



UWS Staff Guidance for Electing, Reporting and Supporting Student Representatives

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Introduction for AY 2025-26

For academic session 2025-26 Course Reps will be elected in person in class, feedback from both students and staff indicate this is the preferred mechanism for electing Course based Representatives.

Detailed in this document are guidance and instructions for completing the Student Rep Election process and how to report rep details to your School Enhancement Developer (SED), it also provides an overview of the UWS Representation Structure which you may find useful when discussing the Rep role with your students.

Your SED is responsible for ensuring Course Rep information is reported to the Student Union Rep Team who will enrol elected Reps to the Student Rep Teams Group so they can access training immediately upon starting their role,

- **please ensure all rep names are submitted to your SED no later than Friday 19th of September* for Term 1 and by Friday 30th January (date TBC) for Term 2** or we cannot guarantee that your reps will be able to complete training before the first SSLGs (Staff Student Liaison Groups).

*For courses which start later, names should be given to your SED within the first 2 weeks of teaching starting, or as soon as possible after this.

Representation Structure

Our representation systems aim to make sure that students are partners in the quality enhancement work at the university. The Students' Union is here to work with reps and UWS to facilitate this process.

UWS staff are vital partners in this work as they inform students about the representation systems, encourage students to stand as reps, and work together with students at School Boards, Divisional Boards, and SSLGs.

At all levels, student reps represent students' interests. While Sabbatical Officers represent students in all areas of their student experience, School Officers, Divisional Reps, and Course Reps do not. These volunteer reps focus on students' academic interests and are concerned exclusively with the learning experience of the students on their course.

To fully support Reps in their role, during Student Council 2024-25, reps passed the Student Rep Engagement and Accountability Policy (see appendix 1). This outlines the expectations of reps in undertaking their role which includes the Student Union reaching out to any rep who has not completed training or who does not engage with their SSLG, or other relevant meetings to provide support and guidance. Should you have any concerns about a rep not undertaking their duties, please contact a member of the Student Union Rep team who will reach out to the rep as detailed in the accompanying flowchart.

What kind of reps are there at UWS?

There are four levels of student representation at UWS. These levels are designed to slot into the committee structure of UWS.

Course Representatives

Course reps are student representatives who represent a course, campus, and year of study. They attend Staff-Student Liaison Groups (SSLGs).

It is advised there should be roughly a 1:25 ratio of course reps to students – i.e., if there is a 1st year cohort of 150 students, there would ideally be 6 course reps to ensure that reps are not overburdened.

Divisional Representatives

Divisional Reps attend Divisional Board meetings, and work together with the Course Reps in their divisions to bring pertinent information to the meetings.

While the Student Union review the role of Divisional Reps, this year Course Reps will be encouraged to consider also participating in their relevant Divisional Programme Board during and after Rep Training, all reps will also be informed of this opportunity via the Rep Teams Group. This process will be managed by the Students' Union in partnership with SED's, however should staff identify a Rep who may wish to sit on their relevant Divisional Programme Board, please inform your SED as soon as practicable in order that they receive the relevant meeting information.

School Officers

Two students per school, elected in March as volunteers who attend School Boards and represent students at a school level.

BCI: *Vacant x2*

CEPS: Obashola Obisesan *Vacant x 1*

ESS: *Vacant x 2*

HLS: *Vacant x2*

Sabbatical Officers

Three students, elected in March to work full time and paid to represent students for a year. They attend University level committees and working groups including Court and Senate.

President: Omowaleola Adebayo

VP Education: Timiebi Oyinpere

VP Welfare and Wellbeing: Shahan Nazir

How to elect Course Reps

Election of all Course Reps should take place in class within the first 2 weeks of teaching to ensure Reps can be invited to Rep Training. An invitation to stand for Course Rep should be sent out in advance of the election itself advising of the purpose of a Rep and where and when the Election will take place. This should take place in a core module class so that a majority of the cohort are present. *For courses with later start dates, this process should be completed as soon as possible.*

Voting in Rep elections can take place via the follow means:

- Secret ballot election – to hold a secret ballot/vote, students should place the names of the nominated students on a piece of paper and place this in a sealed box, the names are counted and those with the highest number of votes are elected. If there are multiple positions students may write down multiple names.

