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THE LEARNER VOICE POLICY

Section	Quality		
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Last Reviewed	n/a	Key Evaluation Question	1-6

INTRODUCTION

The “Learner Voice” refers to the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students at NMIT.

NMIT values feedback from learners as part of its self-assessment practice in order to continually improve services and to ensure learners’ needs are proactively being addressed.

PURPOSE

To ensure learners are at the heart of all decision-making and play a major role in identifying solutions across NMIT.

To provide an overarching articulation of how NMIT and SANITI elicit and respond to learner feedback.

By responding to this feedback, NMIT is able to:

- engage and respond in order to reflect the needs of learners;
- plan and structure learning environments for the benefit and needs of learners;
- provide learners with continued support to assist them achieve their goals;
- provide learners with an appropriate range of responses to their wellbeing needs; and to reduce any barriers to learning.

In order to achieve these outputs, learner feedback will be used to inform decisions to bring about continuous improvement, both for overall organisational improvement and targeted Department, Programme and course-specific strategies. Where significant concerns are identified, the Department or Business Support Team will plan and execute corrective actions to address these concerns and communicate back to the students the actions which have been implemented.

SCOPE

All learners including those:

Studying with NMIT or a training partner (face-to-face; online; in the workplace etc.), and who have graduated from NMIT, will be provided the opportunity to formally and informally provide feedback on NMIT services and teaching delivery.

PRINCIPLES

This policy has been designed to facilitate a climate in which:

- Learners are encouraged and enabled to lead on influencing their learning and the environment in which it takes place.
- NMIT team members actively listen to what learners say, recognise the learner's role as an 'expert' on their own learning, and respond with actions to the learner's suggestions.
- Learners are supported to be actively involved in solution-focused activity groups. (e.g. Programme Representative meetings).
- Learners provide feedback on their experiences and can confirm that their feedback is valued.
- Responding to The Learner Voice is embedded in departmental activity and at institutional level in order to provide assurance to the learner that their voice is heard.
- All departments ensure that the Learner Voice is a key feature of self-assessment activity.
- SANITI's Executive Team routinely provides feedback to Council on the Learner Voice.
- All departments routinely share and celebrate examples that illustrate their responsiveness to the Learner Voice.
- Departments and programmes will regularly provide feedback to learners on the actions taken in response to comments captured during the Learner Voice activities.

METHODS OF CAPTURING AND RESPONDING TO THE LEARNER VOICE

NMIT has designed and identified numerous processes and procedures to enable the capturing of the Learner Voice.

The following processes are currently in place at NMIT. Where procedures are complex, stand-alone Procedures (indicated by *) are available:

- **Departmental Focus Groups** – one meeting per semester with Programme Representatives from across the Department, attended by HoD/DHoD or Programme Coordinator and facilitated by SANITI.
- **Digital Screens** – 'You said, We did' and celebrations. Visible digital screens at campus entrances, these screens provide a communication channel to 'close the loop' after learners have provided feedback.
- **'Have your Say'** – A branded invitation to students to feedback to the institute online (via the website) or on paper slips posted into letter boxes. One letter box is permanently sited in the Library Learning Centre, the other mobilised to target areas whose learners might not visit the LLC regularly. Comments are tracked centrally on DeskPro.
- **Learner Voice Conference** – A conference for learners, organised and facilitated by learners
- **Learning Conversations/ILPs*** – all learners engage in 1:1 learning conversations (minimum of three per year), providing an evaluation of the learner's progress and a forum to exchange feedback.
- **Learning Walks** – Participation by tutors (individually or in pairs) to observe learning spaces in action around the campus to identify good practice. Provides 'walkers' the opportunity to reflect on their own practice. A minimum of four Learning Walks per term per programme is required.
- **Programme Rep* meetings** – the Student President meets with Programme Reps once a term and captures learners' feedback, and follows up with key staff members case-by-case. Meetings are minuted and the minutes are supplied to the relevant Programme staff.
- **Self-Assessment*** – The learner voice is a key component of self-assessment activity. All business support and programme areas are to ensure the learner voice is captured, analysed and responded to.
- **Student Surveys*** – formal surveys delivered at regular intervals throughout the student's Learner Journey at NMIT
- **Talking Walls** – blogs/whiteboards/notice boards/glass windows, within Area of Learning or digitally to capture learner voice and celebrate responsive action. Suggested model: pose question, position

question in suitable area, leave open for two weeks, collect and collate feedback, respond with actions/intended actions/outcomes on Talking Wall within two weeks.

Frequency: three times per department/area of learning

- **Task and Finish Groups** – meetings convened with Programme Reps to focus on specific issues identified through any of the Learner Voice channels to completion/provide a solution.

Frequency: at least one per year

The above list is not exhaustive and departments may use additional strategies to capture and respond to the Learner Voice. Other examples may include: online tools, summaries compiled by the Complaints Coordinator, and SANITI feedback.

