

## Academic Representation Policy

The University of Derby ('the University') and Union of Students ('the Union') are committed to working in partnership to provide effective structures for student feedback and representation. The 'Academic Representation System' provides a clear route in which students can have direct input towards decision-making processes regarding their academic experience and seeks to engage students in the co-creation and evaluation of institutional policy, practice and the enhancement of their overall experience. The Academic Representation System simultaneously allows elected Student Representatives and Officers to raise student voice via a structured and constructive platform and provides a demonstrable opportunity for the Union to represent students' academic interests.

This Policy will be used by the University, the Union, Student Representatives and Student Officers to guide the delivery of the Academic Representation System. The Academic Representation System applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate students registered at the University of Derby, including students at academic partnerships. This Policy is to be implemented in conjunction with;

[Union Standing Orders](#)

[Union Constitution](#)

[University Deliberative Structure and additional guidance](#)

[Programme Committee Meeting Terms of Reference](#)

[College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee Terms of Reference](#)

### Principles

1. Every student, at every level, of every programme, will have access to representation, and as a result will be able to influence their academic experience through their representatives.
2. Any student wishing to take on a role as a representative must be a member of the Union of Students and must be elected and registered through the Student Voice Portal to be recognised as such.
3. The Academic Representation System will be jointly owned by the University and the Union, who will work collaboratively to ensure the effectiveness of the system;
  - a. The Union will create and maintain the Student Voice Portal, which will allow the registration of Student Representatives and the collection and approval functions of all Student Representative feedback.
  - b. Programme Leaders are responsible for facilitating Student Representative elections for their programme and ensuring their

- elected Reps are signposted to register on the Student Voice Portal, using support materials from the Union.
- c. The Union is responsible for the training of elected Student Representatives, at all levels, as well as supporting them and monitoring their effectiveness.
  - d. The University will provide opportunities for representatives to have input into discussion and to present student feedback in appropriate forums, both formal and informal.
  - e. Both the Union and the University will have a shared responsibility for promoting an environment which empowers the student voice.
4. The Vice President (Education) and the Provost for Learning and Teaching will have overall responsibility for effective representation at a University level, exercised through Education Officers and PVC Deans/Deputy Deans at College level, and Student Representatives and Heads of School/Programme Leaders at programme/school level. The Vice President (Education) and the Provost for Learning and Teaching will maintain oversight of the implementation and effectiveness of the Academic Representation System.
  5. For the purposes of this Policy, 'Academic Representation' is defined as the formal processes and structures that:
    - a) allow student voice to be represented effectively at all levels for the purposes of enhancing and improving the academic experience
    - b) provides a mechanism for feeding back the outcomes of this representation
  6. An effective Academic Representation System will be student-led. Representatives will be expected to take responsibility for ensuring that the issues or concerns of the students that they represent are raised and addressed appropriately and that actions and subsequent outcomes are communicated back to the wider student population.
  7. The role of the Representative is integral to the Academic Representation System and as such the students elected will be trained by the Union and supported by both the Union and the University to effectively represent the views of those that they represent.
  8. The University, Union, elected Student Representatives and Officers will utilise the Student Voice Portal which will record student feedback and responses from the University to create an effective feedback loop.
  9. The principles of this policy apply to academic partnerships though the exact terminology utilised and the use of the Student Voice Portal will differ.

## The Academic Representation System

All students at the University of Derby, including academic partnerships, will be represented by elected representatives on every programme, in every College and at an institutional-level as follows;

### 1. Programme Level:

#### 1.1 Student Representatives

- i Student Representatives will be elected in at a minimum ratio of 1 Student Rep:40 students, across all years of study, including post graduate taught, apprenticeships and academic partnerships. Programmes with less than 40 students in total will require a minimum of one Student Rep to cover all year groups.
- ii Student Representatives are only required for degree or diploma programmes and are not required for Micro-credentials.
- iii Student Representatives are responsible for gathering feedback from their cohort and recording this via the Student Voice Portal.
- iv Student Representatives will attend up to four Rep Meetings (RMs) per year at the appropriate programme/discipline level or academic partnership, calendared one week prior to the relevant Programme Committee Meeting (PCM).
- v Rep Meetings (RMs) can be 'clustered' in the same way as they are at the linked PCM, whereby Reps from a 'cluster' of programmes can attend one Rep Meeting with Programme Leaders from that 'cluster'. This is at the discretion of the students and staff members within that 'cluster' and should only be implemented if thought to be the most effective way of conducting RMs.
- vi Programme Leaders will be responsible for the organisation and chairing of RMs and will ensure that the response to actions raised for discussion are recorded via the Student Voice Portal and either:
  - a. Resolved on the Portal following RM discussion
  - b. Allocated to further members of staff to respond as part of the management structure
  - c. Allocated to the corresponding PCM for response
  - d. Elevated to College level to be addressed at the next College Forum/SOC/CQAEC.
- vii Programme Leaders will be responsible for taking the Programme level Representative feedback forward to the relevant PCM.
- viii Student Representatives maintain the right to attend PCMs should they wish to take any feedback forward themselves, as ex-officio members, and should receive invites and papers along with committee members.

