



Applied Engineering College
كلية الهندسة التطبيقية



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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In Partnership
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المملكة العربية السعودية
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المؤسسة العامة للتدريب التقني والمهني
Technical and Vocational Training Corporation

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4.1 Introduction

The AEC Student Engagement policy covers the college's strategy to ensure that all our students are fully represented and involved in the quality assurance and enhancement initiatives. At the core of the policy is our vision:

Every student, on every program and semester, should have the opportunity to impact on their learning experiences.

This vision underpins our culture of engagement with both students and teachers to ensure enhancement and satisfaction. Our aim is to provide a collaborative approach where staff members and students' work together to improve the college's academic and non-academic outcomes experience. We take deliberate steps to engage students in the development of their learning environment. We focus on building close-working relationships with the Student Council and all students to give them the opportunity to share their experiences, concerns and suggestions to enhance their AEC opportunities. This provides our students with multiple formal and informal opportunities to engage with the College, and our quality assurance and enhancement activities.

The AEC student engagement strategy adheres to the following set of principles:

- Student engagement is embedded in all the college's practices and processes
- The contribution of all students is valued and deemed critical for success
- Student opportunities to engage with the college on all levels are widely encouraged
- Students are encouraged to engage in the full range of provided learning opportunities and to shape their learning experience
- Adequate training, time and support provided to all students to allow them to take part in the quality process
- Timely and appropriate action is taken in response to valid issues raised and the outcomes communicated across the college
- Students are informed about how their feedback has been acted upon: 'You said- We did'

Led by the Dean's Office the AEC approach to student engagement is systematically reviewed every semester. Understanding our context and the forms of communication that best suit our

students, we aim to foster an effective and collaborative college-student relationship that creates and maintains meaningful and informative dialogue.

We understand that our students join the program at different academic and cognitive levels. Consequently, some of their academic or personal issues will impact them differently. As a result, different students require different levels of support. It is our responsibility to identify those in need of additional support and offer the appropriate level of assistance, whether academic or non-academic, to prevent a student's early departure. We identify students who we feel could be or are 'at risk' through established indicators, and the collaborative efforts of our Student Affairs team department and academic staff. Our indicators of potential risk include:

- A student not attending regularly his timetabled lecturers/ tutorials
- A student not performing adequately in the classroom
- A student not submitting assessments
- A student failing any low-risk, fundamental assessment

We have developed an early intervention strategy to address the needs of those students identified as being 'at risk'. Student Affairs work closely with the relevant Head(s) of Department to design, introduce and implement tailored, student-centered intervention strategies to help the student overcome the challenges they are facing. These strategies include:

- Extra workshops/ tutorials
- Lecturers support discussion
- Student-led tutorials
- Counselling
- Access to different learning materials

