



Academic Representation Charter

Introduction

Since the original Representation Charter in 2009 the Academic Representation structure has gone from strength to strength, with the implementation of Divisional Reps to bridge the gap between School Reps and Course Reps in larger schools to allow for more effective communication between reps; and higher levels of management between the different levels of reps created to enhance communication and productivity.

The responsibilities of reps and the expectations of them held by the Students' Union and the University has also grown. To manage and reflect this, job descriptions for each rep role have been created, and a reward programme involving bursaries for Senior Reps has been developed. The criteria for bursaries incentivise Senior Reps to more actively engage course reps through close peer to peer relationships, thus expanding the reach into the student body that representatives have. Their management responsibilities also allow them to develop high level employability skills which help them to undertake their roles as well as helping them to become 'work ready'.

The system has become more professionalised, and reps have become more accountable for their actions. A code of conduct has been developed which outlines the expected behaviour and required responsibilities of reps. Failure to adhere to the code of conduct and failure to meet the expectation for reps could lead to the removal of a rep from their role. Rep election and rep removal policies have been implemented to create formalised processes for the system.

A new role of a Postgraduate Officer has been created, whose responsibility is to maintain close contacts with all Postgraduate Reps (both taught and research). They work with the Postgraduate Reps to help to improve the student experience for Postgraduate students.

These amendments aim to ensure that the charter reflects the more professionalised structure of the representation system, and makes reference to the formalised processes which are now in place. It also highlights the increased responsibilities and expectations of all reps.

On behalf of the University of Lincoln Students' Union;

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SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT The Representation Charter

Introduction

The University strongly believes in and promotes 'effective student voice' and recognises that it is essential for developing the University and its offering, as well as for quality assurance. The Student Academic Representation System is in place to ensure that students at the University are represented effectively in decision-making processes and to ensure that the student voice is heard in more than a tokenistic manner. Student Academic Representatives are elected students who represent their peers. They may also, at their discretion, take on additional responsibilities within the Student Representation System. Each Academic Rep agrees to abide to this code of practice when nominating him/herself for the position as well as agreeing to the Academic Representative Code of Conduct; similarly, staff will be expected to adhere to this Code of Practice when dealing with Academic Reps. This code of practice is in place to protect the rights of Academic Representatives, students and University staff.

The Student Academic Representation System is the product of a partnership between the University's Academic Colleges/Schools, academic staff, the Secretariat Department and the Students' Union; each partner has a key role to play. This charter, along with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Students' Union and University, sets out the Students' Union's responsibilities towards academic representation. General Enquiries about this system and about Academic Reps should be directed to the Students' Union.

Terminology:

Course Rep: An elected undergraduate student with the capacity to represent and act on behalf of the students within their programme level.

School Rep: An elected student with the capacity to represent and act on behalf of all students within their School.

College Officers: An elected student with the capacity to represent and act on behalf of all students within their College.

Postgraduate Officer: An elected student with the capacity to represent and act on behalf of all Postgraduate students.

School of ... Postgraduate Taught Reps: Elected postgraduate students with the capacity to represent and act on behalf of postgraduate taught students within their School

School of ... Postgraduate Research Reps: Elected postgraduate students with the capacity to represent and act on behalf of postgraduate research students within their School

VPAA: The Vice President Academic Affairs for the Students' Union

Academic Rep: All student representatives within the Academic Representation structure.

Academic Staff: University staff who teach students, e.g. Lecturers, Seminar Tutors, Programme Leaders.

Professional Support Staff: University Staff who do not teach students e.g. Administrators, Academic Officers, Secretariat Officers.

Student Engagement Champion: The staff member within a School responsible for supporting Academic Representatives to enhance the student experience.

Section 1: GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

All Academic Reps Will:

- Actively seek student opinion and feedback.
- Effectively represent the views of students to the University and the Students' Union, in a way that encompasses the views of all the students within their respective groups.
- Where possible, ensure that all views brought forward are based on evidence and not coloured by personal perception.
- Work with other Academic Reps and the VPAA to create a strong, influential student voice and to collectively conduct a dialogue between students, the University and the Students' Union.
- Show fairness, professionalism and a sensitivity to diversity issues when representing students. They will lead by example through showing respect to all.
- Attend all training and relevant events provided for Reps throughout the year.
- Attend all relevant committees they are a member of to represent the views of students.
- Be elected by their constituents in line with the Rep Election policy.
- Undertake all further responsibilities of an Academic Representative as outlined in the Academic Representative Code of Conduct and Academic Representative job description.

