Policy Title:	Staff-Student Liaison Council (SSLC) Policy
Description:	To promote mutual dialogue and understanding between staff and students regarding academic matters, student supports and facilities.
Author (Position):	Student Engagement Officer
Version:	2
Approved By:	MIE Governing Body
Policy Approval Date:	January 2019
Date of Next Policy Review:	April 2027 (or as necessary)

Staff-Student Liaison Council (SSLC) Policy

1 Context

1.1 The Staff-Student Liaison Council (SSLC) is a structured channel of communication between staff and students that typically meets three times per academic year.

1.2 The role of SSLC is to provide an opportunity for staff and students to engage together in a structured manner to hear the voice of the other and to ensure that open communication is being promoted.

1.3 The Students' Union (SU) organises the election of student class representatives early in the academic year. The Student Engagement Officer convenes meetings between senior members of Marino Institute of Education (MIE) staff and the elected representatives of the students, who meet year by year, programme by programme. Staff members of the Council typically comprise the relevant Course Leader, the Assistant Registrar, the Director of School Placement, and the relevant Dean. Typically, the SU President and/or Vice-President, Welfare Officer, and Education Officer attend the entire Council meetings, while student representatives from each cohort attend for brief periods (approximately 15 minutes each) to identify and discuss matters pertaining to their programme/year group.

1.4 This Council comprised of students and staff recognises that all members of the Institute community, have legitimate, though sometimes different, perceptions and experiences. MIE and the MIE SU value diversity of the student population and are committed to ensuring all students have a sense of belonging to the Institute. By working together to a common agreed purpose, steps can be taken that promote enhancement in a way that works for all concerned. The SSLC reflects a mature relationship based on mutual respect between students and staff.

2 Purpose

2.1 The SSLC is a forum to promote mutual dialogue and understanding between staff and students regarding academic matters, student supports and facilities.

2.2 Its purpose is to optimise the student experience at MIE and to enhance the learning outcomes and development of students, and the performance and reputation of the Institute.

3 Benefits

3.1 Students can better understand and make a meaningful contribution to processes, policies and decision making within the Institute.

3.2 Students become more aware of their role as citizens within the learning community at MIE, with rights and responsibilities.

3.3 The SSLC provides feedback for MIE staff in a positive and prompt manner, allowing the Institute to respond where necessary, and to learn from the student experience.

3.4 Regular communication supports working and studying and increases the sense of wellbeing and community among the students.

3.5 Systematic open communication forums ensure that a strong working relationship exists between staff and students and enable the Institute to communicate clearly to the students, and for the students to seek clarification or raise matters informally.

4 Scope

4.1 The SSLC is a forum on which topics of mutual concern to students and staff may be discussed such as calendar and timetable matters, modules, courses and placements, assessment, facilities and resources, and communications.

4.2 In some instances the discussions may lead to revised practices or arrangements and in other instances the aim is to have greater understanding of the context in which decisions are made.

4.3 The SSLC is not a complaints process – students may raise matters in an informal and anonymous way, on behalf of their peers. If a student wishes to make a complaint, then the Student Complaint Policy is invoked.

5   Principles

5.1 Open internal communications support the implementation of the Institute's [Strategic Plan](#).

5.2 Students are recognised as partners in their education and are encouraged to be active members of the Institute.

5.3 Students are encouraged to offer insights into their experiences as members of the MIE community, and are invited to give their perspectives in a positive and pro-active manner.

5.4 The SSLC promotes institutional self-evaluation and promotes quality assurance, and student engagement.

5.5 Feedback and feedback loop: MIE welcomes and encourages open and prompt feedback from students. The SSLC ensures that students are facilitated in providing feedback in a safe and valued manner. Feedback practices will be transparent and the feedback loop will be closed in a timely fashion. This is carried out at MIE by students participating in [StudentSurvey.ie](#). Responses to the student survey are reviewed and analysed at forums including Programme Boards, Academic Council and the MIE – Associated College Degrees Committee[1].

5.6 Student representatives are encouraged to contribute fully and act in a professional manner when they are involved in the SSLC.

5.7 The SSLC recognises that students and staff have different but equally valid experiences of life on campus. This forum allows for safe and open communication between staff and students on issues which pertain to their particular year group or cohort.

6   Definitions

SSLC – this is an informal forum where student representatives of each year group of each full-time programme has an opportunity to meet with senior staff members. The nature of the students' experience is the primary focus of these meeting.

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[1] See [Programme Boards Terms of Reference](#), [Academic Council Terms of Reference](#) and [MIE Associated College Degrees Committee Terms of Reference](#)

Student Representatives – members of a student class who have been elected to the SU Council.

7 Policy

7.1 The SSLC will be convened approximately three times each academic year – typically mid-October, mid-February and mid-April. Staff are generally in listening mode, where the students are given the opportunity to express their views, in an open and trusting manner.

7.2 Meetings are convened by the Student Engagement Officer who acts as recording secretary (taking minutes) for the SSLC.

7.3 Agenda items are sought from both staff and students. Such items may include matters raised in Section 4.1 above. Matters that emerge from other sources (e.g. StudentSurvey.ie) may also be included on the agenda.

7.4 Each meeting will begin with a report on actions followed-up on since the previous meeting.

7.5 Meetings are chaired by a student representative, such as the SU President, their deputy, or the Education Officer.

7.6 Where matters can be resolved at the meeting, this is done and recorded. Where matters need to be directed to a different forum, this is done and the Student Engagement Officer ensures that such outstanding matters are followed-up.

7.7 In addition to the three regular meetings during the year, where particular matters arise, either staff members or student representatives may call for an extraordinary meeting of the SSLC to discuss such matters.

7.8 A report on SSLC meetings will be given at the Academic Council[2] meeting by one of the student representatives.

8 Responsibility

These procedures are implemented by the Student Engagement Officer, in the Registrar's Office.

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[2] See Academic Council Terms of Reference

9   Relevant Documents

9.1 Dignity and Respect Policy

9.2 Assessment Handbook

9.3 Student Hardship Support Policy

9.4 Allocation of Students for the Purposes of School Placement

9.5 Mentoring Policy for Students on School Placement

9.6 Attendance Monitoring Procedure

9.7 Policy on Special Considerations for School Placement

9.8 Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities

9.9 Student Complaints Procedure

9.10 MIE Staff & Students Code of Conduct for Use of IT Systems

9.11 Support for Pregnant Students at MIE

9.12 Programme Boards Terms of Reference

9.13 Academic Council Terms of Reference

9.14 MIE Associated College Degrees Committee Terms of Reference