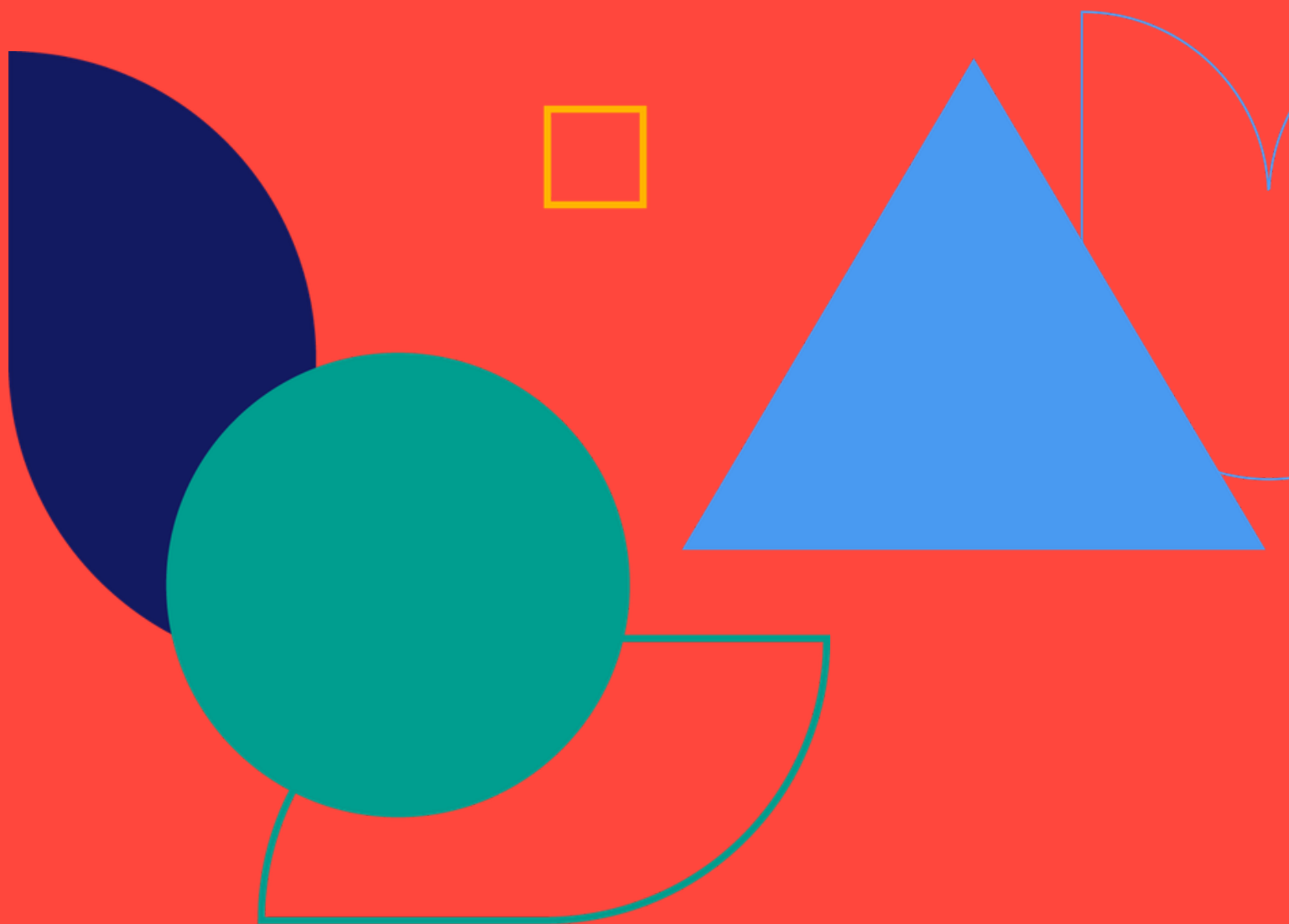
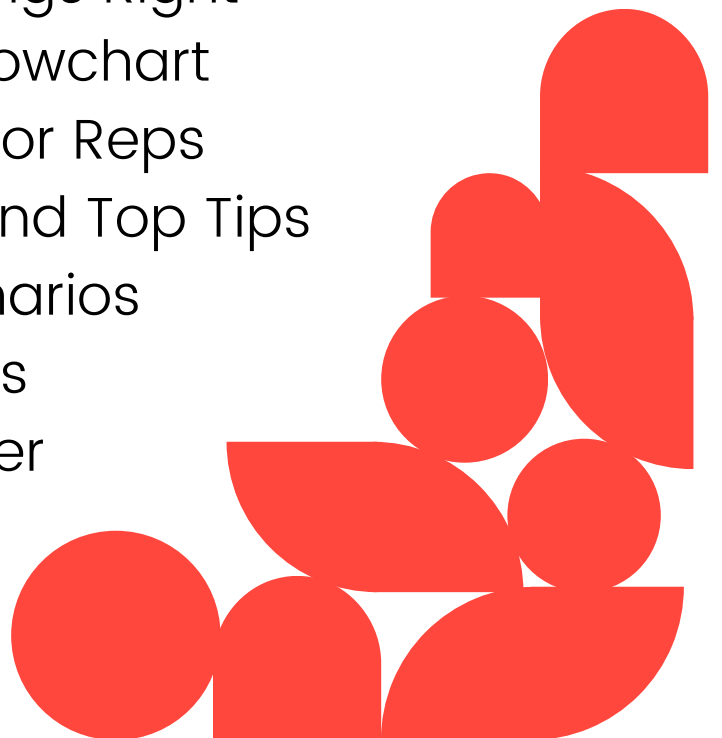