- Hands up – Students are simply asked to raise their hands when their preferred candidate is called those with the highest number of votes are elected.
- If the vote is tied the cohort should decide whether they would like reps to share the role or go to a coin toss.

If a position is uncontested – Majority consent for the student(s) becoming a rep should still be sought using one of the above methods to ensure that the cohort are aware of who represents them, are happy with the choice, and to empower the rep to actually represent those students.

If staff require any advice or assistance in encouraging students to stand or holding elections, please contact a member of the Union Rep Team.

How to Encourage Students to Stand

Being a Rep at UWS is a fantastic opportunity for students but we know that they might not always see that straight away so here are six benefits of being a rep to share with your students:

1. Reps get to **help their course mates** by collecting their opinions, sharing these in meetings with staff, and working together with staff to improve their courses.
2. Reps get to **become part of a team**. The reps get to meet each other throughout the year at training and support sessions and often create a great community. They also have the opportunity to work with the student presidents!
3. Reps get to **see how the university works** through their work in partnership with staff and their membership of Student Council.
4. Reps get to **meet senior management** at Student Council which all reps are members of. Each meeting begins with Senior Management Question Time where reps can ask questions of UWS Senior Management – even the principal attends at least once a year!
5. Reps get **voting rights to decide Student Union policy**. As part of their membership of Student Council, reps vote on student union policy which sets the direction of the Student Union for the next four years!
6. Reps get to **develop their skills**. Full training and support are provided for reps, gathering feedback, presenting this information in a meeting, and working together to find solutions are all skills which are applicable to almost any job.

You can also provide the text below direct to students via email or an Aula post:

Consider becoming a Course Rep

Being a Rep is a great experience, you'll get an insight into the inner workings of UWS and help enhance the learning and teaching.

The purpose of a rep can be split into four main points:

- *To improve the student learning experience in partnership with UWS and the Students Union*
- *To represent classmates' views and opinions in relation to learning and teaching on the course*
- *To provide feedback, both positive and negative, to staff*
- *To act as a communication channel between students and staff*

As a Course Rep, you will undertake the following tasks:

- *Gather student opinion*
- *Provide feedback to staff and students*

- *Attend meetings of the Staff-Student Liaison Groups (SSLGs) for your course*
- *Attend student council which sets Student Union policy*
- *Present student views at meetings*
- *Develop solutions to issues*
- *Pass issues on to the students' association*

The benefits of being a Course Rep are:

Being a Course Rep can set you ahead of colleagues doing similar courses when it comes to employment as you'll be able to showcase where your skills came from and how they've developed! You'll gain skills such as:

- *Communication*
- *Time management*
- *Research*
- *Presentation*
- *Problem solving*
- *You can participate in University level Committee's and group's*

Time Commitment

A course rep must attend one SSLG per term, a minimum of 1 of 4 student council meetings across the year, and complete rep training if they have not completed this in a previous year, these activities should not take more than 10 hours per month. The Student Union also offer plenty of additional optional opportunities to socialise with other reps and further develop skills throughout the year.

Interested in being a Rep for the Course:

If you'd like to be a rep for this course, you just need to let your Programme Leader know who will then pass your details over to the Student Union. You'll then be provided with all the information, training and support you'll need to fulfil the role!

Reporting Student Rep details to your School Enhancement Developer (SED)

Once the Rep is elected, staff should send the Reps details to their SED or the named nominee (see below) as soon as possible noting the following:

- ***Only Programme Leaders/Year Leads should provide Course Rep details to the SED.***
- ***Each SED has full access to the Rep Teams Group to ensure any errors or issues can be quickly addressed***

When contacting your SED, please ensure you **confirm the following details** in your communication:

- Rep Name
- Rep Banner ID – this is critical for adding the correct student to the Rep Teams Group
- Programme Title
- Year of Study
- Campus
- If they are a returning rep (carried on from previous academic year)

Once this information is received by your SED, they will inform the Student Union Rep Team who will add the Rep to the Rep Teams Group and the central Student Rep Database can be produced.

