SAE Institute General Policy

G04 Student Engagement Policy

1. Policy Statement

SAE Institute understands the importance of listening to and hearing 'the student voice' in a culture of continuous improvement, and in forming a collegial environment within a learning community. It is also important that students know their voice has been heard as part of their quality of learning experience. Student engagement is therefore systematically and proactively encouraged for the enhancement of learning and teaching and all other aspects of the student experience at SAE Institute.

2. Purpose

SAE Institute understands the importance of taking into account both individual student views about their needs as well as collective views for improvement, and consults and works with students and student representatives to find appropriate measures to support them throughout their period of study with SAE. Students will also be regularly updated on any actions taken as a result of their feedback and representations.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all SAE Institute operations in Europe, Licenced operations and to all students involved in collaborative programmes with Middlesex University, and to any approved sites for offshore delivery of such programmes.

4. Associated Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- G01 Code of Conduct
- G02 Public Information Policy

5. Associated Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- Student Handbook
- Programme Handbook
- Appendix 1 (attached): Provision of Information to Students
- Appendix 2 (attached): Feedback To and From Students

6. Policy

6.1. Benefits of Student Engagement

SAE Institute believes that:

- student feedback is important to genuinely meet the needs of students
- by encouraging student participation, social inclusion, a learning community and a culture of continuous improvement are maximised

- by listening to students and responding to their needs, the motivation of students can be increased, and the quality of their experience enhanced.

6.2.   Student Engagement Activities

6.2.1. Student Representatives

SAE operates a student representative system intended to promote communication between the student body and college management. The student representative body is made up of a team of students consisting of one nominee from each class intake. It provides a forum for constructive debate and has been devised to gauge student concerns, criticisms and suggestions, with the aim of implementing effective measures to optimise the learning experience for current and future generations of students. Student representative meetings are normally held monthly except when there are Boards of Studies.

6.2.2. Boards of Studies

In accordance with Middlesex University rules and practice, each Programme holds a regular Board of Studies meeting, normally every six months.

The membership includes:

- Student representatives
- Campus Academic Coordinator
- Campus Manager
- Academic staff aligned to the delivery of the Programme or modules
- Support services staff.

The purpose of the Board of Studies is to provide a forum for discussion between students and staff involved in all aspects of the relevant programme with a more formal procedure than is normally the case with the monthly class representative meetings, and in a broader panel.

The minutes are included with the Programme Quality/Annual Monitoring Report for consideration by the University. Students will be informed as soon as action has been taken and this is normally reported at the following Board of Studies.

6.2.3. Programme Feedback and Evaluation Forms/Surveys

Programme feedback forms are distributed throughout the academic year, normally after the completion of each module, and the aim of this feedback process is to elicit student views on the quality of the programme of study and the quality of learning experience. The forms and process are designed to protect anonymity for individuals and confidentiality of proceedings.

Feedback data are normally analysed and evaluated by the Campus Academic Coordinator and the Campus Manager, and findings are reported in general terms at the relevant Board of Studies together with actions planned or taken.

6.2.4. Suggestions and Complaints

All SAE Institute campuses operate an open door policy where the members of staff can be approached directly. If unsatisfied, grievance procedures may be followed. Details of both

the Academic Grievance Policy A07, and the Non-academic (General) Grievance Policy (G06) and procedures are made available to students at the beginning of the programme.

6.2.5. Participation in Validation and Review Events

Student representation and participation is actively sought in all formal validation and review events, eg, where a new programme is validated by the University, there is a required student membership on the panel for the procedure. A student representative or, where that is not feasible, an appropriate student volunteer, will be invited to join the panel and will have a right to vote in any decision.

6.2.6. Reviewing of Public Information

Student views are constantly sought when updating or redesigning content for website, brochure or course material. Any changes made as a result of such consultations will be reported back to the students.

7. Policy Version History

Revised Policy: Sept 2010

Revised Approval Date: March 2012 (Prof. Z. Klich, CEO)

Review Date: February 2013

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Provision of Information to Students

Appendix 2: Feedback To and From Students

Appendix 1: Provision of Information to Students

1. General Information on the Campus

At all times, the relevant SAE campus should provide students and prospective students with:

- general information on SAE;
- an introduction to resources and facilities available;
- written information on procedures and practices;
- the information could be provided by the campus website, brochures, leaflets and open days with this list not being exhaustive.

At the point of enquiry, the prospective student will be supplied with:

- a brochure including information on:
- the structure of the programme;
- the course requirements, including a statement of mandatory or recommended study;
- information on course choices and the relationship of courses;
- enrolment and application details;
- any additional information specifically for potential visa students.

During the admission process:

- all procedural correspondence will be the responsibility of the Campus Academic Coordinator (CAC).

