners. Increased understanding will allow for engagement and consultation, leading to some authentic opportunities for partnership and eventual student leadership.



# **Policy Statement:**

- SNMCI sees student engagement as a process of including and empowering learners in shaping their own learning experience and is committed to working with all learners to empower them to develop the skills and confidence to be actively involved in this process.
- Student engagement is seen as a two-way process and learners are encouraged to work with SNMCI staff to increase understanding of what student engagement means and to promote a democratic learning community that benefits all.
- SNMCI recognises the importance of the learner voice in decision-making processes and offers spaces for consultation and communication in a range of ways.
- SNMCI recognises that listening and responding to learners will:
  - Improve services offered and ensure that quality assurance policies more genuinely meet learner needs
  - Inform strategic decision making
- Provide opportunities for students to gain confidence and become resilient learners
- Motivate learners to engage, thus improving participation, achievement, progression and retention.

- Learners will have the opportunity to offer insight in a range of areas including (not limited to):
  - Admission & Induction
  - Governance and Management
  - Teaching and Learning
  - Assessment
  - Support for Learners
- It is the responsibility of all SNMCI staff involved in programme delivery to support learners and to promote their involvement in a range of processes across the College.
- Opportunities for engagement will be provided by SNMCI in the following ways:
  - Learner Representation at Academic Board Meetings (QA 2.4)
  - Learner representation at Programme Committee Meetings (QA 3.13)
  - Elected learner representatives for each stage
  - Access to the Student Engagement Officer (SEO)
  - Access to the Learner Support Officer
  - Ongoing formal and informal feedback processes
  - Surveys (assessment/admissions/etc.) (QA 3.14)

### Staff Involved:

All staff in principle;

Day-to-day: Admissions; Programme Directors; Programme Managers; Student Engagement Officer; Director of Quality and Academic Affairs (DQAA)

|   | Person/s<br>Responsible | Records generated to ensure evidence |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|   |                         | of follow through                    |
| Procedure Outline   | Admissions              | Results of Surveys                   |
| Admission and Induction:  | Programme               | Annual Reports                       |
| SNMCI:  | Directors               |                                      |
| - Learners will receive.  |                         | Minutes                              |
| - Satisfaction levels with the admissions process and availability of information forms part of | <b>Chair Induction</b>  |                                      |
| the first semester survey.  | Committee               |                                      |

| -      | Induction welcomes new and ongoing students to SNMCI and provides them with all                         |                   | Results of Survey                       |
|--------|---|-------------------|---|
|        | necessary information in order to smoothly begin the new academic year.                                 | Admissions Office | Agenda                                  |
| -      | On-going learners are encouraged to join the Induction Committee, to offer suggestions                  |                   |   |
|        | based on their own experiences  |                   | Minutes                                 |
| -      | New learners will be surveyed following induction for possible improvements in the future               | Enrolled learners |   |
| Learne | ers:  |                   | Feedback loop                           |
| -      | Are expected to supply all information required   |                   | Correspondence                          |
| -      | To reply in good time to requests for additional information  |                   | with Admissions                         |
| -      | To communicate their agreement or otherwise on RPL decisions, to the Admissions Office                  |                   | Office                                  |
| -      | To reply to all offers of places made by SNMCI  |                   | Attendance at                           |
| -      | To attend induction activities  |                   | Induction                               |
| _      | To take part in any survey designed to enhance policies and procedures in SNMCI                         |                   |   |
|        | nance and Management:   |                   |   |
| SNMC   |   |                   |   |
| -      | The Academic Board will include a learner representative to encourage understanding of                  | DQAA              | Induction                               |
|        | how the College works and understanding of the 'bigger picture' of management and                       |                   |   |
|        | governance.   | Learners          |   |
| -      | Each stage cohort of a programme will elect a learner representative.                                   | SEO /Learners     |   |
| -      | A Learner Committee will be formed with the guidance of the Student Engagement Officer.                 |                   |   |
| Learne |   |                   |   |
| -      | Engage with the election of learner representatives   | Learners          | Nominated Reps                          |
| -      | Engage with the Student Engagement Officer  |                   |   |
| -      | Put themselves forward for nomination and/or discuss issues to be brought by the Learner                |                   |   |
|        | Representative.   |                   |   |
|        | ing and Learning:   |                   |   |
| SNMC   |   |                   | Results of surveys                      |
| -      | Hire highly qualified staff   | CEO               | Annual Programme                        |
| -      | Provide a range of learning activities and assessments to suit all learning styles                      | DQAA              | Reports                                 |
| -      | Promote collegiality between staff and learners and encourages a spirit of professionalism and support. |                   | Report of Student<br>Engagement Officer |