### **1.2 DProf Representatives**

- i Professional Doctorate (DProf) Representatives will be elected in at a minimum ratio of 1 DProf Rep:40 students, to include taught and independent research phase.
- ii DProf Representatives are responsible for gathering feedback from their cohort and recording this via the Student Voice Portal.
- iii DProf Representatives will attend up to three Rep Meeting (RM) meetings per year, per DProf Programme, calendared one week prior to the relevant Programme Committee Meeting (PCM).
- iv DProf Programme Leaders will be responsible for organising and chairing RMs and will ensure that the response to actions raised for discussion are recorded via the online portal and either:
  - a. Resolved on the system following RM discussion
  - b. Allocated to further members of staff to respond as part of the management structure
  - c. Allocated to the corresponding PCM for response
  - d. Elevated to College level to be addressed at the next College Research Committee (CRC).
- v Programme Leaders will be responsible for taking the DProf Representative feedback forward to the relevant PCM.
- vi DProf Representatives maintain the right to attend PCMs should they wish to take any feedback forward themselves, as ex-officio members, and should receive invites and papers along with committee members.

## **2. College Level:**

### **2.1 Education Officers (School Reps)**

- i. Education Officers (School Reps) will be elected per School
- ii. Education Officers are responsible for gathering school level feedback from their representatives and recording this via the Student Voice Portal.
- iii. Education Officers (School Reps) will attend:
  - a. Up to five Student Officer Committee (SOCs) meetings, calendared one week prior to the relevant College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) meetings.
  - b. Up to four College Student Voice Forums per year.
- iv. This includes an informal meeting which will be arranged as early as possible in the academic year once the Education Officers have been trained to allow Education Officers and College Leadership teams to meet each other and establish working relationships.
- v. Education Officers maintain the right to attend CQAEC Meetings should they wish to take any feedback forward themselves, as ex-officio members, and should receive invites and papers along with committee members.
- vi. The Union and College Leadership teams (with College Support Officers) are responsible for organising SOCs and ensuring that the

response to actions raised for discussion are recorded via the Student Voice Portal and either:

- Resolved on the system following discussion
- Allocated to further members of staff (including via College Forums) to respond as part of the management structure
- Allocated to the corresponding CQAEC for response
- Elevated to University/Union level via Academic Development Quality Committee (ADQC) and Education Council.

## **2.2 College Student Voice Forums**

- i. College Student Voice Forums will be co-hosted by the PVC Dean and relevant Education Officers and will provide an open opportunity for any student, elected or otherwise, to give student feedback.
- ii. Deans, Deputy Deans and Heads of School will be invited to each forum, however each college is free to also invite any additional members of staff as they see fit.
- iii. Student Representatives and Officers are invited to submit feedback via the Student Voice Portal in advance if they cannot attend.
- iv. The Union will update the Student Voice Portal with actions arising from the forum, allocating to members of staff, student representatives or relevant committee as required.

## **2.3 Post Graduate Research: College Research Reps**

- i. College Research Committee (CRC) Reps will be elected per College to represent Post Graduate Research Students.
- ii. CRC Reps are responsible for gathering feedback from their cohort and recording this via the Student Voice Portal.
- iii. CRC Reps will attend:
  - a. Up to Four College Research Committee (CRC) [Part A] meetings per academic year, calendared 4 week(s) prior to the University Innovation and Research Committee (UIRC) [Part A] meetings.
  - b. Up to Four PGR Council Meetings per academic year, calendared 2 weeks prior to the University Innovation and Research Committee (UIRC) meetings.
- iv. CRC meetings are responsible for ensuring that the response to actions raised for discussion are recorded via the Student Voice Portal and either:
  - Resolved on the system following discussion
  - Allocated to further members of staff to respond as part of the management structure
  - Elevated to University/Union level via University Innovation and Research Committee and Postgraduate Research Council.