On commencement of the course, students are normally provided with:

- ID Card;
- access to the student website with regular course details;
- timetable;
- student Handbook, including information on all policies, rules and regulations;
- information on student responsibilities such as attendance, deadlines and fees;
- Health and Safety guidelines.

2. Details of the Course

On commencement of the course the student will have access to:

- a statement of the aims and objectives of the programme of study and of the courses and modules which that programme comprises;
- a reading list, distinguishing items which are (i) Core texts, (ii) Recommended reading;
- information on the precise nature of the coursework the student is expected to complete and an indication of the overall weighting given to it;
- details of how the coursework is to be submitted;
- advice and guidelines pertaining to formatting, legibility, accuracy and clarity in the production and presentation of coursework;

- the deadlines for submission of all major items of coursework and the procedures to be followed either to request an extension to the deadline or in cases of ill-health or other adverse circumstances;
- advice on the consequences of late submission of coursework;
- details of the arrangements for making coursework available for scrutiny by the Internal and External Examiners;
- advice on coursework returned, of the quality, strengths and weaknesses of the work submitted, with a clearly defined grade or class.

3.   Assessment

Students will be supplied with clear information on their student website, relating to:

- the full range of methods by which the student's performance is to be assessed;
- how many pieces of coursework, assignments, presentations, viva voce, exams, etc., students are required to pass either to be allowed to proceed to the next level of course or to be awarded a degree or an honours degree;
- the relative impact on the student's overall assessment of results in each course of the student's programme of study;
- the weighting of components within each course module;
- the criteria to be used in the assessment process and advice on exactly how these are to be interpreted and applied;
- the consequences of plagiarism and cheating, and full details of the Academic Honesty Policy A03;
- whom to contact in the case of any grievance concerning the assessment process, and details of the Academic Grievance Policy A07 and the Non-academic Grievance Policy G06;
- how students will be notified of their results;
- any reasons which may lead to results being withheld;
- the consequences of failure;
- the possibilities of resubmissions and retakes.

During the course:

- students are required to check the student website for up-to-date news;
- important information is also circulated by email;
- feedback on individual assignments are circulated by the course coordinator individually;
- progress reports may be requested from the local campus coordinators;
- official transcripts can be obtained from SAE via the Campus Academic Coordinator;
- deferrals are dealt with by the Programme Coordinator or the CAC;
- extenuating circumstances in mitigation should be provided for deferrals or delayed submissions to the CAC;
- attendance will be recorded at each compulsory student contact time. Attendance warnings shall be sent at the third, sixth and ninth student absence, and in the case of international visa students, on the 10th absence it will be reported to the Immigration Authorities will be informed.

4.   Responsible Persons for Related Documents

The Student Handbook and any local website content shall be updated jointly by the CAC and the Campus Manager as and when changes are applicable, and shall follow the procedures and responsibilities stated in G02 the Public Information Policy.

Course related information on the student website may updated and edited by the lecturer involved, under the guidance and responsibility of the CAC, on a weekly basis while a course in progress and thereafter at the beginning of each course.

5.   Counselling of Students Policy

Due to the smaller class sizes and specialised nature of many of the courses, SAE offers opportunities for students to have one to one discussions with members of staff.

The lecturer involved or the CAC deal with general academic issues. Personal issues are dealt with by the course coordinator or when necessary the campus manager. In larger campuses a Student Support Officer or a Paraprofessional staff member may be the primary point of contact for students seeking information and guidance.

Opportunities are provided for the individual student to book half hour slots either as tutorials or meetings with academic staff. Appointments can be made to discuss issues with the Campus Manager as and when necessary, and the majority of student matters are resolved by suitable advice and guidance.

In cases where the personal matter is beyond the capability of the staff member, the staff are aware that individual solutions to address specific issues may be required, and other options should be considered, such as guidance to self-help materials, links to relevant and reliable interactive websites, group work, individual support, and information about or referral to other support services.

Specific information and leaflets that are provided in campuses may include but not limited to: anxiety, bereavement, substance abuse, and undue stress.

Appendix 2: Feedback To and From Students

1.   Feedback to Students

SAE's policy is to provide helpful feedback to students on assignments they have submitted and on their overall progress; this may take the form of written comments or may be communicated verbally. A number of systems are in place whereby students may gain feedback on their progress during study. These vary according to course content, assessment criteria and methods.

1.1.   Pre Assessment

For the most part, assignments involving individual research must be approved by a member of staff, usually the Programme Coordinator or Module Leader. Suitable supervisor(s) are appointed to discuss the student projects according to staff expertise and availability. The approval for any final research project is sought and granted by way of written approval of the proposals. Approvals for other assignments where student choice or self-direction is involved may be granted by individual discussion between the student and the assigned tutor.

Face to face and online individual on-demand tutorials (eg Skype) are provided as appropriate to discuss progress on specific assignments.