Rep Handbook



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Introduction To Representation

Welcome from your Postgraduate & International Officer

Hello! I'm Mercy, your Postgraduate & International Officer for this year. A huge congratulations on becoming a Rep! Having been a postgraduate academic rep myself, at both Department and Faculty level, I know just how important this role is and how much difference good representation can make.



Mercy Martins
supostgrad@bath.ac.uk
[View my page here](#)

You are often the bridge between students and the University, making sure postgraduate voices, experiences and concerns are heard. Please never underestimate the value of that.

This year, I'll be working closely with you to strengthen postgraduate representation and make sure you feel supported and confident in your role. Whether you have a question, an idea, something you want to raise, or you just want to have a chat, please reach out.

I'm really looking forward to working with you and seeing what we can achieve together this year.

I'll be cheering you on all the way 💙



Helen Slater
sueducation@bath.ac.uk



Angus Gueterbock
supresident@bath.ac.uk



Tash Moscuzza
sucommunity@bath.ac.uk



Nic Mortreuil
suactivities@bath.ac.uk



Emily McManus
susport@bath.ac.uk

What Is Academic Representation?

Academic Representation is the process of students actively helping to shape and change their own education. As Reps, you gather and raise issues on behalf of the students you represent, acting as voices for students throughout the academic experience. You advocate for student rights across the University, make sure the opinions of your peers are listened to, and help develop our academic curriculum.

Rep Wins So Far

As Reps, you're joining a community that makes incredible changes. To show how important your contributions are and to inspire you to take action, we've put together a few Rep wins from last academic year:

- Extending [formative assessment deadlines](#) to give students time to focus on summative placement and professional development deadlines.
- Pointing out and removing [timetable violations](#), keeping Wednesday afternoons free for all students.
- Creating [practice sessions for coding skills](#) and software-specific training so students feel more comfortable with University technology.
- Bringing in [industry guest speakers](#) to provide insight into the professional world and enhance employability.
- Advocating for [clearer communications about Curriculum Transformation](#), leading to more in-depth module summaries published earlier in the year, so students can make more informed module choices.
- Adding [inclusivity questions to the course-level survey](#), and creating Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion committees to ensure inclusivity is at the forefront of University life.
- Developing [Generic Exam Feedback guidelines](#) to ensure feedback is standardised and easily translates to action.
- Launching [Student Voice Update newsletters](#) to highlight the achievements of Academic Reps.

Structure Of The SU

The SU is a student-led organisation, independent of the University, which aims to support its members by facilitating the best possible student experience.

Students are at every level of The SU's workforce, and your goals and visions are facilitated by permanent SU staff who handle day-to-day matters. As students, you can vote in elections for SU Officers who lead the direction of The SU. As Postgrad Reps, the SU Officer you're most in contact with is the Postgraduate Officer, who represents postgraduate voices at the highest level, both academically and more generally. At the top of The SU is the CEO, who works alongside the SU President to drive student-led change across the University.

Structure Of The University

University

- Academic decisions which affect all faculties and apply across the entire university.
- Key decision making meeting: Senate

Faculty

- Groups of departments in similar subject areas.
- There are four faculties at the University of Bath: Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Engineering and Design, and the School of Management.
- Key decision making meeting: Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees (FLTQCs)

