

Academic Student Representation Policy

1. Overview

- 1.1 The University of Southampton (the University) and the University of Southampton Students' Students' Union (Students' Union) are committed to working in partnership to provide effective structures for student feedback and representation.
- 1.2 This is articulated in this Academic Student Representation Policy (ASRP). Key to the ASRP is the Academic Student Representation System (ASRS), which provides a framework in which students can have a direct input towards decisions regarding their academic programmes, which is managed by the Students' Union.
- 1.3 The ASRS applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students registered and studying in the UK. Postgraduate research students are represented separately through the Students' Union's Postgraduate Committee and by their SUSU Postgraduate Research Representative.

2. Principles

- 2.1 Every student at every level of every programme will have access to representation, and as a result, will be able to influence their student learning experience through their representatives.
- 2.2 Taught students are represented through the ASRS. Postgraduate research students are represented through the Students' Union's Postgraduate Committee and by their SUSU Postgraduate Research Representative.
- 2.3 The ASRP will be jointly owned by the University and Students' Union, who will work in partnership to ensure the effectiveness of the System, as outlined in this document.
- 2.4 The Students' Union (through the ASRS) will work with Education leaders in the University (including the University's VP (Education), Associate Deans (Education), Deputy Heads of School (Education) and Faculty Academic Registrars) to implement the ASRP.

3. Policy

- 3.1 The Students' Union's Vice-President Education will have sole responsibility and signoff for arranging the election and training of student representatives, as well as providing support and monitoring their effectiveness. Any student wishing to take on a role as representative must be a full member of the Students' Union (as defined in Rule 1 of the Students' Union Articles of Association and Rules) who is still engaged in taught study.
- 3.2 The University will provide opportunities for representatives to have input into discussion and to present student feedback in appropriate forums, both formal and informal.
- 3.3 Both the Students' Union and the University are committed to feeding back information regarding discussions, actions, and decisions from meetings to the wider student body. Wherever possible, this feedback should be delivered in partnership with the relevant academic representative[s].
- 3.4 Should there be any changes to the staffing of roles relevant to the ASRS (e.g. Deputy Heads of School (Education), Associate Deans (Education) and Faculty Academic Registrars) the Students' Union VP Education and the relevant Faculty Officer(s) will be informed.

- 3.5 Informal concerns about the engagement and attendance of Academic Representatives at relevant meetings should be reported to the Students' Union's Representation Team (representation@susu.org), where they will then be handled in-line with the Students' Union's rules and by-laws. Formal concerns about the conduct of student representatives acting in their representative role should be sent to the Chair of the Students' Union Disciplinary Committee where they will be considered through Rule 9 (Disciplinary Procedure) of the Articles of Association and Rules of the Students' Union. This does not preclude use of the University's Student Discipline Regulations.
- 3.6 Where the University undertakes provision of education in collaboration with a partner, arrangements for student representation may vary from this policy for various cultural and political reasons. Faculties involved in collaborative provision will provide assurance to the University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) that arrangements for soliciting and engaging with student feedback are in place, and that these arrangements are appropriately linked into processes in the Faculties. The details of those arrangements are set out in the relevant Memoranda of Agreement.
- 3.7 Further guidance on student representation is available from Students' Union via the Representation Team contactable at representation@susu.org, and/or the University via the Quality Standards and Accreditation Team, contactable at qsa@soton.ac.uk.
- 3.8 For more information regarding the role and responsibilities of the student representatives please see the Course Rep Handbook and Opportunity Profiles on the Students' Union [website](#), within the [Education](#) tab.

4. Staff Student Liaison Committee

- 4.1 Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLC) are a central pillar of our representation system. They will be conducted at School level, or at a level below that of Schools for appropriate groupings of disciplines. The School President and the Deputy Head of School (Education) will consider whether separate SSLCs should be held for undergraduate and postgraduate taught students. There will be (at a minimum) three formal Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings (SSLC) each year. In addition, an informal SSLC meeting as early as possible in the autumn term will be held to allow participants to meet each other and establish working relationships. Dates for these meetings will be agreed jointly between the appropriate Academic Representative and appropriate staff member.
- 4.2 The full Terms of Reference and Membership of SSLCs can be found in appendix 1 of this policy.
- 4.3 SSLCs will be co-chaired by the relevant staff member and relevant student representative (usually the School or Departmental President). SSLCs should be free to discuss any topics relating to learning, teaching and the student experience. These may include, but are not limited to, issues such as:
 - quality of programmes and modules overall;
 - external examiner reports (these should always be discussed at the appropriate meeting of the SSLC);
 - learning and teaching methods;
 - assessment methods;
 - feedback on assessed work;
 - the provision of study skills support, general student support and / or supervision;
 - learning resources, facilities, and study space;
 - campaigns and issues raised by the Students' Union's Education Zone.