1.2.   Submission

Unless otherwise specified, written assignments must be submitted on < http://www.turnitin> in addition to a hard copy; electronic and hard copy versions must be identical. Specific instruction for submissions will be provided for practical components and presentations.

1.3.   Feedback on Coursework and Examinations

All assignments will be graded, commented upon and moderated. Once the sample has been moderated, all comments from assessor and moderator will be forwarded to the student. The turnaround time is aimed to be no longer than four weeks, and preferably less, although the SAE campus locations and programme distribution are such that sometimes necessary moderation processes may delay the optimal timing. SAE staff will also provide feedback on student coursework and examinations in formal group sessions. If desired, students may discuss their progress on a personal basis, by arrangement, with the appropriate member of staff.

Transcripts of results may be obtained from administration at certain intervals by way of written request, and normally through the Campus Academic Coordinator.

2.   Feedback from Students

SAE's policy is to use feedback from students to:

- inform all aspects of the student experience that have scope for enhancement;
- help improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment;
- ensure that quality management takes full account of student views.

Student feedback is obtained at module level, course level and at Campus level through various means.

3.   Boards of Studies (see section 6.2.2 of the Policy earlier)

The purpose of the Board of Studies is to provide a forum for discussion between students and staff involved in all aspects of the programme. Student members of the Board are elected at the start of each semester/academic year, to ensure that all the various interests on the programme are adequately represented.

Each programme holds a Board of Studies meeting, normally at least twice per year. The dates for Boards of Studies are notified locally at each Degree Centre.

Board membership is as per section 6.2.2 of the Policy earlier.

Student representatives represent their module or year group and are responsible for notifying the Board of any issues which have been brought to them by the students; student representatives should be briefed about the purpose of Boards of Studies and about their role as representatives. Students in general should be made aware of the function of the Board of Studies and should ensure that representatives are alerted in good time to raise any matters of concern, or to suggest initiatives.

Minutes are made of the discussion and decisions of each Board meeting, and these are circulated to members with outcomes. Actions taken from matters raised at previous Board meetings are also explained. The reports are included with the school annual monitoring report for consideration by the University.

4.   Student Representatives

SAE's belief is that in a setting and culture with lower staff-student ratios and lower class sizes, many student matters and student-related issues are effectively addressed through informal processes that operate as part of the normal ebb and flow of staff-student communications in an educational organisation.

In addition, and to ensure effective and reliable systems of addressing student concerns and to benefit from student views and ideas, SAE operates a student representative system intended to promote communication between the student body and college management. It provides a forum for constructive debate and has been devised to gauge student concerns, criticisms and suggestions, with the aim of implementing effective measures to optimise the learning experience for current and future generations of students.

The student representative body at each campus is made up of a team of students normally consisting of one nominee from each class intake. Candidates are voted for by their peers, and meetings between representatives and college management are scheduled. The dates of these meetings are published at each SAE campus. Student attendance at these meetings is encouraged but is not compulsory.

Student representative meetings are not a forum within which to put forward or pursue matters of a personal nature. It is also not part of the college management, but it provides an important and valuable source of advice to management. Final decisions taken on matters arising in student representative meetings normally rest with the Campus Manager.

The role of a student representative is one which carries certain responsibilities, both to management and the student body. In short, representatives should be willing to:

- Gather information regarding students' concerns, suggestions and criticisms, and table them at meetings with campus management and other representatives.
- Attend short meetings – one hour, approximately every eight weeks – with the campus manager and/or other senior members of staff.
- Provide feedback to peers on the outcomes of meetings.
- Representatives acting on behalf of degree classes may, in addition to regular meetings with management, be encouraged to be present at Board of Studies meetings.

5.   Programme Evaluation Questionnaires

Module and programme feedback forms are distributed throughout the academic year. Both sets of forms will be completely anonymous. The aim of this feedback process is to elicit students' views on the quality of all the modules they have taken, and their experience of being a student in that programme of study.

Module forms examine each module in some detail, while Programme questionnaires invite comment on students' views on their programme experiences overall.

Students will receive feedback and normally a report on any issues that have been identified. The report will also describe the measures taken to resolve any problems. All reports will be an item for discussion during subsequent Boards of Studies and will, where necessary, be reported upon during the annual monitoring process. The whole feedback process will also be reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that that it is effective and helps to provide a good quality experience for students.

The staff responsible for courses, normally the CAC, shall produce summaries of overall satisfaction data for consideration at course and module level, and CAC's and Programme Coordinators should comment on feedback data in their Annual Monitoring Reports.

6.   Suggestions

The Institute is always interested to receive suggestions from students and staff that can lead to improvements to its facilities, programmes of study or organisational operations. These may be made informally to the appropriate staff member, or via questionnaires, surveys or Boards of Studies. The Institute undertakes to consider all suggestions and to let the person who made the suggestion know the outcome of any action taken.