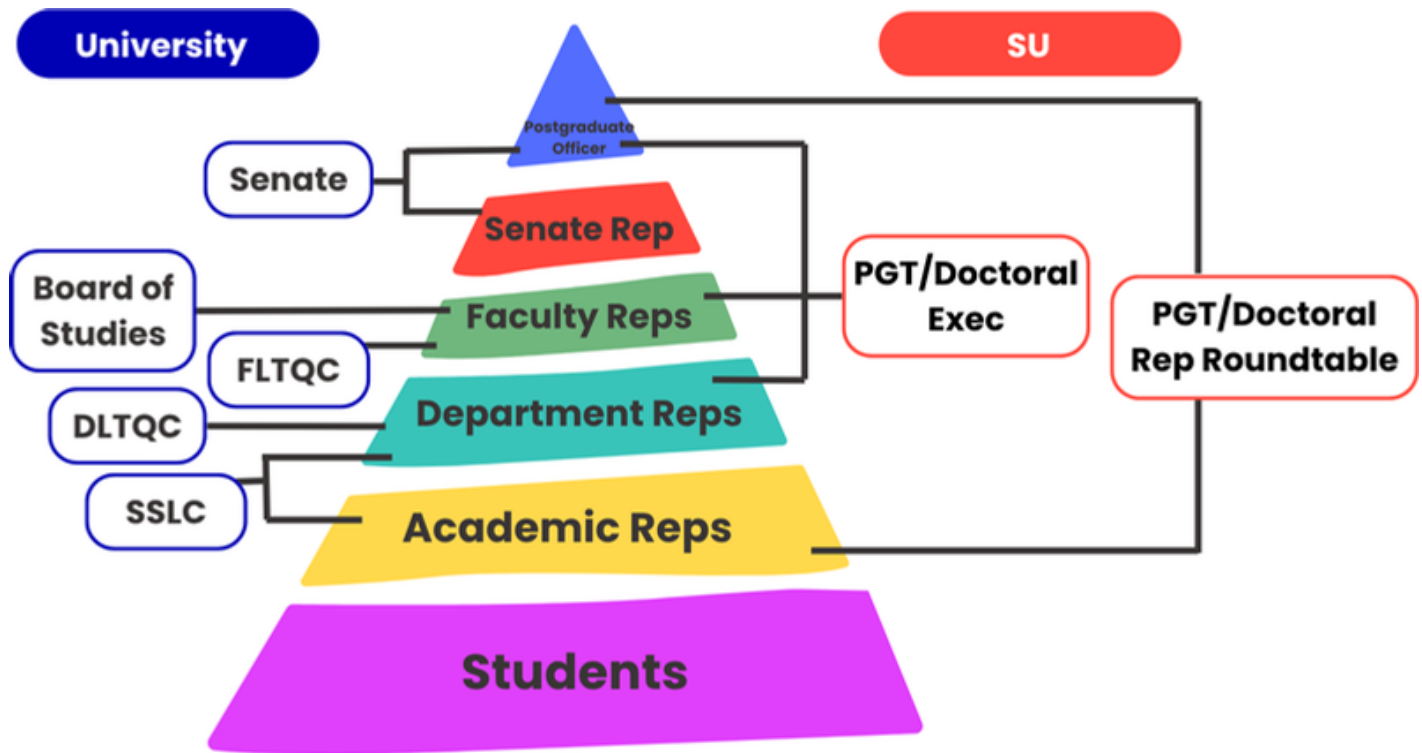
Department

- All years and placement options who study courses within a certain subject.
- Often the same as your course name, e.g. Department of Physics, but not always, e.g. Department of Social and Policy Sciences.
- Department LTQCs (DLTQCs)

Course

- Your specific program of study
- Includes your year, whether you're on a placement course, and your subject.
- E.g. First Year Sociology
- SSLCs

Structure of Academic Representation



What's Changed In Academic Representation?

The SU has reviewed Academic Representation across the University and are making changes to improve the rep system for everyone from students to staff. The key changes include:

- Introducing the [Department Rep](#) position – Department Reps act as liaisons between Academic and Faculty Reps to collate student feedback, make changes, and strengthen our academic community.
- Creating an [online feedback tool](#) for easier feedback collection, transparency, and more standardised feedback responses.
- Improving [Rep training](#) to help Reps feel prepared and empowered to lead change.
- Strengthening [staff support](#) and understanding of the academic representation system through more training and follow-ups on feedback.
- Continuing to improve [Student Staff Liaison Committees \(SSLCs\)](#), including monitoring the new [Action Tracker system](#) and looking at new ways to enhance these meetings and collaborate across departments.
- Reviewing how [Reps are recognised](#) and rewarded for their role to ensure they stay motivated and engaged throughout the year.

Who are the Reps?

Academic Reps

Objectives

- Represent voices of students on your course.
- Act as a liaison between students and academic staff.
- Bring about change in the student academic experience

Responsibilities

- Attend Academic Rep training.
- Gather student feedback, both by letting students contact you, and by reaching out to students asking their opinions.
- Contact staff members to resolve urgent issues, or smaller-scale issues informally where possible.
- Attend meetings: SSLCs, Rep Roundtables.
- Escalate issues to Department or Faculty Reps when needed.
- Update your cohort on how their feedback has been taken on and what changes you've made.

Department Rep

Objectives

- Represent the voices of students in your department.
- Help co-ordinate and mentor Academic Reps.
- Act as a liaison between Academic Reps and Faculty Reps.
- Bring about change in the student academic experience.

Responsibilities

- Attend Department Rep training.
- Gather feedback by collating the voices of Academic Reps in your department.
- Contact staff members to resolve urgent or smaller-scale issues where possible.
- Attend meetings: SSLCs, DLTQCs, PGT/Doctoral Execs.
- Chair: SSLC meetings.
- Escalate issues to Faculty Reps when needed.
- Update Academic Reps and SSLC members on how their feedback has been acted on after being escalated to DLTQCs.
- Update your cohort on how their feedback has been taken on and what changes you've made.

Faculty Rep

Objectives

- Represent the voices of students in your faculty.
- Help co-ordinate and lead Department Reps.
- Collate feedback from Academic and Department Reps to understand what student issues span your faculty.
- Bring about change in the student academic experience.

