

University of Birmingham Student Representation System Toolkit

The Student Representation System Toolkit can be used by students, postgraduate researchers, and staff to support the development of student/postgraduate researcher representation across Colleges, Schools and Departments.

The Student Rep System is underpinned by the following core principles:

- Student voices are embedded in all structures and decision making processes at the University
- Student/PGR Reps at all levels are supported to meaningfully contribute to discussions and decision making by both the University and the Guild
- Students/postgraduate researchers and staff work in partnership to develop and create solutions that draw on the priorities of all
- Student/PGR Reps are fully involved in the design, delivery and assessment of teaching, learning, and research activity across the University
- The Guild and the University work together to develop, enhance and evaluate student/postgraduate researcher representation

The baseline expectations have been jointly agreed by the Guild and the University in partnership, to ensure an effective Student Representation System.

Our examples of good and excellent practice provide you with an idea of how academic representation can be enhanced and developed across the University. Guild of Students staff are available to support and give advice on this develop – contact studentreps@guild.bham.ac.uk for bespoke support relevant to your School / College.

School / Department Overview

This section outlines responsibilities for the Student Representation System at School / Department level. Though practice may vary, there should be a clear line of responsibility to ensure that:

- Student and PGR Reps are supported to meaningfully contribute to design, delivery and assessment of teaching and learning
- Reps at all levels are supported to feel welcome as full members of the relevant meetings and are embedded in all relevant structures and processes related to teaching and learning.

Baseline Expectations	Examples of Good Practice	Examples of Excellent Practice
The Head of School (or nominee) ensures that an academic Staff Liaison Contact and member of admin staff are allocated to each Staff Student Forum.	Staff support is provided to each SLC by a local Student Experience Officer (or equivalent).	SLCs, SEOs and admin staff are aware of – and attend – relevant staff training.
The School informs the Guild and University of the nominated first point of contact for Student and PGR Representation	SLC/ SEOs are aware of the information, training and support provided by the Guild, so that they can build on this within the local context	The School / Department work in close partnership with the Guild and College to ensure effective functioning of the Staff Student Forum
Information and publicity about the Rep System is communicated to relevant members of School staff	SRS information is published via relevant channels in via a clear and coordinated process.	Schools have robust and diverse procedures to ensure information circulates – e.g. email reminders, staff handbook, team meetings, School committees / boards
Staff Student Forum has student representation for relevant years and programmes of study. All taught students must have a Student Rep from their programme or level of study, with a	Student Reps are recruited for each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Reps for each year of each programme (UG & PGT) 	Departments recruit more than two Student Reps per year group, aiming for a ratio of 1:15. Departments / Schools recruit