- **Contact Details for School Enhancement Developers or Nominee**

School of Health and Life Sciences – Liz Richmond – Elizabeth.Richmond@uws.ac.uk

School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Science – Michelle Taylor - michelle.taylor@uws.ac.uk

School of Business and Enterprise – Fiona Gibson-Green – Fiona.Gibson-Green@uws.ac.uk

School of Education and Social Science – Sarah Black – sarah.black@uws.ac.uk

Supporting reps to engage their cohorts/GDPR

In order to support Reps to engage with their cohorts, the Student Union has a 'contact your cohort' function on the Union Website which reps have access to and is explained during Rep Training, however Programme Leaders should ensure Reps have access to the list of students they represent within their cohort, this should include the student names and e-mails.

We have received confirmation from the UWS Legal Team that sharing this information does not breach GDPR.

Methods all Reps can use to communicate with their cohort and each other may include Email, WhatsApp, MS Teams Group, Aula Space etc. Reps are informed of the purpose and appropriate use of these platforms during Rep Training, including consideration to accessibility and inclusivity.

Running Staff-Student Liaison Groups (SSLG)

SSLG's are the main space in which staff and students meet and work in partnership for positive change. These meetings may be the first time that students have come across formal agendas and chairing meetings. The Union will provide support for this activity through student rep training and encourage staff to do the same.

To make SSLGs welcoming for Course Reps, we recommend that Reps always outnumber staff and that Reps chair or co-chair meetings, the Student Union can provide chair training upon request for reps who wish to chair their SSLG.

We recommend that SSLG dates are set before term starts to enable both staff and students to keep dates free, and that dates don't clash with assessments or other compulsory learning and teaching activities such as classes. It is expected however that Course Reps will have authorised absence from a class or lecture to attend an SSLG, should they wish to do so.

When communicating with Course reps about SSLGs, we recommend communicating clearly and not assuming any knowledge. Reps will be told about SSLGs during training, but acronyms can be confusing; it is best to be explicit in communications. For example:

"Our first meeting between staff and Course Reps for this term (Staff-Student Liaison Group or SSLG) is coming up on [date], [time] and you can join the meeting here: [link] / [room number, campus] in person. This is where you bring the feedback you have collected from your classmates and work with staff to make things better at UWS. Remember, you can ask your lecturers for time to talk to your classmates and let them know that a meeting is coming up."

In preparation for SSLG's, the Chair or Secretary may wish to send a reminder email to Reps ensure attendance, this should also encourage Reps to 'Accept' or 'Reject' the meeting invitation.

To support everyone who participates in SSLG meetings, we have provided a 'Meetings Expectations' document (see appendix 2) which we encourage all staff and students to abide by. This document is shared with Reps via the Rep Teams Group and via training. Although this document is specifically for SSLG's, it can be used for Divisional Programme Board meetings and School Board meetings.

Student Rep Training, Development and Support

We'd appreciate if you would help to publicise training, as we know that trained reps are noticeably better at bringing feedback and participating in meetings.

Rep Training Part 1 – this is an online module accessible via the Student Rep Teams Site. This part of training is compulsory and any Rep who has not completed this training will be contacted by the Rep team to encourage completion (as per the Rep Engagement and Accountability Policy, see appendix 1).

Once Part 1 is complete, reps will be able to sign up to Rep Training Part 2 – this is held in person/live online as part of the Rep Training Conference scheduled for week commencing 29th September to 3rd October, with 'mop up' training from 6th October to 11th October (including two evening and one Saturday session)

We also provide additional 'mop up' training for reps who are elected later and online sessions available for those who are unable to attend campus. Details of Rep Training will be available here for all to view: <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/representation/resources/> and will be available on the Reps Teams Group for all Reps to sign up.

Reps also attend Student Council and we request that they are enabled to attend. Student Council is always from 13.30 to 15.30 and usually on Wednesday's. Dates for Student's Council are published on the Rep Teams Group, they are also available for all to view here: <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/representation/student-council/>

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Rep Team at the Student Union who will be happy to answer any questions or talk about any concerns or suggestions you have.