Responsibilities

- Attend Faculty Rep training.
- Collate feedback from Department Reps in your faculty.
- Attend meetings: Board of Studies, FLTQC, PGT/Doctoral Execs.
- Escalate issues to Senate Reps when needed.
- Update cohort on how feedback has been taken on and what changes you've made.

Senate Rep

Objectives

- Represent the voices of students across the University in a high-level meeting directing academic work.
- Collate feedback from Faculty Reps to understand what issues span the entire University.
- Bring about change in the student academic experience.

Responsibilities

- Attend Senate Rep training.
- Gather feedback from the student population.
- Attend meetings: Senate, Academic Execs.
- Chair: Academic Execs.
- Update your cohort on how their feedback has been taken on and what changes you've made.

Gathering Feedback – Methods

A key part of being a Rep is collecting feedback from peers to create meaningful change, and there are lots of ways to generate feedback. It's worth trying different methods to see what leads to highest engagement.

Face To Face

Pros

Allows you to further question and explore comments.
Informal conversations can lead to more honesty

Cons

Having to ask probing questions or redirect conversations.
Time consuming.

Lecture Shout Outs

Pros

Ensures target audience is present and engaged.
Makes you more visible.

Cons

Brief.
Less anonymous – students may be reluctant to share issues with staff present.

Social Media

Pros

Widely used, so likely to reach a wide audience.
Versatile; you can create groups, message, create polls and post.

Cons

Not everyone has social media, so it shouldn't be used on its own.
Mixes personal and professional lives.

Surveys

Pros

Gathers lots of data quickly.
Open text comments allow deeper insights.

Cons

Students receive lots of surveys, so you should consider your timing.
Lack of accountability as Reps aren't around to see surveys completed.

Feedback Box

Pros

Anonymous and visible.
Can be placed wherever student traffic is.

Cons

Anonymity makes progress updates difficult.
Requires coursemates to be around or travel.

Polls

Pros

Quick and easy to fill in.
Some platforms allow open text comments.

Cons

Less useful for complex issues.
Only works for a small number of questions.

Gathering Feedback – Question Ideas

When students aren't providing you with specific concerns, you might want to gather feedback with specific topics or questions in mind.

Teaching Quality And Style

- What are your opinions on your course's teaching quality?
- How does the style of teaching compare to your style of learning?
- How well does your course prepare you for your assessments?

Learning Resources

- Do you have enough access to IT resources and course texts?
- How would you rate your experience with student study spaces?
- Are practical resources readily available, e.g. lab equipment?

Organisation And management

- How would you describe your course organisation in terms of clarity and appropriateness for student life?
- How do you feel about your timetable and how far in advance you receive it?
- How clearly outlined are your course and modules?

Assessment and feedback

- How do you feel about the clarity of assessment methods and criteria?
- What are your opinions on the frequency of assessments?
- Is feedback timely and detailed enough?

Academic support

- How effective do you feel the Academic Advisor system/PGT Buddy scheme/Doctoral peer mentoring scheme is for supporting you when you need it?
- Do you feel you could and would know how to talk to lecturers or unit convenors if you didn't understand content?
- What is your experience with information about extensions, Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMCs), and Disability Action Plans (DAPs)?

Learning opportunities and student progression

- How has your course influenced your skillset?
- Do you think your course has affected your employability?
- Are professional and placement opportunities well organised and readily available?

Gathering Feedback – Key Issues

The SU's 'Together We Shape Tomorrow' survey allowed students to highlight what they felt were key issues in their student life at Bath, so you might want to focus your feedback on these areas. To find out more about TWST, visit our website linked here: <https://www.thesubath.com/twst/>

Course Flexibility

Students felt there wasn't enough choice of modules on their course, particularly following curriculum transformation, and would have liked more optional modules. On open days, students expressed the importance of being able to change courses after they arrived.

Course Delivery

Although the University scores above NSS average for teaching quality, students were concerned about staff repeating content or reading directly from slides. Students said they prefer passionate lecturers and interactive delivery.

Academic Rights

In 2023/24, nearly 150 students requested help from the SU Advice and Support team regarding Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMCs). Furthermore, most of the 150 students seeking advice about Academic Appeals and academic misconduct were postgraduates, suggesting the need for more transparency and detailed guidelines regarding these academic procedures, especially at a postgrad level.

Academic Communities

Both current and prospective students highly value being part of a community, and 72% of students reported forming friendships on their academic course. Therefore, fostering academic communities should continue to be of high importance for the University.

Disability Support And Inclusion

Inclusive teaching is a key priority for Bath students. Only 42% of students said they received recordings of all lectures, which they felt were important to review challenging lecture content or to catch up when unable to attend.

Sources: SU's 'Together We Shape Tomorrow' Survey 2024, NSS



Boundaries And Signposting

Having seen what your role covers, you've hopefully realised that you're only expected to deal with academic matters which could affect your whole cohort. You don't need to solve every kind of student problem, but you should know how to signpost students to University and SU services if something is outside your remit.