4.2 Shared Culture

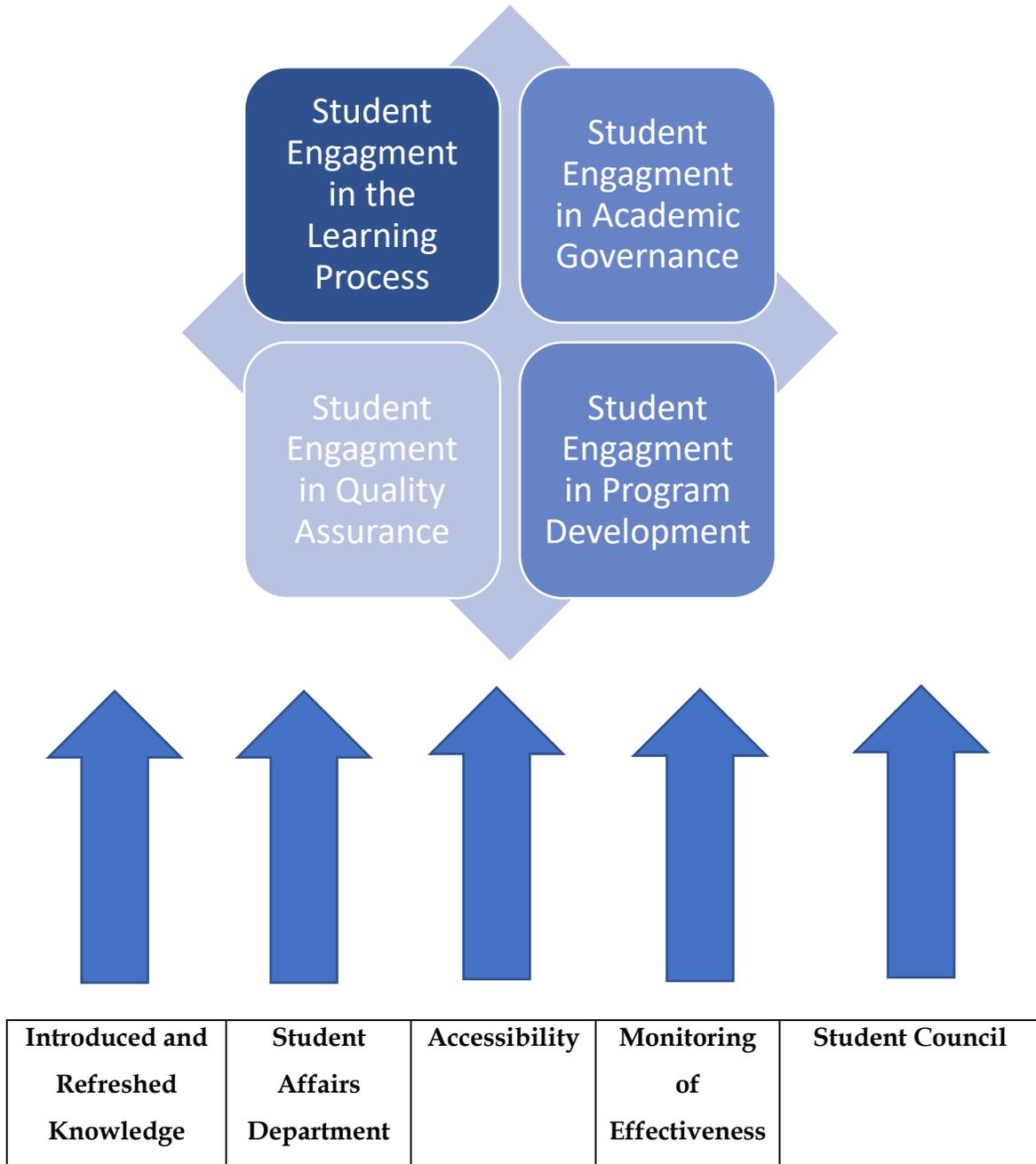
An essential element of our student engagement practice is the process of communicating ongoing activities at the college to enhance their student learning experience. We embrace a culture of shared ownership and responsibility, actively seeking student partnership across all initiatives. We firmly believe in a student-academic partnership that is built on shared beliefs and culture will enhance their AEC graduate outcomes. We actively encourage student representation at all levels, however are aware of the sensitivity of the role and do so through open and closed meetings. This culture we build play letting our students play a collaborative role in the AEC decision making process and communicating all new strategies through:

- The AEC website (<http://www.appliedengineeringcollege.com>)
- Marketing and our college notice boards
- Informal/ formal discussion sessions
- The Student Council

Establishing a shared culture has meant our students have gained a valuable insight into the academic activities and proposed enhancement strategies to develop the environment. The process demonstrates our willingness to engage them in the process where we are doing for and not to, creating a co-create learning environment and utilizing the skills and creativity of both academic and students.

ESSENTIAL STUDENT OUTCOMES AND TOOLS

The AEC has identified four key areas of student engagement: in the Learning Process, in Academic Governance, in Program Development, and in Quality Assurance; and encourages, secures and ensures this through the following six inputs.



4.3 Introduced and Refreshed Knowledge

4.3.1 Student Induction



Throughout their 3-years at the AEC, students are introduced annually to the college rules, polices, engagement opportunities and the expectations on them. As students advance through their pathway they are supported in developing skills and strategies including, for example learner autonomy, self-study and how they engage with the college, that meet the changing demands of their level of study. Thus, through structured academic and non-academic sessions at the start of each year/ semester they receive the support necessary to fully understand the semester/ year ahead.

4.3.2 Module Introduction

Student knowledge and understanding of their taught modules is an essential element of their academic success. During the Module Introduction students and their lecturers openly discuss the semester ahead and start to plan the academic process. It gives our students an opportunity to engage with their lecturer, academic content and assessment schedule in an informed session during the first week of the semester. Also, it gives the lecturer the chance to highlight any critical milestones within the module plan.