<p>general expectation of at least 2 Student Reps per year group. All postgraduate researchers must have at least one PGR Rep from their programme or research group.</p> <p>The School aims for a 1:40 Rep / Student ratio.</p> <p>The challenges of recruiting and managing Student Rep numbers on smaller and larger programmes are recognised by all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate Part Time & Distance Learning Reps • Appropriate Joint Honours Reps <p>PGR Reps are recruited from all appropriate programmes and / or research groups.</p> <p>Each Forum invites additional students to ensure diverse representation which can effectively represent student's views and perspectives (this could include E&D reps, International Reps, Academic Societies etc.)</p>	<p>Student or PGR Reps from different pathways or specialisms where appropriate.</p>
<p>Staff Student Forum jointly agrees a Forum Agreement each year, outlining how the Forum will operate.</p> <p>These are shared by staff with the Guild and Registry.</p>	<p>The Forum Agreement outlines the Forum scope, remit and procedure and is available online for all students it represents.</p>	<p>The Agreement is reviewed and amended annually by the Forum, to ensure it remains appropriate and relevant for the programme / School / department.</p>
<p>Staff Student Forums meet at least once a term.</p>	<p>The timing of meetings is planned to ensure that Student/PGR Reps are integrated into the School's decision making.</p>	<p>There is a clear process for involved Staff Student Forum into decision making processes – with evidence of information and action flowing both ways between Forum and relevant committees.</p>
<p>Staff Student Forum discusses key items relevant to the design and delivery of teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey responses & action plans • Student Voice Report 	<p>There is a clear process for the publication, discussion and action of Rep feedback on key Teaching and Learning items. Staff Student Forum is a space for Reps and staff to share ideas, discuss solutions and evaluate Teaching and Learning in the School.</p>	<p>There is a clear and integrated process for communicating feedback, discussion and actions to all students/postgraduate researchers in the School on these key items. Students/postgraduate researchers are told what</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Education Plans • External Examiner Reports • Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Board Reports. <p>Relevant University departments (e.g. the Library) are invited to Staff Student Forum at least once per year.</p> <p>Guild and School Staff provide briefing and training to Reps, to ensure they are able to meaningfully contribute to discussion and decision making.</p>		<p>feedback was raised, how the School has responded and what will happen next.</p>
<p>A Rep acts as co-chair of the Staff Student Forum.</p> <p>Students/postgraduate researchers and Staff work together to co-create the Forum agenda.</p>	<p>Staff Student Forum acts as a space for students/postgraduate researchers to raise issues and make proposals about teaching and learning. Staff routinely consult Reps about significant developments in teaching and learning and encourage Reps to engage in wider programme / School business.</p>	<p>Staff Student Forum acts as a creative space for ongoing engaged dialogue between staff and students/postgraduate researchers about teaching and learning, allowing for meaningful influence on School teaching and learning.</p>
<p>SLCs / SEOS meet with Student / PGR Reps prior to Staff Student Forum, to provide briefing and troubleshoot small operational issues.</p>	<p>Staff and Reps agree a meeting plan of action and priorities for discussion at Staff Student Forum.</p>	<p>SLCs / SEOs consult with Reps and academic groups throughout the year, on all substantial teaching and learning issues. This includes involving reps in the development, testing and evaluation of new and existing initiatives.</p>
<p>Staff Student Forum minutes are shared with students, the Guild and Registry within 1 week of meeting.</p>	<p>There is a clear process for sharing information about Staff Student Forum meetings and outcomes to all students in the School. It is made explicit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the Forum has discussed 	<p>The School has robust processes for ongoing dialogue with the whole student body, about issues raised via the Rep System. This may include programme level</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School / department feedback on items raised • What will happen next based on staff/ Rep discussions in the meeting. 	meetings, consultation with academic societies, focus groups or activity organised by the SEO. This activity is undertaken in partnership with Reps and, where appropriate, the Guild.
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Recruitment

This section outlines responsibilities for recruitment of Student and PGR Reps. The main principles of Rep recruitment are:

- Student Reps & PGR Reps volunteer online via the online portal. College and School Reps are elected by the Guild.
- Staff and students/postgraduate researchers work together to understand and remove barriers that prevent students/postgraduate researchers volunteering as Reps, to ensure it is accessible to all
- Recruitment communications focus on the value of the Rep role, work that has been achieved in partnership with staff and the ways in which Reps are rewarded and recognised.

Baseline Expectations	Examples of Good Practice	Examples of Excellent Practice
<p>The Guild will provide a central online portal for Student / PGR Rep recruitment. This portal also allows students to find details of their Rep online.</p> <p>The Guild will provide contact details of Reps to designated School contacts according to the agreed schedule</p>	The Guild and School follow the agreed recruitment and promotion schedule.	The Guild, SLCs and SEOs maintain dialogue around recruitment, sharing good practice and addressing issues
Students/postgraduate researchers are encouraged to volunteer for the role through informal non-competitive processes that encourage diversity in representation	The 1:40 Rep/Student ratio is reached, with each programme/ year group represented	Number of Student / PGR Reps reaches the ideal ratio of 1:15

