Your Voice
Only Louder

Student Representation System

Over-subscription recruitment process

Rationale

For the 23/24 academic year, we have been set targets for the numbers of reps that we can recruit. This year, we are aiming to recruit a total of 1,600 reps across the university and in all the available roles. Due to these targets, we have taken some time to consider the impact that this may have on colleges and courses. To alleviate this impact, we are setting caps on the amount of reps each college/course can recruit.

If you are unaware of your cap, please reach out to the relevant Student Experience Officer for more details. Alternatively, you can reach out to us via **studentreps@guild.bham.ac.uk** to speak to your representation coordinator.

We are adding caps to the system to ensure that parts of the university aren't over-recruited. This will allow us to ensure that all colleges in the university are proportionally represented. It also allows us to alleviate the stress of having a rep cohort which is too large to efficiently manage.

In the case of over-subscription, it is important that we outline and plan a fair way for students to become reps based on an application. We want to be able to determine how we can find the most appropriate reps for a student cohort.

The over-subscription process will only be used when a cohort is at risk of being over-subscribed or is already.

In the event of an over-subscription taking place, we have written a plan to support the relevant parties in accommodating applications when the volume of applications approaches or crosses the cap threshold.

During the application process, we are looking for students to answer these questions (or similar ones) in no more than 50 words each. We have opted for shorter answers and more questions because it gives us a better indication on who is applying, what their skills and abilities are and how these will support the student cohort. These questions will be completed by all students at the application process so that we can prepare in the event of oversubscription rather than reacting to it after it has happened.

We will only review answers to these questions in the event that a course/school/college is approaching their cap by 10%. If the cap is not reached (or close to being reached) we will not review their answers and as a result, all applicants will be considered successful candidates (unless they are applying for an elected role. In this case they will need to wait for the election to take place before assuming their position.)

Process

Once the reps team and student experience officers have identified the over-subscription, the process will begin. This process is detailed below.

From the 2023/24 academic year, we plan on asking students to submit a 100-150 word written answer to a number of limited questions which will give us a better oversight of who is looking to take on the role of a rep. The questions that we are looking to ask include but arse not limited to:

- Can you give us an example of what makes a good rep?
- What experience do you have that is relatable to this role?
- How will you encourage students to engage with you as a rep?

In the event that we do need to review the applications, the relevant student representation coordinator will work with the college SEO's and discuss a plan on how to go through the applications effectively. Once this discussion has taken place, the parties will then collate the answers ready for review.

The Reps team will only begin reviewing the situation in the event that a college is approaching their cap by 10%. This cap has been discussed with the relevant college SEO's and agreed by the Student Representation Team. When the amount of applications come close to reaching the cap, either party can open a conversation about what to do. This is where the application process will begin

This discussion will also aim to understand where the over-recruitment is coming from so that we can pinpoint exactly which applications need to be reviewed and how we can monitor and manage it in the short term.

There are times where a college may request to close the application process due to an overwhelming amount of applications that are coming in. When this happens, the Guild will refer the college to the list of caps that have been set and offer guidance as to what we can and will do when the college gets closer to their relevant cap. As well as the cap guidance, any decision to close the voluntary application process to any part of the university will be made by the Senior Representation Coordinator.

If the decision is made to keep the application process open and to keep the applications coming in, the Guild will continue to work with the relevant parties to make the process more manageable. The Guild will also keep an oversight on the situation to ensure that it doesn't become unmanageable.

If a college finds itself in a position where they are over-subscribed in any part of their institution, their assigned Representation Coordinator will work with the SEOs to determine a fair and manageable way to read the applications and decide on the successful applicants.

This process will start with an initial conversation which aims to determine where the over-subscription has come from. This may be from a single course or school. Once this has been determined, the Representation Coordinator and the SEOs will work together by dividing up the applications, taking some time to choose the most appropriate candidates from their division of applications before meeting again to agree on their new student reps. Once this has been decided, emails will be sent out to all candidates to inform them of the news.

Example of sharing the news:

Offering the role

"Dear Student,

Thank you for your application of 'course rep' for the 2023/24 academic year.

After taking some time to review applications, we are pleased to inform you that we would like to offer you the role conditional to you completing our training.

We will be in touch in due course to provide you with access to training via our canvas site.

Congratulations, and we wish you the very best in your role.

Kind Regards,

Staff Member"

Not offering the role

"Dear Student,

Thank you for your application of 'course rep' for the 2023/24 academic year.

After taking some time to review applications, unfortunately, we are unable to offer you the role. Due to high interest from your cohort, your course was over-subscribed for rep applications. Therefore, we had to select a number of students from the application pool. This is never an easy task and we're sorry that it didn't work out this time. We hope to see another application from you in the next academic year.