If a student is concerned about...	You could signpost them to...
Their wellbeing	Student Services studentsupport@bath.ac.uk +44 (0)1225 383838 bath.ac.uk/locations/student-support-at-the-roper-centre
Housing	ResLife support reslife@bath.ac.uk bath.ac.uk/professional-services/reslife-support SU Advice and Support suadvice@bath.ac.uk thesubath.com/advice/housing
Money	Student Money Advice studentmoneyadvice@bath.ac.uk bath.ac.uk/professional-services/student-money-advice
Visas	Student Immigration Services studentimmigrationservice@bath.ac.uk +44 (0)1225 384605 bath.ac.uk/teams/student-immigration-service
Formal University procedures	SU Advice and Support suadvice@bath.ac.uk thesubath.com/advice/academic Their Director of Studies
Disputes with an individual staff member	SU Advice and Support suadvice@bath.ac.uk thesubath.com/advice/academic

University Meetings

One of your main responsibilities as a Rep is to attend meetings, where you'll convey your feedback and other members of the meeting will explain how they intend to act on it. Here's who and what to expect from different meetings:

SSLCs – A chance for Academic Reps to bring student voices to staff, acting on or deciding to escalate issues raised.

Student Staff Liaison Committees

Four per year, Chaired by: Department Rep

Members:

- Director of Studies
- Academic Reps
- Department Rep

In attendance:

- Department Programme Administrator (as Secretary)
- Professional Support Service staff e.g. library, computing & careers representatives if relevant

Content:

- Reps **reporting course feedback** to staff and deciding how to resolve potential issues.
- Staff members **requesting student input** on potential course changes.
- **Escalating issues to Department/Faculty** meetings, if they are wider reaching than a singular course, or deciding and **implementing actions directly**.
- Considering issues related to course structure, pace, feedback timing, assessment, timetabling, attendance, material costs, additional content requests, course event requests.
- Tracking actions to follow up in the next meeting using an **Action Tracker**.

To prepare:

- If you have an issue that you want to discuss in detail, email the secretary to let them know.

DLTQCs – A meeting about academic work across Departments which makes more fundamental teaching level change.

Department Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees

Four per year, Chaired by: Heads of Department

Members:

- Head of Department appoints staff committee members with senior responsibilities – usually the Director of Teaching is one of these
- Head of Learning Partnerships Office (or their representative) when the meeting is about collaborative provision
- Department Rep

Content:

- Monitoring **quality of learning and teaching within departments**, ensuring Good Practice guidelines are followed
- Monitoring **Department level changes** including new programmes and e-education
- **Advising Department Executive Committees** on new policies and strategies
- **Escalating issues to Faculty meetings**, if they are wider reaching than a singular department, or deciding and **implementing actions directly**
- Considering issues related to programmes of study including content; degree scheme reviews; feedback (including from Academic Reps, from External Examiners and national feedback e.g. the PTES)

To prepare:

- Collate feedback and add larger items to the agenda

FLTQCs – A more staff-heavy meeting about learning and teaching quality across a Faculty, which also approves policies and partnerships.

Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees

Seven per year. Chaired by: Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching

Members:

- Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching
- Postgraduate Dean
- One staff representative from each Department, nominated by Heads of Department
- One member of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Office, nominated by Directors of Teaching
- Head of Learning Partnerships Office or their nominee
- Head of Learning, Teaching and Quality
- Undergraduate and postgraduate Associate Deans
- Student Experience Officer
- Three people representing the Director of Studies, who are nominated by Deans and Heads of School/Faculty
- Faculty Rep

Content:

- **Monitoring quality of learning and teaching within faculties**, ensuring Good Practice guidelines are followed.
- **Monitoring Faculty level changes** e.g. new programme initiatives and e-education initiatives.
- **Considering draft documentation and proposals** from Programmes and Partnerships Approval Committees, relating to things like academic content, standards, existing provisions.
- **Considering proposed collaborations** (e.g. with Exchange Partners and other Higher Education institutions) to recommend for approval, and approving renewals of department level arrangements with Exchange Partners.
- **Recommending that the Board of Studies delegate certain matters** requiring approval to a department or course level, and monitoring the effectiveness of the changes.
- **Analysing** overview **reports**, admissions, and retentions in context of national and University trends.
- Monitoring courses redesigned by **curriculum transformation** and recommending aspects for approval.
- **Escalating issues to Senate meetings** if they are wider reaching than a singular faculty or deciding and **implementing actions directly**.
- Considering issues related to faculty wide course elements such as assessment, feedback and course delivery, proposals from and for other committees.

To prepare:

- Collate feedback and add larger items to the agenda

Board of Studies – A staff-based Faculty meeting about the logistics of academic work, which is used to inform the Senate.

Seven per year, Chaired by: Faculty Dean

Members:

- Vice-Chancellor
- Faculty Dean
- Faculty Associate Deans
- Faculty Heads of Department
- Nine members elected from and by Academic Assembly members of the Faculty
- One representative from all other Faculties/Schools
- Head of Learning Partnerships Office or nominee
- Faculty Rep

Content:

- Reporting to the Senate on the **organisation of teaching, education, research**, and other academic matters in the Faculty.
- **Considering student progress** e.g. awards, exam resits, retakes, and disqualifications.
- **Appointing examiners.**
- **Discussing topics which the Senate refers** to it.
- **Advising the Senate** on their academic strategy.