<p>The Guild provides central marketing materials to Schools / Departments about Student / PGR Rep recruitment. The Guild promotes academic representation to all students</p> <p>Schools / Departments promote Student / PGR Rep roles in line with the agreed promotion and marketing timeline.</p>	<p>Schools / SEOs promote Rep roles in comms prior to the new academic year through social media and other tools. Links to Guild resources and recruitment portal are available via Canvas.</p> <p>Staff highlight the role of Reps in classes and previous Reps play an active role in articulating why students should get involved.</p> <p>Rep roles are contextualised locally to demonstrate the benefits of engagement and importance of student voice.</p>	<p>Rep achievements are used as part of recruitment, with upcoming projects and ideas shared to show what reps might work on.</p>
<p>Rep recruitment schedules are coordinated by SEOs / SLCs, taking place by end of October for September start programmes.</p> <p>Continuing cohort recruitment may be undertaken in spring for the following session.</p>	<p>Year 2+ reps assist in the promotion of the Student Rep role to Year 1 and PGT students during recruitment.</p>	<p>Staff work in close partnership with the Guild and Reps, tailoring recruitment locally to ensure diverse recruitment of Reps.</p>
<p>A School / College Rep is elected at UG, PGT and PGR level to sit on the appropriate School / College Level committee by the Guild of Students.</p> <p>School / College Reps are treated as full members of their Committees and feel welcomed into the meeting.</p> <p>Details of School & College Reps are shared within and across Colleges, and</p>	<p>School and College Rep elections are contested.</p>	<p>Schools and the Guild provide a clear processes and community events for School Reps and Student / PGR Reps to talk to each other.</p> <p>School and College Reps are encouraged to shape committee decisions, working with staff to agree agenda items and priorities.</p>

they are co-opted to work on cross-College projects and issues.		Staff and Reps agree and contribute to committee projects.
The Guild is also responsible for the election and training of Senate Reps.		

Support and Training:

- Training is provided by the Guild and University staff in partnership, based on student feedback
- Forum/Committees are responsible for inducting Reps into their meetings and ensuring they feel welcome in their role
- Training and support empowers Reps to contribute meaningfully to teaching and learning discussions and to understand how to use data and feedback to support their contributions

Baseline Expectations	Examples of Good Practice	Examples of Excellent Practice
The Guild provides online training for Reps at the point of recruitment, prior to a Rep's first Forum/Committee meeting	Reps are promptly welcome into post by the Guild and given clear info on the value of training Bespoke training is provided for PGR Reps, acknowledge their specific experiences	Evaluation and discussion with Reps leads to ongoing review of training
Reps are provided with a tailored programme / School level induction before or at the first Forum/Committee meeting.	Reps are provided with a formal local induction session, led by the SEO or SLCs.	Local inductions included an introduction to key members of staff, existing work of the Forum/committee and relevant local issues. This is delivered in partnership with the Guild.
The Guild provides a rolling programme of skills and development training sessions for reps. Information about these sessions is shared with Reps by Departments and Reps are encouraged to attend.	Schedule and timeline are provided with plenty of notice to allow Reps to access it	The Guild recognises and rewards Reps for attending additional training.

Reps are encouraged to develop their community through events and communications before the first Staff Student Forum.	The Guild & SEOs organise regular community social events for Reps.	The Guild, SEOs and Reps work together to develop ongoing networking opportunities for students across Rep levels to socialise and share information.
The University provides guidance documents on the SLC role prior to the academic session.	A Staff Forum and training session is held by Registry and the Guild covering updates and key information to undertake the roles of an SLC and Staff Student Forum support.	The University will capture feedback and evaluate the effectiveness of the Staff Forum and training.

Communications & Resources

- Staff Student Forum is provided with the resources needed to function effectively.
- Student & PGR Reps are responsible for gathering feedback from across their student body.
- The Guild, SEOs and SLCs work together to ensure Reps can communicate with students and with each other. Everyone works together to close the feedback loop.

