



# Student Governor Support Programme

- An introduction to the SGSP



national union of students

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Student Governor Support Programme (SGSP), run jointly by the National Unions of Students (NUS) and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

Student engagement is vital to the work of corporation boards when it comes to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the learner experience, and indeed wider governance issues in relation to the college. It is recognised across the sector that student involvement is not simply having student governors sat in a board meeting, or indeed having blocks of text in a learner involvement strategy. It is the day to day practice, people and resources that enable students to be effective and fully involved in relation to the college decision making processes.

The programme will enhance the engagement of students who are members or observers on College Corporation, by providing support to student members as well as those who support them.

However, ensuring successful and effective student governors can be the most challenging area for the engagement of students due to the nature of a corporation board's work. The SGSP aims to enhance the full and effective role that students can play at corporation level, embedding key relationships and consistency of governor support within providers.

The programme consists of training events, learning tools and networks. It is designed in such a way that the 'student governor journey' can be mapped over the course of a year, identifying the appropriate support from colleagues and peers that then leads onto local, regional and national opportunities.

Through active participation in regional learning days, cohort networks and national events, as well as using the programme of toolkits on a local level, I believe the SGSP can support colleges in building strong and effective learner voice from classrooms right through to the boardroom.



**Toni Pearce**  
**NUS Vice President (Further Education)**

## Programme structure

The Student Governor Support Programme aims to create a framework for student governor support that is flexible, continuous and responsive to the need for effective student engagement.

The programme achieves this through locally delivered **interactive learning toolkits**, regional informal group support through **cohort learning days** and ongoing support from **NUS Policy and Development advisors** and nationally through **national governance events** and through an **informal online information exchange**.

## National events

Part of the SGSP is to encourage student governors to be a part of the wider sector and build networks with other governors from across the country. As part of this, LSIS and NUS will be coordinating a number of national events, which student governors will be expected to attend. These include:

- Student Governor inductions
- Student Governors conference
- LSIS National Governance conference

## Online information exchange

At a national level, student governors will be able to offer one another peer-to-peer support through an informal online network. This will be coordinated through the NUS affiliates' website, [www.nusconnect.org.uk](http://www.nusconnect.org.uk) and will enable student governors to post and answer each other's questions, share best practice or raise their concerns with other governors across the sector.

Your regional NUS Policy & Delivery Advisor will supply you with a link to this forum at you induction day.

## Cohort learning days

Each cohort will meet three times a year. The first induction event will take place at the start of term 1 when the full programme will be handed over and explained to clerks and student governors. Cohorts will then arrange to meet for two further regional learning days, once at the end of term 1 and once towards the end of term 2. These events will be to review how colleges are using the programme and share best practice. These events will be facilitated by NUS Policy & Development Advisors.

## Interactive learning toolkits

The interactive learning toolkits are designed to provide ongoing support for student governors and clerks throughout the year. The aim is to ensure that in between the meetings of corporation, regional and national events there is something that will keep the student governor engaged with their role and responsibilities.

All of the toolkits can be found on the USB drive which you received at the SGSP induction event in September. It is not expected that all the toolkits would be completed in an academic year. An outline of all the toolkits can be found in the Programme Outline document to help you to identify which toolkits will be appropriate for you to use.

The **Impact Evaluation Tool** can be found in the Evaluating impact folder. This is a vital tool for measuring the development of student governor support and wider learner voice across the college. Student governors and clerk will be expected to use this tool throughout the year to assess the impact of learner voice and governor support and to bring this along to the regional learning days.

## Who is involved?

The beginning of each toolkit and each sub-section recommends the key individuals who should be working through that part of the toolkit together. It also highlights other individuals who may be interested in the toolkit or who it may be beneficial to include. These recommendations can also be found in the programme outline.

Different individuals may have different job titles or role descriptions within different colleges, so it is important to clarify who the most appropriate individual is within your college from the descriptions below.

## Student governors

Students of the college who have been elected to serve as members of the corporation board

**Incoming student governor** – A student who has been elected and has just started/has not yet started their term as a governor.

**Outgoing student governor** – A student governor who is approaching the end of their term as a governor of the college.

## **SU President**

A student who is elected as leader of the college's students' union or council, but does not necessarily adopt one of the student governor positions on the corporation board.

## **Student observers**

Other members of the student body invited to attend meetings of corporation and its sub-committees, but who do not hold voting power.

## **Clerk to the corporation**

Individual appointed by the corporation for managing the business of the corporation and support the chair and all governors in their role. The clerk often had a key role to play in support student governors through their term in office.

## **Chair of corporation**

A governor elected by the corporation to chair meetings of the corporation and lead the governing body of the college.

## **Other governors**

Other members of the corporation board who are not student governors or the chair.

**Governor mentor** – another member of the corporation assigned to provide informal support and mentoring to a student governor (Toolkit 3).

## **Learner voice manager (Senior manager in charge of learner engagement)**

Member of the college senior management team whose remit includes learner voice, learner involvement, learner voice or the student union.

## **Learner voice support staff**

Member of college staff responsible for supporting the colleges learner engagement/students' union work on a day-to-day basis. Sometimes called Staff Student Liaison Officer (SSLO) or Learner Voice coordinator.

## **Head of Quality**

Member of the college senior management team whose remit covers academic quality.

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