- 4.4 SSLCs must be seen as a safe space for ideas and issues to be discussed broadly, and must therefore not engage in discussion of:
- Individual staff members;
 - Individual students;
 - Personal complaints/grievances/appeals.
- 4.5 Serious issues relating to individuals should be discussed personally between the relevant representative and staff member. In some instances, this may require issues to be escalated to Faculty or University level, specifically when unresolved issues are about individuals involved in the discussions. Students are encouraged to use the University's Regulations Governing Student Complaints when appropriate.
- 4.6 University staff will work with the relevant student representatives to ensure that suitable support is provided to help with the running and organising of meetings. This support will include (but is not limited to):
- Providing a member of staff to take and circulate a synopsis of the meeting to all students and staff
 - Facilitating room booking on behalf of students
 - Ensuring that the relevant members of academic staff attend the SSLC
 - Making available copies of agendas and minutes for committee members
- 4.7 All minutes (or other records) of SSLC meetings and other meetings involving student representatives should be forwarded to the Students' Union Representation Team (representation@susu.org) and the relevant Faculty Officer by the staff member responsible for recording the meeting.
- 4.8 The last SSLC of the year in the summer term will review SSLC activity for the year, as well as considering the usual agenda items. This review, which will answer the prescribed questions set below, will be sent to the Students' Union's Representation Team (representation@susu.org) and to the relevant School Programmes Committee.
- What was your SSLC able to achieve this year?
 - What worked well at your SSLC?
 - What will you do differently next year at your SSLC?
 - What could SUSU do to further support Academic Representation at Southampton?

5. Representation in Organisation and Governance

- 5.1 The University's Charter and Ordinances state specific roles for members of the Students' Union in the University's Governance arrangements. These include:
- University Council (The President of the Union of Students)
 - University Senate (Five registered full-time students of the University)
- 5.2 Student representatives also sit on various Committees of Senate, including Academic Quality and Standards Committee, Education Committee, and the Doctoral College Board, as dictated within the Terms of Reference for each Committee.

6. Student Representation in Quality Assurance

- 6.1 Student representatives are also called on to support the University's Academic Quality Assurance mechanisms. Student representatives are invited to act as panel members for Programme Validations and Periodic Reviews of both taught and research programmes.
- 6.2 Student engagement in Quality Assurance processes is also requested through the informal and formal sharing of views on particular elements of the University's Quality Assurance framework, for example in the programme design process and in the drafting of new policy.

7. Reporting and Evaluation

- 7.1 Schools will report annually on the effectiveness and operation of this policy to Academic Quality and Standards Committee through the Annual Quality Reporting process.

Document Information	
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Appendix 1: Staff-Student Liaison Committees

Terms of Reference

To establish effective communication between students and academic staff.

To consider issues which would enhance the student experience, including, but not limited to:

- quality of programmes and modules overall
- external examiner reports (these should always be discussed at the appropriate meeting of the SSLC)
- learning and teaching methods
- assessment methods
- feedback on assessed work
- the provision of study skills support, general student support and / or supervision
- learning resources, facilities, and study space
- campaigns and issues raised by the Students' Union's Education Zone

To consider data collected from students that could impact on the shape of the education experience, including, but not limited to:

- National Student Survey data
- PTES data
- Module Evaluation data (as permitted according to University policy)
- External Examiner reports
- Any surveys carried out in-house (e.g. Southampton Student Survey)

To refer issues to relevant personnel when appropriate.

To monitor response to student issues raised.

To consider issues relating to health and safety, reporting to the Faculty Health and Safety Committee where necessary.

To review SSLC activity for the year (last SSLC meeting of the year in the Summer Term) as per the guidance found in the Academic student Representation Policy.

To report to the School Programmes Committee and any of its sub-committees as necessary.

Membership

Chair: SUSU School President (or Department President, where appropriate) Academic Lead: Staff Student Liaison	
Academic Representatives: Module Leads Learning Groups Leads Programme Leads	
Student Representatives: SUSU School President (or Department President, where appropriate) SUSU Course Representatives	
Faculty Academic Registrar	
Professional Services Representatives: Library iSolutions	
Ex-officio: Associate Dean (Education)	
Secretary	

Frequency and Timing

As a minimum, these meetings take place 3 times per year.

Reporting Requirements

Minutes of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee will be submitted to the School Programme Committee for approval.

Minutes of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee will be submitted to the Faculty Education Committee for information.

Minutes of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee will be submitted to the SUSU Representation Team (representation@susu.org) for information.