Baseline Expectations	Examples of Good Practice	Examples of Excellent Practice
Schools / SEOs / SLCs promote Reps to students through regular communication – e.g. departmental social media, newsletters, Canvas, core lecture slots	Schools re-introduce Reps to students at key times of the year, such as in lectures in advance of Staff Student Forum	Reps are visible in the School's engagement with students, e.g. contributing to all student meetings or featuring in communications to students.
Department Reps provide a standard email address for students to communicate with Reps and Reps to	Individual rep contact details are shared with students/postgraduate researchers.	

communicate with students – e.g. "HistoryReps@bham"	Reps are provided with a list of relevant staff contacts	
Schools / SEOs provide Reps with tools to contact their cohort in the School / department Departments provide mailing lists of students to Reps or assist Reps with comms	Schools provide opportunities for School Reps to communicate with Reps from across programmes in their School	With support from the Guild, Schools / departments develop effective online tools that allow all students/postgraduate researchers to communicate with Reps. This could be via email, canvas, social media or other means. Schools / Departments promote the Guild's "Find My Rep" website.
Reps are provided with a timeline for departmental meetings. Reps are provided with agenda, previous minutes and papers at least a week in advance of the meeting. Staff support is provided to ensure minutes are taken. Reps do not take Forum minutes.	SEOs / SLCs meet informally with Reps before the meeting to talk through the papers. Any changes to the schedule are promptly communicated.	Staff Student Forum schedules are planned strategically to coordinate with School Education Committees / Graduate Boards. Reps are provided with a "lifecycle" of the year, so they understand how their work contributes to decision making in the School / Department.
Dialogue between Reps, staff and departments is maintained outside of formal Forum/committee meetings. The Guild provides funding for Rep projects, via the Student Rep Fund.	Departments / Schools proactively support Rep projects and connect them to other events / ides within the departments. Reps work with SEOs / SLCs to submit proposals to the Rep Fund.	Reps are kept in continuous dialogue with staff outside of routine Forum/committee meetings. Schools empower Rep projects by providing platforms for sessions or supporting in administration.
Required resources are provided to Reps in good time before Staff Student Forum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey data 	Staff meet informally to brief reps on documents before the Staff Student Forum	SEOs and the Guild work in partnership to support sessions for Reps to understand and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Examiner reports • School Education Plans 		interrogate required resources
Achievements of Reps are shared through communication and engagement activities.		

Partnerships

Student and PGR Reps are seen as a key aspect of departmental structures	Reps are the central voice of consultation within departments.	Reps and SEOs work together to lead on student engagement and consultation. Where relevant, these projects are undertaken with the Guild.
<p>The student voice in meetings is respected equally to that of staff and individual contributions are valued appropriately.</p> <p>School and College Reps are full members of the appropriate committee</p>	Relevant students, such as academic societies and E&D ambassadors, are invited to Staff Student Forum meetings	Staff Student Forum are sites of rich and constructive dialogue between staff and students, with each influencing the other
Staff Student Forum nominates a Rep to co-chair the meeting.	Forum agendas feature input from both staff and students	There is good dialogue between staff and students, drawing on the priorities of each, when producing agendas
Student voices are engaged and valued in learning and teaching, Quality Assurance and programme change	Staff Student Forum meeting increasingly focussed on co-curricular development and partnership. Operational issues are dealt with swiftly and informally outside of	Staff Student Forum meetings are the heart of departmental collaboration with students as co-producers, such a programme

Relevant University departments (e.g. Library, Careers Network) are invited to Staff Student Forum	the Forum.	changes and the strategic direction of the department.
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Impact

Staff Student Forum Minutes are uploaded to the Student Rep Committee SharePoint. Registry and the Guild produce a School-wide/College-wide and University summary of Staff Student Forum issues arising from the minutes. When appropriate, a short annual report is completed by Reps and staff	Staff Student Forum achievements and School-wide concerns are shared with the Guild, students and wider School via established channels	Best practice and School-wide concerns raised via Staff Student Forum are shared as appropriate, via SEPs, SRSAB or with Guild. These inform School / College discussion and strategy.
Reps reflect on their achievements and how this contributes to personal development	Reps participate in the Guild's reward and recognition schemes for Reps, including accreditation, thank you events and awards	Reps are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their work to the School, through talks, panels or collaborative projects

College-level Representation

The Guild is responsible for the election of College Reps.	College Reps are provided with a key staff contact at College level	
College Reps receive suitable induction and training from the Guild, including an introduction to committees, briefing on key College issues and a chance to network with other College Reps.	College Induction provides reps with understanding of the College context, current priorities, and previous issues. Colleges and the Guild work together to ensure College Reps can gather feedback from students from across the College.	Colleges provide an informal opportunity for Reps to meet key staff and committee members. They are appropriately supported and mentored.