| <ul> <li>Provide opportunities for learner feedback on module satisfaction, assessment and services and facilities</li> <li>Encourage learner representation at end of year Programme Committee meetings where feedback from staff and learners will feed into any proposed changes for the coming year.</li> <li>Listen and respond to learner feedback and endeavour to 'close the loop' on feedback in a timely manner</li> </ul>  | Programme<br>Managers<br>DQAA<br>Programme<br>Committees | to Academic Board<br>Documented<br>changes<br>Representing a<br>closure of the<br>feedback loop       |
|---|--|---|
| <ul> <li>Take responsibility for their own learning progress and seek support as needed</li> <li>Demonstrate commitment to their studies</li> <li>Attend and actively engage in lectures, placements and all teaching and learning activities</li> </ul>  | Learners   |   |
| <ul> <li>Abide by the Attendance Policy</li> <li>Act in an ethical manner</li> <li>Abide by the Learner Code of Conduct</li> </ul>  |  | On-going<br>monitoring of<br>assessment   |
| Assessment:   |  | practices   |
| <ul> <li>SNMCI:</li> <li>Work to ensure best practice in assessment across all programmes in light of current research</li> <li>Follow policies and guidelines related to assessment to ensure transparency in assessment practices and fairness for all learners.</li> <li>Seek learner feedback on assessment practices through surveys or focus groups</li> <li>Use learner feedback from this survey, learner representation at Programme Committee Meetings and any informal feedback to inform any (possible) changes within the scope of the Programme Schedule, or any Minor or Major Modification sought with regard to programme assessment.</li> </ul> | DQEAA  | T,L &A Strategy<br>updates<br>Report on<br>Assessment feeding<br>into new<br>programme<br>development |
| - Abide by the assessment rules, policies and guidelines which have been set out to ensure  |  |   |
| fairness for all learners.<br>- Engage with the feedback process  | Learners   |   |

| Support for Learners:   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| - The Student Engagement Officer (SEO) will act as a liaison, between learners and academic | SEO |  |
| and management staff, to facilitate communication and organisation of student led events.   |     |  |

# **Policy Control Sheet**

| Policy  | QA 7.1 Student Engagement                          |
|---|--|
| Version                                       | 2.0  |
| Adopted/Effective                             | August 202   |
| Supersedes                                    | N/A  |
| Monitoring/ Next Review Date                  | Major review in conjunction with learners May 2020 |
| Responsible Officer(s) Designated Reviewer(s) | Students; Student Engagement Officer; DQAA         |
| Scope   | College wide                                       |

## References

| SNMCI Policy area 7) SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS: QA Vol 2 |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Developed with reference to                         | QQI (2016) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines   |  |
|   | QQI (2016) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed for Independent/Private Providers coming |  |
|   | to QQI on a Voluntary Basis  |  |
|   | Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), May 2015 |  |
|   | National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP)  |  |
| <b>Related SNMCI Policies / Forms</b>               | QA 2.4: TOR Academic Board; QA 3.13: TOR Programme Committees; QA 3.14: Learner Feedback             |  |

### Revision

| Revision Number | Revision Description                | Originator     | Approved By |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1.0/08/2020     | General review for blended learning | Office of DQAA | AB          |