*indicates the availability of an accompanying Procedure document on the QMS

TARGETS

This policy will be fully implemented when the following targets have been achieved for each programme:

- **Departmental Focus Groups** – one meeting per semester with Programme Representatives from across the Department, attended by HoD/DHoD or Programme Coordinator and facilitated by SANITI
- **Learning Conversations / Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)** – all learners engage in a minimum of three 1:1 conversations per year
- **Learning Walks** - a minimum of four Learning Walks per term per programme are completed
- **Programme Representative meetings** - all programmes have a minimum of one Programme Representative ('Programme Rep')
- **Student Surveys** - an 80% response rate is achieved for the four primary Student Satisfaction Surveys (First Impressions, Course Evaluation, Tutor Evaluation and Learner Experience)

(Response rates are calculated as follows: –the total number of learners who completed a survey, divided by the number of learners eligible to take the survey)

- **Student Surveys** - 90% learners indicate they are satisfied with their learning experience through the Learner Experience survey
- **Student Surveys – Course/Tutor evaluations** - Where feasible, all fulltime, permanent tutors will have Tutor Evaluations conducted at least once per year, particularly during their first year of teaching.
- **Talking Walls** - three times a year per department/area of learning

THE LEARNER VOICE PLAN

By 20 March each year, HoDs/DHoDs/Programme Coordinators or Area delegates will develop a **Learner Voice Plan**, for each programme delivery. These plans are created based on the unique features and requirements of individual programmes and take into account course start and end dates, so that feedback loops may be completed.

Ideally, a combination of several of the methods listed in this policy for capturing the Learner Voice are used to construct Learner Voice Plans (with a view to avoid “over surveying” learners). As a minimum, the following methods are required to ensure consistency in approach across all NMIT programmes:

- Course Evaluations
- Tutor Evaluations
- Learning Conversations/ILPs
- Programme Representative Meetings
- Departmental Focus Groups

The staff member responsible for developing the Learner Voice Plan will consult with the Student Survey Administrator for the formal surveys. The SANITI President can be consulted for the **Departmental Focus Groups**, if needed.

Progress and outcomes of **The Learner Voice Plans** will be monitored at monthly Performance Panels for each Department.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Business Support Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support learners in Task and Finish Groups that relate to their service area. Use appropriate strategies to capture and respond to Learner Voice. Ensure that the Learner Voice is a key feature of self-assessment.
Director of Learner Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate impact of this Learner Voice Policy and review annually. Ensure Learner Voice outputs are effectively responded to.
Head (HoD)/ Deputy Head of Department (DHoD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure activities to capture the Learner Voice are planned and implemented across their department via Learner Voice Plans Attend Departmental Focus Groups ensuring that actions addressing any arising issues are implemented. Ensure that listening to the Learner Voice is a key feature of self-assessment activity.
Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embrace every opportunity to provide feedback and influence positive change across NMIT. Are provided the opportunity and are encouraged to participate in multiple feedback forums (including formal student surveys) in order to provide NMIT with feedback throughout their learner journey.
Programme Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that programmes have at least one student Programme Representative. Support a culture that is responsive to Learner Voice, including attending Departmental Focus Groups. Ensure the Learner Voice is a key feature of self-assessment activity. Develop a Learner Voice Plan annually by 20 March in collaboration with the Student Survey Administrator Support the monitoring of NMIT's responsiveness to feedback.
Programme Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in Departmental Focus Groups. Encourage learners to provide NMIT with constructive feedback via multiple feedback channels.
Student Learning Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated team member whose role is to conduct the Individual Learning Plan conversations with learners (available in some programme areas such as Applied Business).
Student President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate recruitment, training and meetings of Programme Reps Facilitate Departmental Focus Groups

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate feedback to relevant NMIT team members and Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality. • Provide feedback to Council on the Learner Voice.
Student Survey Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote delivery of formal student surveys institute-wide. • Ensure Annual Learner Voice Plans are established and maintained (in collaboration with HoDs or delegate). • Advise and consult Programme Areas regarding the administration requirements of formal student surveys • Support the monitoring of survey response rates
Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek, listen to and respond to feedback from learners around their learning preferences and experiences. • Facilitate regular Learning Conversations to listen to and respond to learner feedback, to support pathway decisions, actions and outcomes. Refer to the NMIT Tutor Guide to Assessment for assessment feedback responsibilities.

REFERENCES

INTERNAL

Student Surveys ([NMIT Intranet/Academic and Quality/Student Surveys](#))

[The Learner Voice Plan \[template\]](#)

[Survey Feedback Summary \[template\]](#)

[Student Survey Procedure](#)

[NMIT Academic Statute – Section 3 Academic Regulations](#)

[Student Problem Resolution Framework](#)

[Formal Complaints Resolution Procedure](#)

[Programme Representative Policy](#)

[Self-Assessment Policy](#)

[Self-Assessment Procedure](#)

[Internal Review policy](#)

[Learner Conversations Procedure](#) (including *Individual Learning Plan Template*)