### **3. University/Union Level:**

#### **3.1 Education Officers (mode of study)**

- i. Education Officers (mode of study) will be elected for;
  - a. Post Graduate Taught (PGT)
  - b. Joint Honours
  - c. Part Time
  - d. Online Learners
  - e. Apprenticeships
- ii. Education Officers (mode of study) will attend:
  - a. Up to Four Education Council meetings per year, calendared one week prior to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee meetings.
  - b. Relevant University committee meetings throughout the academic year (as per the Academic Representation Meeting Calendar)

#### **3.2 Education Council**

- i. The Education Officers (School Reps) and Education Officers (mode of study), will make up the Education Council, with the PGR Chair as an ex-officio member.
- ii. An Education Chair will be elected to provide leadership and direction to the Education Officers, ensure that institution-wide feedback is considered by the Council and that any student voice themes are elevated through the relevant management or deliberative structures of the University and/or Union.
- iii. The Education Chair will:
  - a. Chair up to four Education Council meetings per year, calendared one week prior to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee meetings.
  - b. Attend up to four Learning and Teaching Committee meetings per academic year to represent the Education Council, including the PGR Council.
- iv. The Education Council will formally meet up to four times per year and will be attended by all Education Officers, the Education Chair and Vice President (Education).

#### **3.3 Post Graduate Research Council**

- i. Postgraduate Research Chair and College Research Committee Reps make up the Post Graduate Research Council, a sub-group of the Education Council.
- ii. The Post Graduate Research Chair will be elected to provide leadership and direction to the College Research Reps and ensure that institution-wide feedback is considered by the PGR Council and any PGR student voice themes are elevated through the relevant

management or deliberative structures of the University and/or Union.

- iii. The PGR Chair will:
  - a. Chair up to four PGR Council meetings per year, calendared two weeks prior to the University Innovation and Research Council (UIRC).
  - b. Attend up to four UIRC meetings per academic year to represents all PGR students.
- iv. The PGR Committee will pass items for action, via the PGR Chair, to;
  - a. University Innovation and Research Committee
  - b. Education Council

### 3.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officers (EDI Officers)

- i. EDI Officers will be elected for;

Disabilities	International Students
Ethnic Minorities	Parents & Carers
Gender	Commuter Students
LGBTQ+	Faith & Belief
Mental Health	Mature Students
Sustainability	

- ii. EDI Officers will attend:
  - a. Up to Four Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Council meetings per year, calendared one week prior to the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Committee meetings.
  - b. Relevant University committee meetings throughout the academic year (as per the Academic Representation Meeting Calendar)

### 3.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Council

- i. The EDI Officers and will make up the ED&I Council.
- ii. An ED&I Chair will be elected to provide leadership and direction to the EDI Officers and ensure that institution-wide feedback is considered by the Council and any student voice themes are elevated through the relevant management or deliberative structures of the University and/or Union.
- iii. The ED&I Chair will:
  - a. Chair up to four ED&I Council meetings per year, calendared one week prior to the University's Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Committee meetings.

- b. Attend up to four University of Derby ED&I Committee meetings per academic year to represent the ED&I Council.
- iv. The ED&I Council will formally meet up to four times per year and will be attended by all EDI Officers, the ED&I Chair and Vice President (Welfare).

#### **4. Institutional Level (University and Union combined):**

##### **4.1 Officer Trustees**

- i. Four Officer Trustees of the Union will be elected and provide student representation and/or Co-Chair the University's key governance meetings (as per the Academic Representation Map)
- ii. The Officer Trustees provide leadership and direction to the entire Union, including academic representation via the Vice President (Education) and are responsible for ensuring the student voice is heard across the institution.
- iii. In addition to representation throughout the University's deliberative structure, the Officer Trustees, through the Union President as Co-Chair, will raise relevant student voice themes to the Student Affairs Committee (SAC).

#### **Key logistical points**

1. *Registry Systems will provide the following reports by the specified timeline following a request from the Union and in line with the data sharing agreements in place:*
  - i. *'programme structure (with stages)' report – to be requested by the end of June*
  - ii. *'student headcounts per programme and stage' report – to be requested by the end of autumn term enrolment.*
2. Student Representatives and DProf Representatives should be elected by the student cohort that they represent, with elections facilitated by programme staff and supported by the Union.
3. Elected Student Representatives and DProf Representatives must register as a representative as soon as possible to ensure sufficient time to be trained before the first RM meeting of the year. College Student Centres should facilitate the registration of Student Representatives and DProf Representatives with the Union to ensure a coordinated approach.
4. All academic representatives (Student Reps, DProf Reps and Student Officers) must participate in training provided by the Union to support them in fulfilling their roles and academic staff will encourage this.