Student knowledge and understanding of their taught modules is an essential element in their academic success. Students are introduced to each module at the beginning of teaching, with particular focus given to the academic content; the learning, teaching and assessment strategies;

critical milestones within the module plan; and, the requirements of the College. This provides our students with opportunities to engage with their lecturers, and to openly discuss and plan the semester ahead as partners in the academic process.

4.4 Student Affairs Department

The Student Affairs Department is the ‘front office’ of our student engagement initiatives and the first point of contact for our students. The services that the department offers contributes to the quality of both the learner experience and the ability of academic staff to deliver the required lectures. They support and enhance of students AEC experiences (academic, social and welfare) and act a ‘big brother’ to students that are away from home for the first time. Some of the key tasks they undertake are:

1. Pre-entry guidance and advice
2. Helping students understand the AEC code of conduct
3. Lead the student induction program
4. Manage the student complaint and request system
5. Help run extra-curricular activities
6. Resolving conflict
7. Communication official college decisions

Furthermore, they play a key role in managing the student retention rate through offer pastoral care and counseling and help identify possible **student’s at risk**. Being an international provider with many of the college’s management and academic staff being non-Saudi means the Student Affairs Department can offer a deeper-level of understanding (academic and emotional) with a social/ contextual understanding. From an AEC perspective they provide support and help explain the core mission and values to our students and help them understand how they can participate in the overall management of college and the decisions being made.

4.5 Accessibility

4.5.1 Informal College Environment

The college promotes an open-door policy across all student-facing areas with our students having direct access to all academic staff members, including those in the Dean’s Office. We

believe that our students are our partners rather than customers, and we require their assistance, dialogue and experiences to inform the continual development and enhancement of our systems and programs. Through this avenue, we developed an ‘everyone is equal’ approach to college improvement where everyone’s voice is heard equally at every level.

4.5.2 Office Hours

The typical day of an AEC lecturer is very busy, with regular movements around the campus, using different classes and different workshops. This means that it can sometimes be difficult for our students to find the lecturer they need. To overcome this issue, and to bolster our open-door policy, all academic staff have designated and timetabled office hours that we communicate to students through various channels. This means that our students know with certainty when and where lecturers will be available for student discussions.

4.5.3 Student Common Room Forums

A Student Council initiative established the Student Common Room Forum to make the students feel more comfortable in sharing their concerns, issues and enhancement ideas. During each academic semester on a fortnightly basis, a member of the Dean’s Office takes part in an open-forum where students can interact directly with the college’s senior management. The outcomes and major discussion points of the Forum’s are recorded and further discussed at Student Council- Dean’s Office level. Finally, the Student Council and the Dean’s Office representative select key points that are progressed for discussion and resolution as agenda items at the Deans Executive Group Meeting. The outcomes of these are actioned through the Student Council and the college’s internal marketing channels.