Please be aware that there are lots of other opportunities to be involved with the Guild of Students and represent your cohort. The education committee is a fantastic way to get involved. The Guild also has 300 student groups, societies and associations which are always looking for new members!

Please email **studentreps@guild.bham.ac.uk** if you'd like to discuss other ways to get involved with the representation system.

Thank you very much for taking the time to apply and for showing interest in representing your cohort. Please don't forget that you are encouraged to work with your reps to support change at UoB throughout the academic year.

If you have any questions related to this decision, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

We wish you all the best in your studies.

Kind Regards,

Staff Member"

What makes a good answer?

It's important to know that all answers to the question required will be different. All of them will be strong in their own way but we must recognise the ones that stand out from the rest to ensure that we are recruiting the right people for the role.

A good answer could contain:

- Confidence
  - o Do they sound confident in their answer? Does it seem like they know what they're talking about and that they are keen to help and support by taking on this role as a student rep.
- Consistency
  - o Is their answer in line with the relevant role description? Have they taken time to study this and apply It to their answer?
  - o Do they take the time to keep their answer to the point or do they go off on a tangent?
- Potential name-dropping of student-wide issues
  - o Since the answer is only a maximum of 150-words, we don't expect applicants to go into key details about what they will do and how they will do it. However, if they can name-drop issues that students at UoB might be facing, this suggests that they are in-touch with their cohort and are aware of what they need.
- Positive phrases and language
  - o As with any application, candidates are expected to use positive phrases and language to demonstrate their knowledge and passion for the role. This part goes in hand with 'confidence' and should be seen as a demonstration of understanding and passion.

As mentioned previously, every answer to this question will be different. We encourage those reviewing these answers to use their own digression and knowledge when reviewing.

How to score an answer

	Can you give us an example of what makes a good rep?	What experience do you have that relates to this role?	How will you encourage students to engage with their reps?
Satisfactory	Refers to but makes no detail to at least one transferrable skill or the following: - Communication - Taking notes - Tracking and keeping data No Information Scores: 1	Refers to but makes no detail to at least one of the following: - Previous roles - Relatable experience - Transferrable skills No information Scores: 1	Refers to but makes no detail to at least one of the following: - Events, surveys, socials - Skills - Communication - Notes - Social media No Information Scores: 1
Good	Refers to at least one transferrable skill or the following: - Communication - Taking notes - Tracking and keeping data Limited information Scores: 2	Refers to at least one of the following: - Previous roles - Relatable experience - Transferrable skills Limited information Scores: 2	Refers to at least one of the following: - Events, surveys, socials - Skills - Communication - Notes - Social media Limited information Scores: 2
Better	Refers to at least one transferrable skill or the following: - Communication - Taking notes - Tracking and keeping data Gives detail about how this benefits the role Scores: 3	Refers to at least one of the following: - Previous roles - Relatable experience - Transferrable skills Gives details about how this benefits them Scores: 3	Refers to at least one of the following: - Events, surveys, socials - Skills - Communication - Notes - Social media Gives details about how this will benefit the role Scores: 3

Best	Refers to at least one transferrable skill or the following: - Communication - Taking notes - Tracking and keeping data Gives detail about how this benefits the role and students Scores: 4	Refers to at least one of the following: - Previous roles - Relatable experience - Transferrable skills Gives detail about how this benefits them and supports them with the role Scores: 4	Refers to at least one of the following: - Events, surveys, socials - Skills - Communication - Notes - Social media Gives details about how this will benefit the role and encourage engagement Scores: 4

We understand that some students may list different skills and ideas that are also relevant to the above questions so we ask that you use appropriate discretion when scoring a question to allow for individuality.

Context:

4 – Higher than standards

3 – Competent

2 – Some Knowledge

1 – Little or no evidence

Using the scoring system, we then look at the responses for what we are 'looking for' in the answer.

For example, if the question asks "We have seen your application; please can you tell us about your previous experience in relation to this role and what attracts you to this role?"

In this event, we are 'looking for' the following:

- Relevant experience
- Understanding of the role
- Understanding of the environment of UoB
- Have they conducted research
- Values

Once the answer has been reviewed, a score will be determined based off of a consultation with the members who are reviewing the applications.

Each question response will be scored on the 1-4 scale. Once all applications have been reviewed, the team will collate the scores and appoint the highest scoring candidates.

As mentioned previously, the reps team from the Guild will be available to work with the relevant parties to support this process. Please reach out to your representation coordinator for support and guidance via the rep email.

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