

Rep Engagement and Accountability Policy UWS Union

Welcome to your role as a Student Representative! This policy is designed to help you understand your responsibilities and the support available to you. As a Rep, you play a crucial part in building a strong community and raising the voice of students across our university.

Your Role as a Rep

As a Student Representative, your main duties are to:

1. Gather feedback from your fellow students
2. Share this feedback with staff at relevant meetings
3. Propose solutions to any issues raised
4. Work together with staff to improve your course

We believe in your ability to fulfil this role to the best of your ability, and the Students' Union is always here to support you along the way.

Engagement Expectations

We want you to succeed in your role and make the most of this opportunity, there are 2 key points of engagement you must prioritise, these are:

- Completing Rep Training Part 1, this is considered compulsory.
- Engaging with your relevant meeting (detailed below under 'meetings').

Sometimes, we know things come up and you might not have the time to engage with the rep role as you'd hoped. Sometimes staff or students may highlight where a rep isn't fully engaging with their responsibilities, and if that happens we've set up a supportive process, this includes:

1. The Students' Union reaching out to provide individual support and guidance.
2. If engagement issues continue, we'll have another friendly chat to make sure you're clear on your duties and provide any additional support agreed.

We have provided a flowchart below to show how this process will be implemented. If you are unable to fulfil the Rep role following the process outlined in the flowchart, we will ask you to step down from the role to allow another student to take up the opportunity.

Meetings

An important part of your role is attending relevant meetings. The following meetings are usually held once per term:

Course Reps attend:

- Student Staff Liaison Group (SSLG)

Division Reps attend:

- Division Programme Board
- Student Partnership Forum

School Officers attend:

- School Board
- Academic Quality Committee

Post Graduate Research (PGR) Reps participate in the following meetings depending on the role they were elected to:

- Divisional Programme Board
- Doctoral College Board
- Research and Innovation Committee
- Senate

All Reps are invited to attend Student Council – 2 per Term

If a meeting is scheduled for a time you have class, please ask your Programme Leader or Module Coordinator if you can have time out of class to attend the meeting. If you can't make a meeting for any reason however, please don't worry! Just send your apologies along with any student feedback you've collected. This way, your cohort's voice can still be heard.

Professionalism in Your Representative Role

As a Student Representative, you're a bridge between your peers and the university staff. When discussing issues with fellow students:

- Maintain a respectful and constructive tone, even when addressing challenging topics.
- Listen actively and empathetically to understand different perspectives.
- Focus on finding solutions rather than just highlighting problems.
- Use appropriate language and avoid personal criticisms.
- Be mindful of the time and place for these discussions, ensuring they don't disrupt classes or other activities.

Your professional approach sets the tone for productive conversations and positive change. By communicating thoughtfully and respectfully, using the ABCD of effective feedback you're not only representing your peers effectively but also developing valuable skills for your future career.

Supporting Your Fellow Students with Care and Compassion

As a Student Representative, you may sometimes find yourself in a position where students share sensitive information with you, this may be about their home life, finances, or employment for example. This is a testament to the trust your peers place in you, and we're here to help you navigate these situations with care.

It's important to note that as a Student Representative it is not your role to support individual students through personal challenges, however you should signpost those students to the most appropriate source of support. This is likely to be either signposting to the Student Hub or the Student Union where they can receive full support from the team.

There are still considerations however when handling sensitive information:

- Treat every shared story with respect and confidentiality. Your classmates are trusting you with their experiences.
- Remember that each student's story is their own. Don't assume others know about their situation.
- Always ask for permission before sharing someone's information. Your peers' trust is valuable!
- If you're worried about a student's safety, it's okay to reach out to the appropriate support services. Your concern could make a real difference.

Feeling unsure about how to handle sensitive information? That's completely normal! We encourage you to:

1. Clarify with the student what they're comfortable with you sharing.
2. Reach out to us at the Students' Union for guidance, we're always here to support you.

Remember, by handling these situations with care, you're playing a crucial role in creating a supportive and trustworthy community for all students. Your commitment to this is truly appreciated!

Remember, the Students' Union is always here to support you. We're committed to helping you develop your skills, provide mentorship, and ensure you have a positive experience as a Student Representative.

By working together, we can create positive change and enhance the university experience for all students. Thank you for taking on this important role and contributing to our university community!

Flow chart