Diversity Monitoring

As part of Rep training, all reps are invited to complete a Diversity Monitoring Form (administered by our partners at SPARQS) this will enable us to capture the diversity of reps which will then feed into liberation campaigns and will form some of our future promotional material to address any under-representation of the student body.

Useful contacts

Student Union Rep Team

Sabina Lawrie – Student Voice Manager - sabina.lawrie@uws.ac.uk

Claire Lumsden – Student Representation and Training Co-ordinator - Claire.lumsden@uws.ac.uk
Nathan Price – Student Representation and Engagement Co-ordinator (London Campus) -
Nathan.price@uws.ac.uk

UWS School Enhancement Developers

School of Health and Life Sciences – Liz Richmond – Elizabeth.Richmond@uws.ac.uk

School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Science – Michelle Taylor -
michelle.taylor@uws.ac.uk

School of Business and Enterprise – Fiona Gibson-Green – Fiona.Gibson-Green@uws.ac.uk

School of Education and Social Science – Sarah Black – sarah.black@uws.ac.uk

Student Union Presidents:

President: Omowaleola Adebayo - unionpresident@uws.ac.uk

VP Education: Timiebi Aghogho Oyinpere - unionvpe@uws.ac.uk

VP Welfare and Wellbeing: Shahan Nazir - unionvpww@uws.ac.uk

Appendix 1 – 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 Co-ordinator 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:

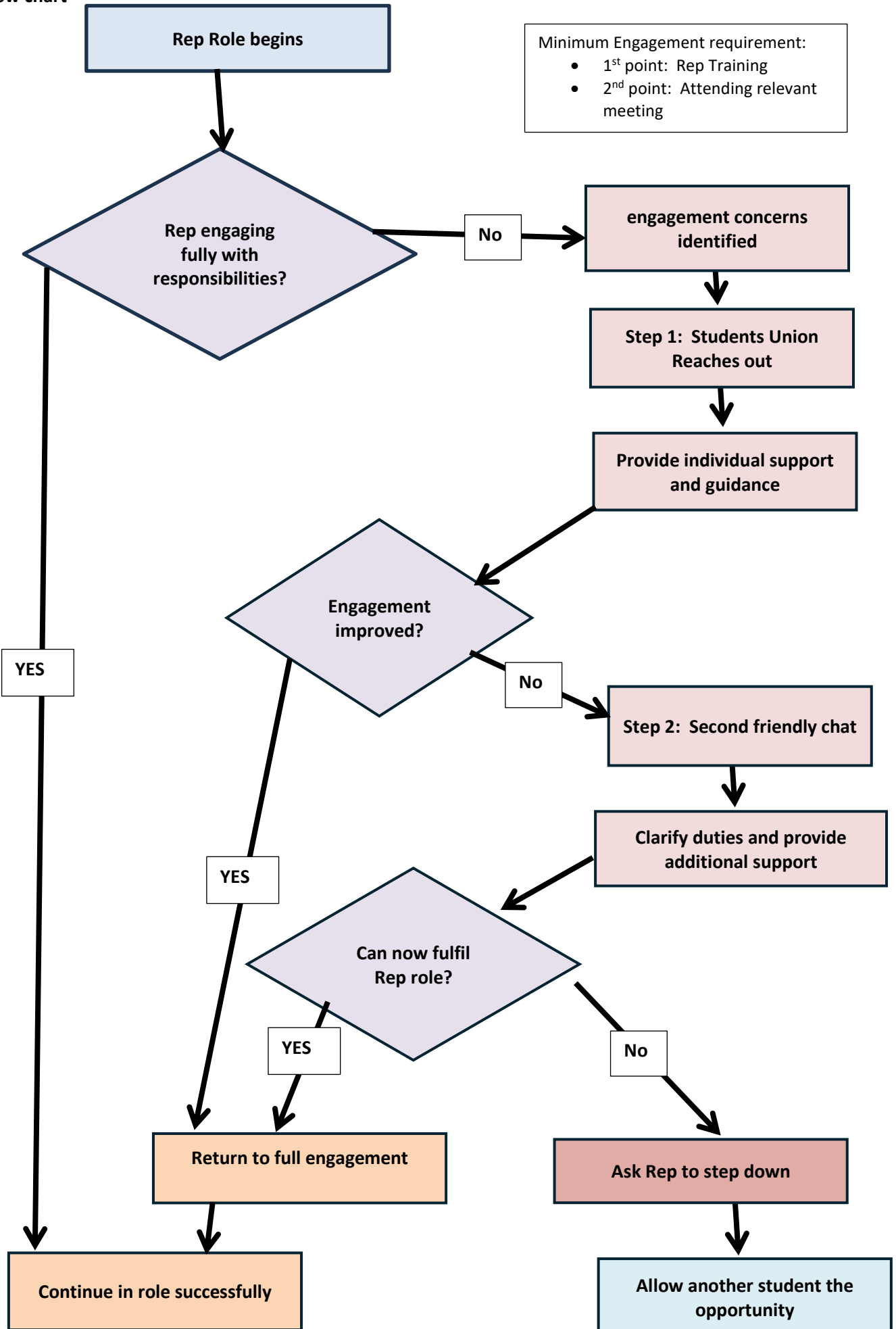
1. Clarify with the student what they're comfortable with you sharing.
2. Reach out to us at the Students' Union for guidance, we're always here to support you.