To prepare:

- Read through the agenda and consider how the feedback you've gathered relates to it, and what opinions you'll be using to inform your judgements on the items

Senate – A senior staff meeting about the University's overall academic work and policy

Five per year, Chaired by: Vice-Chancellor

Members:

- Vice-Chancellor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- Pro-Vice-Chancellors
- Chair of Academic Assembly
- Faculty Deans
- SU President
- SU Postgraduate Officer
- SU Education Officer
- Librarian
- Senate Reps
- Plus 27 elected professorial members

In attendance:

- University Secretary and Registrar
- Director, Centre for Learning and Teaching
- Associate Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering and Design
- Head of Student Voice and Academic engagement
- Director of Academic Registry

Content:

- Regulating and **directing the University's academic work** and the strategic development of University activities
- **Approving policies** to ensure the quality of the University's academic work
- Discussing matters referred to it by the Council, forming an opinion, and **making recommendations to the Council** on policy and practice
- **Assuring the Council** of the **University's academic quality**

To prepare:

- Collate feedback and add larger items to the agenda

SU Meetings

PGT/Doctoral Rep Roundtable (previously Council) – Academic Reps across departments coming together to share their thoughts, usually with specific discussion topics provided by the SU or Postgraduate Officer

Two per year, Chaired by: SU Postgraduate Officer

Members:

- SU Postgraduate Officer, Academic Reps

Content:

- Academic Reps across departments sharing their thoughts on academic matters, and how well SSLCs have dealt with these if appropriate.
- Reps discussing and feeding back on a wider topic which applies across departments (e.g. attendance or assessment), brought to the meeting by the SU or Postgraduate Officer.
- Reps advising the Postgraduate Officer on their potential acts or actions currently in progress.

To prepare:

- Read the agenda and start considering how your opinions and the feedback you've gathered relate to the discussion topics

PGT/Doctoral Exec – PGT/Doctoral Reps from different faculties share their thoughts on academic procedures and give feedback on the Postgraduate Officer's suggestions.

One of the SU Executive Committees, Four or five per year, Chaired by: Postgrad Exec Chair

Members:

- Postgraduate Officer
- Postgraduate Exec Chair
- Faculty Reps
- Department Reps

In attendance:

- Postgrad Student Voice Coordinator
- Student Voice Administrative Assistant

Content:

- Reps talking about positive procedures their faculties have implemented that other faculty reps might want to introduce in their own faculty.
- Reps discussing issues in their own faculties, seeing if these also affect other faculties, and considering other faculties' proposed solutions.
- The SU Postgraduate Officer making suggestions about improvements to postgraduate life and academic experiences, which Reps then discuss.
- Raising awareness of the Rep system and achievements across faculties.

To prepare:

- Consider your progress, challenges and the issues you want to raise when you're asked to

Doing Meetings Right

Before:

- **Gather feedback!** Try to write things down as you get told them to collate a list for the meeting. To make sure this feedback is representative of your wider cohort, you can ask a couple of other people to see if they agree with it.
- Gather **evidence** for your feedback – Examples of evidence include:
 - A **chronological account** of any issues experienced, including dates or screenshots.
 - **Policy documents**, course prospectuses or module outlines showing any contractual obligations which the University is not fulfilling.
 - Any **previous actions** to resolve the issue.
 - **Student stories** about the **impact** the issue has had on them and reasons for its importance, for example on their mental health/stress levels (and if they required student support services to mitigate this) or their success in academic modules.
- Note the most important or common points you **really want to bring to the meeting**. Don't discard smaller potential wins though, in case there's extra time at the end of the meeting or for you to pursue separately.
- If there is a **particular or larger issue** you would like the meeting members to discuss, there are different approaches depending on the meeting type. For University meetings, inform the secretary that you would like to add a topic to the agenda at least 2 weeks in advance. For SSLC meetings, note to the secretary or chair that you will be bringing up a particular topic in the Rep Update to ensure members are prepared. Finally, for SU meetings, if you would like a specific topic to be discussed, speak with your Postgraduate Officer.
- Around a week before the meeting, the secretary should send out the agenda. Briefly **reading this through** with your own feedback in mind will help you feel confident about speaking up. Think about **how your own ideas or evidence link** to any points on the agenda, so you feel prepared to add them during the meeting.
- Send your **apologies** to the secretary if you can't attend the meeting.

During:

- **Share without interrupting.** If you've put an item on the **agenda**, you have time to discuss it when the chair raises it. If not, you should either **add your points to other agenda items**, or raise issues unrelated to the agenda items in **Any Other Business**.
- **Give your feedback** effectively. Meaningful feedback that will make an impact is:
 - **Accurate** – Your points should be detailed and clearly represent students' views, including the impact of the issue on their lives.
 - **Balanced** – Try to consider counterarguments and be inclusive of everyone's views.
 - **Constructive** – Rather than wording your point as a complaint, you should structure feedback in a way that highlights problems but focuses on solutions.
 - **Depersonalised** – You should always avoid names, both of staff and students, when raising feedback. If an issue is with a single staff member, raise it with them or your Director of Studies instead.
 - **Evidenced** – Make sure your feedback is supported by evidence.

