COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Process Area	Governance
Reference Number	GOV/002
Directorate	Client Services

Issue No	Date	Details	Author	Approved	Next Review
001	Sep 2008	First Issue	SW/JMCK	BD	Sep 2012
002	Sep 2012	Reviewed and no changes made	MM	BD	Jan 2019
003	Jan 2019	Reviewed with significant changes	RS	Governing Body	Sept 2021
004	Sept 2021	Reviewed with minor changes	RS	Governing Body	Oct 2024
005	Oct 2024	Reviewed with minor changes	RS	Governing Body	Oct 2027

If requested, the College will make the policy available in alternative formats to accommodate visual impairments. The policy can also be downloaded from the College website and made available in alternative languages upon request.

1.   POLICY STATEMENT

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Communications Procedural note which outlines the main communication channels available and how and when they might be effectively used.

Southern Regional College (the College) considers communication, with both internal and external stakeholders, as fundamental for the effective functioning of the organisation. The College has a commitment to ensuring that all stakeholders receive clear and effective communication about all aspects of their engagement with the College.

This Policy outlines the responsibilities of staff and students in maintaining good communication practice.

The guiding principles are:

- to ensure staff are fully informed of all relevant activity, to enable them to be as effective as possible in their roles and to support the strategic direction of the organisation;

- to ensure students are fully informed on all aspects of student services, student engagement activities, course delivery, assessment and progression thus enabling them to participate fully as a student of the College;

- to ensure all staff and students are aware of their responsibilities for maintaining good communication practice;

- to promote the coherence and consistency of information flow through appropriate channels of communication;

- to ensure information gets to those who need it at the right time, in the right format and in the most effective medium;

- to ensure that the transfer and sharing of information meets data protection best practice.

2.   SCOPE

This policy refers to all communication, both internal and external, and applies to Governors, staff and students of the College.

3.   DEFINITIONS

Stakeholder	Any organisation or individual with involvement or prospective involvement with the College.
Personal Tutor	Staff member responsible for the tutorial guidance and pastoral care of an individual student.
Staff Student Consultative Group	Curriculum Staff and Student Group which discusses, and actions issues related to a curriculum area or course. This group may include industrial representatives.
Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)	A forum of College Management and staff representative organisations (trade unions) which provides a means of co-operation, communication, information and consultation between the wider staff body and Senior Management.
Class Representatives	Each class nominates two class representatives who act as 'a voice' for class issues and who are members of the Student Council and Staff Student Consultative Groups.
Student Council	Council formed of class representatives to discuss College issues not linked directly to the curriculum.
Student Union	Student Union is a legal organisation affiliated to The National Union of Students and the Union of Students in Ireland.

4.   RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1   Governing Body and Principal & Chief Executive
The Governing Body and Principal & Chief Executive are responsible for ensuring that appropriate structures are in place for the implementation, review and evaluation of the Communication Policy and associated policies, procedures and activities.

4.2   Senior Management Team (SMT)
The SMT shall:
- Ensure that mechanisms exist to allow free flowing information throughout the organisation.
- Ensure staff views are considered, and responses given when appropriate.
- Identify potential bottlenecks in communication between the SMT and staff and provide solutions to improve the system.
- Investigate conflicting information.

4.3   Other Managers
Other Managers shall:
- Ensure that the opportunity exists for staff to receive and gain feedback.
- Take responsibility for delivering information and obtaining the views of staff in a consistent manner.

4.4 Head of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment
    The Head of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment shall:

- Prepare and issue press and other news releases.
- Prepare and provide high quality, professional branded college literature.
- Develop relationships with the general public and media.
- Monitor, review and report on media activity.
- Develop appropriate messaging for the College website and social media channels.
- Monitor other relevant department/section social media channels.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the college's communications and stakeholder perceptions.
- Manage consistent use of the brand identity.
- Oversee delivery of the Stakeholder Engagement and Communication plans including the College's Estates Strategy.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive's Office is aware of and is dealing with media enquiries when required.

5. DISTRIBUTION

- Policy Centre – SharePoint
- VLE
- SRC Website
- All Clients

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Communications Procedural Note
- Admissions Policy & Admissions Process
- Business Continuity Plan
- Appraisal Scheme Policy
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- Student Charter
- Marketing Toolkit
- Equality and Good Relations Policy
- FE Sector Data Protection (GDPR) Policy
- FE Sector Data Retention and Disposal Schedule
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Network Acceptable Use Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy
- SENDO (Special Education Needs and Disability Order) Guidelines
- Social Media Policy

7. FLOWCHART

N/A