4.6 Monitoring of Effectiveness

4.6.1 The Student Survey

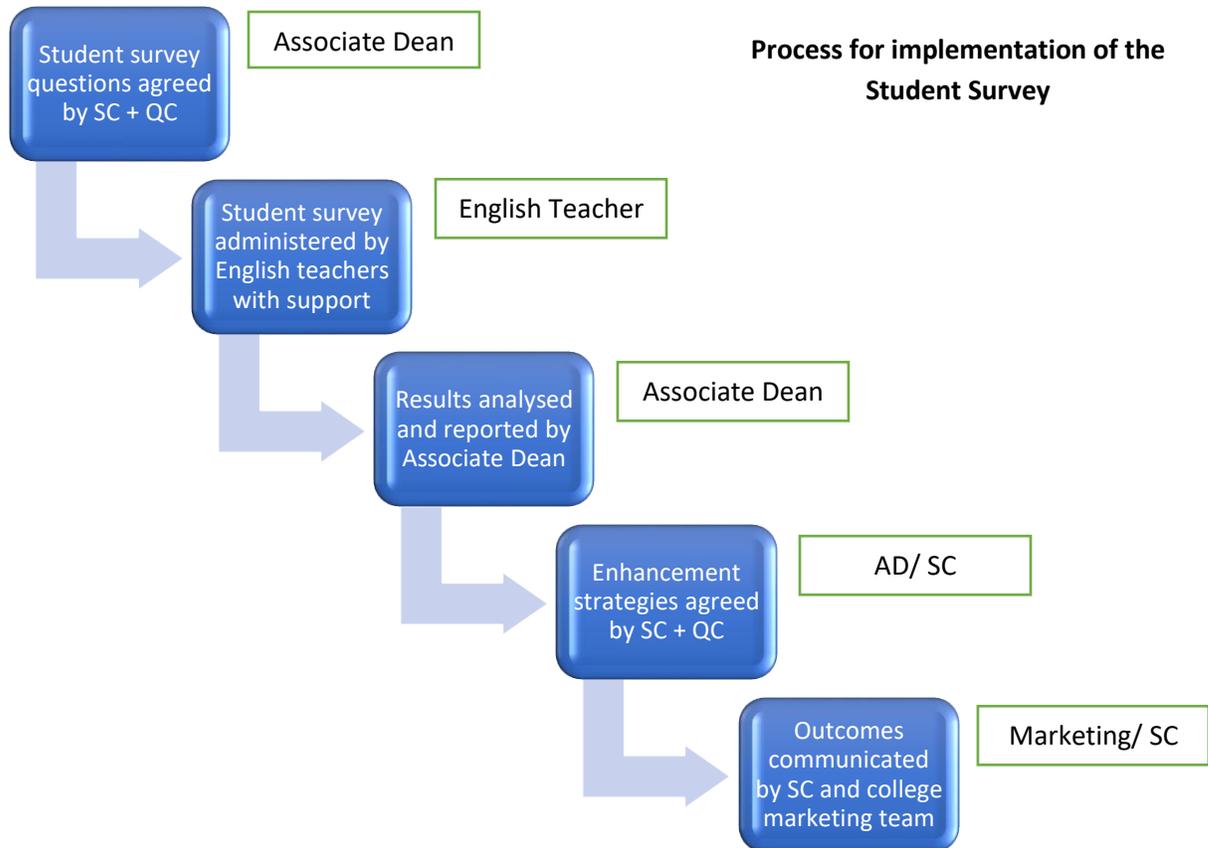
At the AEC student evaluation and feedback is a key source of information regarding our college-wide experience. The Student Survey (SS) is completed by our students every semester. It is scheduled within the Quality Cycle, provided digitally, and should take place between weeks 12-15. Under the guidance of the Associate Dean for Quality, the survey is designed to gather structured feedback on student satisfaction levels on the full range of their college experience

including teaching and learning, student support, assessments, learning facilities and student services. The aims of our surveys are:

- ✓ To provide students with a platform to formally feedback about their college experiences
- ✓ To generate student perceptions on the challenges they face at the AEC
- ✓ To provide key information that informs quality enhancement strategies

The survey is written in English, as the primary language of the college, and has an Arabic version available to ensure that all students understand the questions and are enabled to provide honest and truthful answers. All students receive the opportunity to complete the survey during the appropriate English lesson where extra support can be given regarding the questions and vocabulary be their peers. The selection of English lessons reflects that these are timetabled for all students, regardless of their pathway or semester. Through several different channel's students are given no less than 2-weeks' notice of the actual date of the survey so they may guarantee their attendance or, where appropriate and necessary, make alternative arrangements to complete the survey. If a student misses the day the survey is administered, he can request access via Student Council or the Dean's Office (only for the week designated for the survey to be completed).

Following completion of the Student Survey, Associate Dean for Quality analyses the results and reports these to the Quality Committee and Student Council for the development of enhancement strategies, the outcomes of which are then communicated to students as per the process outlined below.



4.6.2 Student Interviews

Student interviews are conducted post-survey with the aim of gathering greater insight to the critical responses, validate the information gathered from the SS to enhance the effectiveness of the proposed Quality Enhancement strategies and to build a more informed enhancement approach. The interviews are conducted by the teacher responsible for administering the survey with all data recorded and sent to the Associate Dean for Quality. All data collected is confidential and student names are not recorded during the process. Students have the right to refuse to take part of withdraw their information at any given time.

4.6.3 Student Module Survey (See Chapter: Program Monitoring and Review)

The aim of the Student Module Survey is to evaluate the modules and capture the student experience. It enables our students to provide feedback on any problems they experienced and on any areas, they identify as best practice. Student feedback is then inputted into the module development process and the Annual Module Review. This process enables us to actively show

our commitment to the Student Experience and their input into the academic process. The response of the survey is shared via the class Google Class no more than 2-weeks after completion.