What To Do Post-Meeting

- **Review the minutes** of the meeting to make sure you understood everything.
- **Complete any actions** you agreed to – information about who needs to complete actions should be at the bottom of the minutes or on the action tracker where applicable.
- **Follow up on your feedback** to make sure it's being acted on.
- **Share your achievements** with your cohort!



Why is it so important to close the feedback loop?

It's crucial to let your cohort know that you've taken forward their feedback and it's resulted in action. **Students feel empowered if they know their opinions matter** and lead to change, which makes them more likely to engage with academic representation in the future.

Keeping your cohort up to date **doesn't mean only communicating the things you've changed successfully** – it's just as important to let you cohort know that you took forward feedback which hasn't resulted in actions, and what you're doing to change that.

Ways to close the feedback loop

By now you should hopefully know enough ways to communicate with your cohort, and a lecture shout out, email, or post in your course group chat telling them what you've achieved never goes amiss. You could also nominate yourself for Rep of the Month to put your work on the University stage!

Feedback Flowchart

Suggestions for how Academic Reps can turn feedback into change



What's In It For Reps

Support From The SU

In return for your hard work as a Rep, you will receive regular support from The SU. This includes:

- Comprehensive training on how to be a successful rep before you begin
- Access to a range of additional online training modules, including handling complaints, feedback, and chairing.
- On-hand support whenever you're stuck and need help
- Regular Teams and Email updates on all things academic representation



Gained Skills

Being a student leader enhances your **transferable skills**, which boosts your employability and makes you a more well-rounded individual. Student leadership is most strongly linked to:

- Communication, teamwork and people management
- Organisation and time management
- Confidence
- Decision-making
- Problem solving

You also gain valuable **networking opportunities** with your fellow Reps. Want more advice on how to showcase your employability and skills gained from your student leadership position? The University Careers team has online resources and in person drop-ins.



Tangible Rewards

Finally, the SU and University want to provide physical rewards for your continued engagement and hard work as Reps. Rewards schemes include:

- **Rep of the Month** – Reps who have made meaningful, positive contributions to the University and student experience are nominated each month by staff and students, with winners receiving mugs and LinkedIn recommendations.
- **Education Awards** – Students and staff members nominate Reps for Education Awards, which recognise their outstanding contributions to academic representation at Bath. Shortlisted nominees attend an annual awards ceremony.
- **The Bath Award** – An award being piloted this year for exceptional extracurricular engagement and employability skills. Student in Rep positions or other extracurricular roles track their contribution hours and complete employability training to receive an award at the end of the year. For more information, please contact thebathaward@bath.ac.uk or visit bath.ac.uk/campaigns/employability-and-student-success/

REP
of the
Month

— The University of Bath & The SU Bath —

**EDUCATION
AWARDS**

What Next?

After being elected as a Rep, you'll want to get started as soon as possible to set yourself up for the rest of the year. This checklist has a few suggestions for establishing yourself as a successful Rep.

1. Get in contact with your other Reps – You'll want to contact and arrange to meet Reps in the same role as you. You should make a group on Teams or social media for further discussions, e.g. a Chemistry Year 1 Academic Reps group. Then establish a good line of communication with the Reps who you'll escalate feedback from and to. For example, if you're a Department Rep, let your Academic Reps know the best way they can pass on feedback to you, and say hi to your Faculty Rep so they know you'll be contacting them on behalf of your department.

2. Introduce yourselves to students – Send an email or put up a poster introducing yourself to the cohort you're representing. Many Reps also speak before a lecture so cohorts can recognise them to approach with feedback.

3. Set up an email signature – You could create a new email signature including your name, pronouns and Rep position.

4. Approach societies – If your department/faculty has its own SU societies, you might want to get in touch with them to propose collaborations or request feedback; they're likely to receive lots of opinions from your cohort.

5. Start collecting feedback!

Three Top Tips

1. Don't feel you have to wait until meetings – If an issue is urgent, such as an assignment with a deadline, or can be resolved easily with a conversation, e.g. asking a lecturer to put content slides up, feel free to act before a meeting and report back to other Reps and your cohort.

2. Keep it consistent – Try to maintain visibility throughout the year through regular updates. You want your cohort to know they can speak to you throughout the term, not just in the first week.

3. Know your role – As Reps, you're here to communicate feedback and bring ideas – you need to make sure change is being made, but you shouldn't have to execute the change yourself too. Being a Rep shouldn't be interfering with your studies.

