

UWE Bristol Principles of Academic Representation – Learning Communities

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UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE

Utilising Learning Communities

UWE Bristol and The Students' Union host a diverse range of learning communities that identify towards a common purpose, goal or shared experience. Within the context of academic representation, there are a variety of learning communities who can, and do, positively contribute to the continued enhancement and co-creation of learning experiences.

Fostering positive relationships with Student Learning Communities can bring alternative perspectives and additional subject-focused thinking to supplement cohort feedback brought by Student Reps. These additional perspectives can help programme teams to shape and test ideas with wider groups of students to help advance inclusive educational experiences. Programme teams are encouraged to consider where engaging with other learning communities could be beneficial to discussions, for instance in Student Rep Staff Forum meetings or where programmes are going through review processes.

Student Learning Communities could include, but are not limited to:

Academic Societies

Academic Societies are groups of passionate students who unite around their programme to lead on extra/co-curricular activities in a student-led environment. Academic Societies play a key role in creating cohort identity through both social and extra/co-curricular activities. This unique mix empowers them to understand their members and gather feedback in a less formal way in order to deliver enhancements. This can also drive co-creation of the curriculum by identifying areas students wish to develop or supplement within their programme.

PAL Leaders

PAL Leaders are deployed across various parts of UWE Bristol to provide peer-to-peer academic support for students. These leaders are trained to deliver coaching, study support sessions and provide a student-led learning environment. This learning community has a strong understanding of the curriculum and can identify, through their students, where enhancements can be made to programmes in response to perceived knowledge or skills gaps or interests.

Student Consultation Panel

The student consultation panel was first established during the summer of the 2019/20 academic year in response to COVID-19. The panel consists of a group of student volunteers

from across the university who were initially recruited to work in partnership with the Recovery Groups to develop, shape and test actions that enhance the university's response to COVID-19. The pilot will continue to during 2020/21. This group of students are keen to ensure the student voice is actively incorporated into decision making at UWE. Many of the students come from other learning communities meaning they have a well-rounded understanding of other students' needs and concerns.

Student Representatives

Student Reps

Student Reps are elected representatives of their cohorts at a local level who proactively seek out feedback and enhancement opportunities and work collaboratively to make positive change on their programme or at a wider level. The Student Rep structure is already fully embedded within the academic governance system and plays a key role in ensuring the student voice is valued at all levels of the institution. Student Reps receive training around being truly representative, feedback gathering tools, signposting, evidencing and working with staff. This training is designed to empower Student Reps to gather a representative viewpoint and understand how to create positive change effectively.

Overview:

- Elected in class in first few weeks of academic year
- Represent the student voice at the local level
- Volunteers
- Over 1000 across the university
- Attend Student Rep and Staff Forums (SRSF)s

Recommended number of students per Student Rep

- 1-25 students = 1 Student Rep
- 26-50 students = 1-2 Student Reps
- 51-75 students = 2-3 Student Reps
- 76-100 students = 2-4 Student Reps
- 101-125 students = 3-5 Student Reps
- 126-150 students = 3-6 Student Reps
- 151-175 students = 4-7 Student Reps
- 176-200 students = 4-8 Student Reps
- 201+ students = 5-9 Student Reps

This is a guide, if a course wishes to elect more Student Reps this can be discussed with The Students' Union Representation Team studentreps@uwe.ac.uk

Programme Year Reps *New for 2020/21*

Programme Year Reps are elected from their cohort of student reps on their programme, with each level having their own Programme Year Rep. In addition to the primary duties of being a Student Rep, the Programme Year Reps will work closely with the Programme Team to develop the programme and represent their cohort at Programme Management Committees (PMC) and Departmental Student Partnership Meeting. They will also work closely with their Lead Department Rep(s) to ensure that their cohort is being represented at department, faculty and university levels.

Overview:

- Elected from the Student Reps at Student Rep and Staff Forums (SRSFs)
- Represent all courses from their SRSF
- Volunteers
- Attend Programme Management Committees (PMCs)

Recommended number of Programme Year Reps per SRSF

1 Year Lead Rep per year from each SRSF

- Foundation
- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Masters

Programme teams may wish to have extra Year Lead Reps for different starting date cohorts.

Department Reps

Department Reps are elected from the body of student reps in their department. Each department has three department reps who have different role titles and responsibilities: Academic Processes, Diversity & Inclusivity, Sustainability. These Department Reps are elected to gain feedback on these different themes and work closely with the Student Reps and Lead Department Reps to enhance the student experience and learning outcomes. These groups of students also work closely with members of staff in their department and different professional services teams across the university.

Overview:

- Elected at Student Rep Committee (meeting hosted by The Students' Union)
- Volunteers

- Represent their Department on areas within their portfolio
 - Academic Process
 - Diversity and Inclusivity
 - Sustainability
- One Department Rep from each portfolio for each Department

Lead Department Reps

Lead Department Reps are the students who are recruited and paid to represent their department. They use their keen research, listening and teamwork skills to ensure the student voice is empowered in their department and utilised to make changes. They work in partnership with various executive members of staff in their department to produce a student voice report for their respective Academic Standards and Quality Committee meetings. To ensure they represent the student body of their department, they work with their three department reps and the programme year reps to address any trends in feedback across the department.

Overview:

- Recruited by The Students' Union before the start of the academic year
- Paid to prepare for, attend and feedback on specific meetings
- Represent their Department and Faculty
- One or two Lead Department Reps per department as agreed by each Faculty
- All attend their department Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQCs) and Department Student Partnership Forums
- Different LDRs attend Faculty Board, Learning and Teaching Student Experience Committee (LTSEC) and Academic Board