5. The Union will be responsible for dealing with complaints about the conduct of any Academic Representative in their role. Complaints can come from the students the Rep represents, and/or a Union or University member of staff. The first point of contact would be the Vice President (Education), who would then take the matter to the Education Council, in accordance with the Union's procedures. If a complaint is raised concerning the conduct of VP (Education), the Union President should be notified.
6. The Education Council will pass items for action to;
  - a. Learning & Teaching Committee, via the Education Chair
  - b. Student Affairs Committee, via the Vice President (Education)
7. PCMs, CQAECs and departments of the university are responsible for ensuring the items allocated to them are audit-ready for the Union, University or OfS to review at any time.
8. The Academic Representation System will be reviewed on an annual basis under the direction of Vice President (Education) and the Provost for Learning and Teaching.

#### Appendix 1 – Role descriptions

##### **Role Title: Education Officers**

---

**Reporting to:** The University of Derby student body

**Supported by:** Student Officer Coordinator and the Officer Trustees with the main contact being Vice-President (Education)

**Responsible for:** Representing University of Derby Students and Student Reps of their School Department or mode of study.

---

##### **A: Duties**

- To gather feedback on a regular basis from Student Reps and students within their School Department or mode of study, across all relevant sites.
- To contribute to meetings they have a seat on including: Student Officer Committees, Student College Forums and ex-officio members of College Quality Assurance Enhancement Committee.
- To attend Student Rep Conference.
- To lead the team of Student Reps within their School Department or students within their mode of study area.

- To voice the student view at relevant opportunities within the College Department.
- To fulfil their campaign manifesto.
- To run relevant campaigns within their School Department or mode of study area.
- To arrange and attend meetings with their College Dean where appropriate and necessary.
- To keep the Union up to date on the student voice within their School or mode of study area via the Student Voice Portal and meetings with Student Officer Coordinator.
- To represent their Student Reps and students to the Union, University and wider community at Campaign events, meetings and other forums.
- Regularly attend and provide updates to Education Council with information about what has been happening in their School Department or mode of study and any upcoming events.
- Be an active member of the decision-making bodies within the Union.

## **B: Responsibilities**

The principle role and responsibilities may change from time to time and the post holder is required to undertake any additional duties as deemed appropriate.

## **C: General**

All Union Representatives are expected to work within the ethos of the Union and strive to achieve the following in conjunction with the Union's [Code of Conduct for Elected Representatives](#):

- To work at all times within relevant legislation as well as structures, policies and procedures.
  - To work co-operatively with other Union staff and Officers, as well as relevant external organisations.
  - To seek to continually develop and improve Union facilities and services.
  - To keep up-to-date with sector developments, local competition and students views/needs, where necessary undertaking market research to generate such information.
  - To undertake necessary training and to attend all meetings as requested.
  - To promote a positive and professional image of the University of Derby Students' Union (Union of Students) to its members, customers, stakeholders and other external people.
  - To positively contribute to the organisation's ethical & environmental ethos.
-

Education Officers are required to have a Development Plan and to participate in training, meetings or conferences considered relevant to their role.

### **Role Title: Student Representatives**

---

**Reporting to:** The University of Derby student body

**Supported by:** Student Rep Coordinator, Student Officers and the Officer Trustees with the main contact being Vice-President (Education)

**Responsible for:** Representing University of Derby Students from their academic programme stage.

---

#### **A: Duties**

- Regularly consult students at their programme stage on their views and opinions on academic matters and to feedback this information to the Union and/or University
- Campaigning on issues which affect students on their academic programme.
- Attend training, provided by the Union, to facilitate them in their role.
- Actively seek feedback and the views of students.
- Attend Rep Meetings and present student views in a professional and appropriate manner.
- Contribute to staff discussions regarding developments or changes to their programme.
- Update the Student Voice Portal providing data on feedback from their cohort
- Attend Student Rep Conference and other training opportunities if possible.
- Support their Student Officer for Education by attending forums, providing information, and supporting campaigns within their College.
- Be an active member of the decision-making bodies within the Union.

#### **B: Responsibilities**

The principle role and responsibilities may change from time to time and the post holder is required to undertake any additional duties as deemed appropriate.

### **C: General**

All Union Representatives are expected to work within the ethos of the Union and strive to achieve the following in conjunction with the Union's [Code of Conduct for Elected Representatives](#):

- To work at all times within relevant legislation as well as structures, policies and procedures.
  - To work co-operatively with other Union staff and Officers, as well as relevant external organisations.
  - To seek to continually develop and improve Union facilities and services.
  - To undertake necessary training and to attend all meetings as requested.
  - To promote a positive and professional image of the University of Derby Students' Union (Union of Students).
  - To positively contribute to the organisation's ethical & environmental ethos.
-



UNIVERSITY OF  
DERBY

**US** UNION OF  
STUDENTS

Key

University Structure

Collaborative Structure

Union Structure