What If Scenarios

Staff are not listening to our problems

Staff might be busy or unable to change the specific issue you've raised with them, so you should start by sending a follow-up email, or talking to them to ask why action hasn't been taken yet. If staff are consistently dismissive, you could politely remind them of their responsibility to listen and respond to you – it's part of QA48 policy! However, if this happens repeatedly, it might be worth talking to more senior Reps, or to your Director of Studies/Dean who is responsible for creating action plans in response to student feedback.

There's policy stopping us making change

University policy can and should change too! Students are represented at the most senior levels of University decision-making, and if you're unable to resolve an issue you could escalate it to a Faculty or Senate Rep, or the Education Officer, and request they take the issue to more senior meetings if they also think it's important.

Students are not engaging with Rep feedback gathering

The most important way to engage students is by closing the feedback loop – share your achievements or previous Rep wins to show your cohort that their feedback meaningfully changes their learning experience. If that and a set of reminders doesn't work, it might be time to try a different feedback method.

Nobody seems dissatisfied with anything

That's great, but good things can still be better. You might want to reframe your feedback questions as ways to improve rather than complaints.

Key Contacts

As a Rep, you're lucky enough to have the support of both The SU and the University if you need help with academic representation or personal matters.

The SU

Voice team

su-voice@bath.ac.uk

All specific questions about academic representation, including your role, procedures and meetings

Support and Advice

suadvice@bath.ac.uk

More personal academic matters, e.g. balancing your role with your studies

Postgraduate Officer

supostgrad@bath.ac.uk

Academic representation queries or escalation requests specific to postgraduates

Education Officer

sueducation@bath.ac.uk

Academic representation ideas or requesting escalation when issues don't just affect postgraduates

The University

Support Service

studentsupport@bath.ac.uk

Financial or wellbeing concerns

Student engagement/education managers:

Faculty specific queries

Kate Campbell – Science

kjc47@bath.ac.uk

Annika Theilgaard – Humanities and Social Sciences

act36@bath.ac.uk

Joanne Pike – Engineering and Design

jp900@bath.ac.uk

Gemma Ker-Bridges – PG Management

glb26@bath.ac.uk

Jargon Buster

Agenda – A to-do list of important items to cover at a meeting. Items can be added to the agenda by emailing the secretary at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting. You should receive an agenda around one week before a meeting is due to take place.

Any other business (AOB) – An opportunity at the end of a meeting to discuss anything which did not come up or fit into the agenda. If nobody has other topics to discuss, this time may be used to return to agenda items requiring more discussion.

Apologies – Members of a meeting unable to attend send apologies to the secretary in advance, which are read out at the start of a meeting.

Chair – In a meeting context, this person leads and ensures the smooth running of a meeting. They guide the discussion towards the agenda and ensures everyone who wishes to has the opportunity to speak.

Council – The University's governing body which generally oversees University affairs. Its members consist of the Vice-Chancellor, members of University staff, and SU officers.

EQSC – Education Quality Standards Committee – A senior academic committee within the University. They develop and oversee the University's Education Strategy, maintaining academic standards, for Senate approval.

Exec Chair – Anyone who leads an Exec Committee. PGT and Doctoral Exec chairs are separately elected positions, but for Academic Execs this is the Senate Rep.

Exec Committee – SU based meeting groups which discuss make admin decisions about various aspects of student life. These are chaired by elected students, who helps to put across their vision during the decision-making process.

In attendance – When you are categorised as 'in attendance' at a meeting, you are present for the meeting, but not a member, therefore you do not have voting or decision-making rights. Usually, people in attendance are listeners or are providing relevant information to help members make a decision.

Matters arising – This is a standing item on an agenda involving updates on progress of actions from previous meetings, and how to solve any further problems that have occurred.

Member – As a member of a meeting, you have full voting and decision-making rights.

Minutes – An accurate record of what was discussed in a meeting, including agreed-upon actions and who is responsible for completing them. The minutes of a previous meeting are checked at the start of the next meeting.

NUS – National Union of Students – A voluntary membership organisation aiming to make a difference to student lives. It encompasses around 600 students' unions and represents the interests of more than 95% of higher education unions in the UK.

PRES – Postgraduate Research Experience Survey – A UK higher education sector-wide survey gaining insight into the learning and teaching experience of doctoral students.

PTES – Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey – A UK higher education sector-wide survey gaining insight into the learning and teaching experience of postgraduate taught students, including Masters, Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma students.

QA48 – A University of Bath document setting out the principles of partnership between the University and SU to facilitate student engagement in all aspects of the learning experience, including academic representation.

Quorum – The minimum number of members that must be present at a meeting to make its proceedings valid. For example, in SSLCs, this is one third of academic staff and Academic Reps (but there should never be more staff than students).

Secretary – Organises and carries out meeting procedures, including arranging the meeting time, collating and distributing the agenda, and taking the minutes.

Standing item – An item always on the agenda of a scheduled meeting, such as apologies or matters arising.

SU Officers – A team of six paid, full-time elected officers who lead the direction of The SU. They sit on the University's highest decision-making meetings, representing student voice and campaigning for change. Permanent SU staff facilitate their visions and priorities for the Union and University.

TEF – Teaching Excellence Framework – A government recognition scheme for high quality teaching in higher education institutions.