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



Appendix 2 – Student Staff Liaison Group Meeting Expectations

Student Staff meetings are an important forum for students and staff to discuss student feedback about what works well on the course and what could work better, including making recommendations for improvement and working in partnership to solve issues. Items discussed within Student Staff meetings should align with the [SPARQS Student Learning Experience Model](#)

This document is to support all those involved in meetings to have a shared understanding of expectations when attending in person and online meetings.

General Tips for Student-Staff Meetings:

- **Positive Attitude:** Approach meetings with a positive and collaborative mindset.
- **Be Mindful of Others:** Be aware of different communication styles and cultural backgrounds.
- **Respectful Disagreement:** It's okay to disagree with others, but do so respectfully and constructively.
- **End on a Positive Note:** Thank everyone for their time and contributions.

When discussing issues in meetings:

- Listen actively and empathetically to understand different perspectives.
- Focus on finding solutions rather than just highlighting problems.
- Maintain a respectful and constructive tone, even when addressing challenging topics.
- Use appropriate language, avoid personal criticisms and avoid naming staff, refer to the module or job title and how the student experience is affected.

Tips for engaging with meetings:

Before the Meeting:

- **Punctuality:** Respond to any diary invitations from the Chair and Secretary so they know who'll be attending. Arrive on time, or even a few minutes early, to show respect for everyone's time.
- **Preparation:** Review the agenda and any relevant materials in advance to contribute meaningfully. If you have feedback for the meeting, but can't attend, send your feedback to the chair via email. If you have questions about the agenda, email the Chair and Secretary to seek clarification.
- **Professionalism:** Be professional in meetings, this approach sets the tone for productive conversations and positive change. If your meeting is online, ensure the space you are in is comfortable, well-lit, quiet and free from background noise

During the Meeting:

- **Active Listening:** Pay attention to the speaker and show engagement by making eye contact (if in person) or using appropriate body language (if virtual).
- **Respectful Communication:** Speak clearly, avoid interrupting, and be mindful of your tone and language. Remember the '[ABCD of effective feedback](#)' when sharing student views and remember to keep information anonymised and confidential.
- **Stay Focused:** Avoid distractions like phones or side conversations, and keep the discussion on topic. *If using your phone to take notes, you should inform the Chair and all other meeting participants*
- **Follow the Agenda:** Stay aligned with the meeting's purpose and time constraints.
- **Share the Air:** Ensure everyone has a chance to speak and contribute their ideas.

- **Take Notes:** Note down important points, action items, and decisions made during the meeting.
- **Ask Questions:** If something is unclear, ask for clarification at the appropriate time.

After the Meeting:

- **Action Items:** Follow up on any tasks or responsibilities assigned to you.
- **Share Meeting Minutes:** Share meeting minutes or summaries with all attendees. It may also be useful for minutes to be posted on Course VLE sites, or emailed directly to students depending on what has been discussed and actions to be taken.