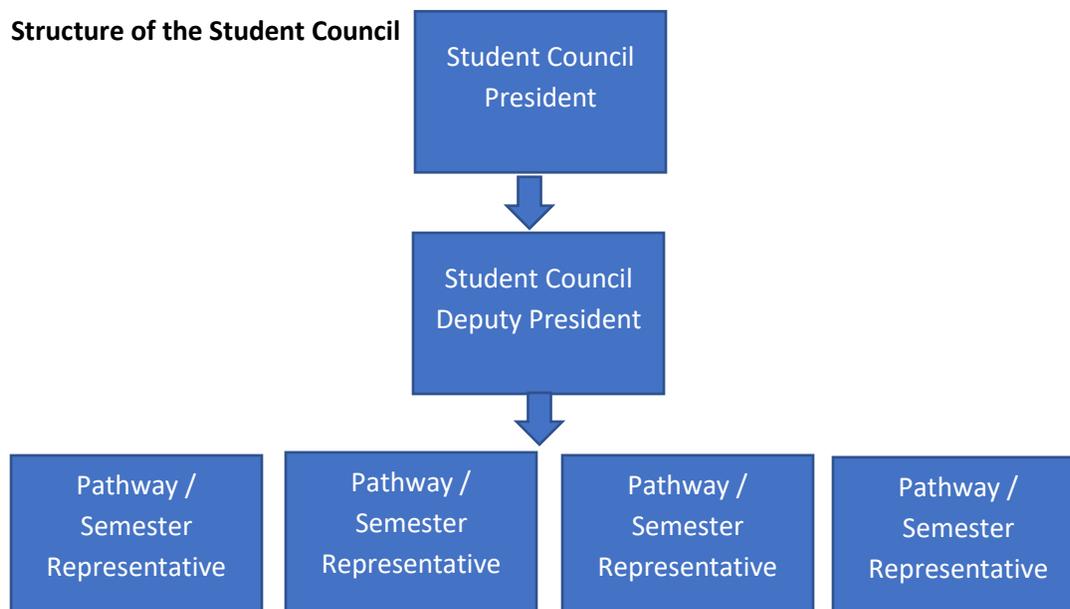
4.7 Student Council

The Student Council is the student representative body aimed at ensuring that a collective student-voice is heard. The college has developed several avenues for our Student Council to communicate with the college at all levels including schedule meetings with the Dean’s Office, informal daily discussions and sessions with our Student Affairs. The AEC vision for the Student Council is:

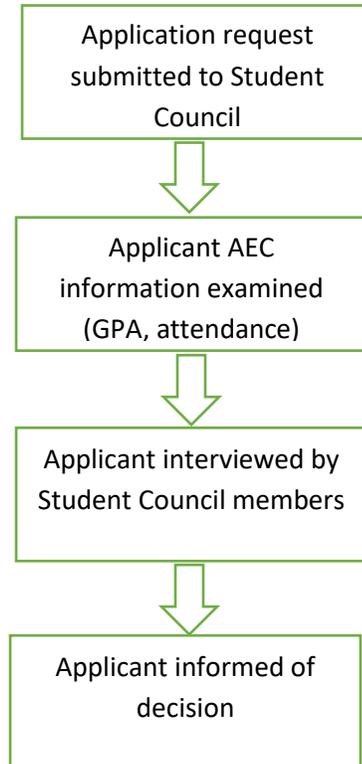
“To promote the interests of the student-body at all times and to collaboratively work with the college to enhance the student AEC experience.”

Membership of the Student Council is based on an elected/ or selected process. Any enrolled student at the AEC is eligible to serve has a member of the Student Council. The election period for the council is one academic year (2 semesters). There is no limit to the number of memberships a student may hold while attending the college, but each member must go through the annual election process.

Structure of the Student Council



The Student Council should set timetabled meetings every semester. Each meeting should have a minimum of 50% of the council present. Outside of the initial election process if a student wishes to apply for membership he must follow the application process:



The Student Council should act independently and some of its objectives may vary from the AEC, but in general they will:

- ❖ Enhance communication between students, management and all staff members.
- ❖ Promote and develop a positive learner AEC environment
- ❖ Support the college and its students in enhancing student outcomes
- ❖ Represent the views of the student body
- ❖ Consider all items pertaining to student activities at the AEC brought before it, either by one of its members, students or faculty members