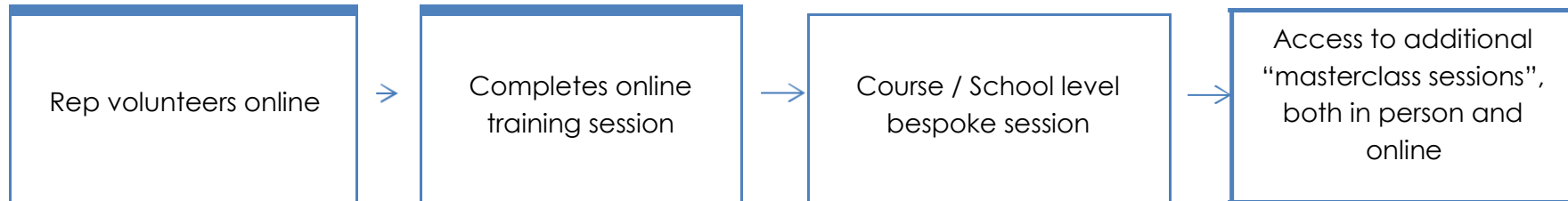
Committee papers are provided to College Reps at least 1 week in advance of the meeting	The Guild provides College Reps with a briefing on committee papers and arising issues	The College provides a local briefing ahead of the upcoming College committee
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Student Representation System Advisory Board (SRSAB)

This section outlines responsibilities for the Student Representation System at institutional level:

Baseline Expectations	Examples of Good Practice	Examples of Excellent Practice
SRSAB monitors the effectiveness and operation of the SRS, with membership from Colleges, College Reps, Professional Services and the Guild of Students. SRSAB is co-chaired by the Guild's Education Officer and University Director of Student Engagement	College Reps, the Guild and the University co-create SRSAB agenda (particularly on issues of Student Engagement and Representation).	College Reps / the Guild co-chair relevant SRSAB Task & Finish Groups.
SRSAB will agree alternative methods to the Rep System and record the Staff Student Forum in place across the University.	Evaluate the effectiveness of alternative methods of representation.	Effective practice for standard and alternative methods of representation will be shared throughout the University.
SRSAB reports to Student Academic Engagement Committee	A Guild / UoB reflective report is provided annually, leading to informed comment and action for the following year	The University and Guild commit to promoting the core principles of the Rep System across all areas of teaching and learning.
SRSAB receives the Guild's Student Voice Report, which identifies key priorities for the year. The Guild and University agree to work together to progress these priorities.	The University provides regular progress on the key Student Voice Report priorities for the academic year.	SRSAB sponsors working groups or projects related to the Report recommendations. This work is jointly led by students and staff.
SRSAB supports at least one Staff Forum for staff involved in the Rep System,	SRSAB provides staff with regular updates on SRS activity and events,	SRSAB encourages University staff to meet regularly with Guild staff to work

covering updates and key information	and an opportunity to provide feedback about the SRS, discuss implementation issues that Schools and Colleges face with regard to the SRS, and to share effective practice.	through the SRS toolkit
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- "How to be a rep" – basic roles and responsibilities
- Delivered via Canvas
- Rep officially on system after completion
- Details then passed to SEO / SLC

- Co-delivered by SEO / SLC and Guild of Students
- In person session, bringing together reps from across programme / school
- Cover local issues such as survey data, SEP, key staff contacts

- Delivered by Guild, with key inputs from partners as necessary
- Covering skills, knowledge, policy and leadership
- In addition, we will support community building sessions with all levels of rep
- Reps to accrue points towards accreditation