All Academic Reps will adhere to the Academic Rep Code of Conduct and all related policies.

Divisional Reps will also:

- **Act as a conduit for information between the School Rep and the Academic Reps in the School of Health and Social care and the Business School.**

College Officers will also:

- Attend Students' Union Executive Committee
- Attend All Student Members' Meetings to represent their student cohort.
- Regularly meet with their School Reps as per the College Officer job description and their School of... Postgraduate Reps to discuss the progress of their School and to prepare for committees and other meetings.
- Collate and share rep successes to champion good practice within their School.
- Lead in the delivery of Rep Forums
- Support School Reps in the delivery of Academic Representative Training
- Undertake all further responsibilities of a College Officer as outlined in the College Officer job description.

School Reps will also:

- Attend All Student Members' Meetings as a voting member to represent their student cohort.
- Regularly meet with Course Reps as per the School Rep job description and School of... Postgraduate Taught/ Research Reps to discuss progress on their course and to prepare for Subject Committee meetings.
- Collate and share rep successes to champion good practice within their School.
- Lead in the delivery of Academic Representative Training
- Undertake all further responsibilities of a School Representative as outlined in the School Rep job description.

The Postgraduate Officer will also:

- Attend All Student Members' Meetings to represent Post-Graduate Students
- Regularly hold events to build a community of Post-Graduate students
- Ensure that the views of Post-Graduate students are represented across all relevant areas of the University
- Run campaigns which improve the student experience for Post-Graduate students.

School of... Postgraduate Taught/Research Reps will also:

- Represent postgraduate students within their School/ College on Subject, College or Institutional Committees where required.
- Regularly meet with the School Rep or College Officer, and the Postgraduate Officer, to discuss the progress of postgraduate programmes within the school and to prepare for Subject Committee meetings, College Committees or Institutional Committees.

Students Will:

- Ensure that their voice is heard by communicating with their elected representatives and ensure that they utilise their respective Reps when necessary.
- Hold their elected Representatives to account by questioning performance and outcomes from Committees and agreed actions.

The University and its Staff Will:

- Fully support the Student Academic Representation System according to the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Students' Union and this Charter.
- Recognise and appreciate that Academic Reps are representing the views of their peers, and will therefore act upon reasonable requests made in the interests of improving the student experience.
- Treat Academic Reps and Colleagues respectfully in University and Students' Union meetings and Committees.
- Actively promote Academic Reps as vital members of Subject Committees and include them in the Committees business.

The Students' Union Will:

- Provide an academic representation system for Postgraduate and Undergraduate students, regardless of their mode of study by :
 - Promoting, electing and training Academic Reps to ensure delivery of an effective Academic Representative system, as bench marked against other University systems and NUS recommendations.
 - Provide continuous support to Academic Reps throughout their term, including creating space for them to share best practice with University staff and fellow Reps
 - Facilitating events to assist in the development of and networking between Academic Reps as well as events to network with Academic and Professional Support Staff.
 - Ensuring that all relevant University and College Committees have elected and trained Academic Reps
 - Hold records of all actions taken by representatives on behalf of their students.

Section 2: ELECTIONS

The number of Course Reps per undergraduate level per subject shall depend on the number of students enrolled.

Number of Course Reps per level per subject =
$$\frac{\text{Total undergraduate Students Enrolled}}{25}$$

The minimum number of Course Reps per undergraduate level per subject shall be 1. We recommend electing 3 reps per undergraduate level per subject.
The number of School of... Postgraduate Taught/Research Reps will depend on the number of postgraduate students enrolled within the School.

Number of School of... Postgraduate Taught Reps per School = $\frac{\text{Total postgraduate Taught Students Enrolled}}{25}$

Number of School of... Postgraduate Research Reps per School = $\frac{\text{Total postgraduate Research Students Enrolled}}{25}$

University Staff Will:

- Promote forthcoming elections to all students and will help encourage students to nominate themselves
- Support the Students' Union in holding an open, fair and democratic election in line with the Academic Representative Election policy.

Academic Rep Candidates Will:

- Be prepared to fulfil the role of an Academic Rep and their remit if elected.
- Nominate themselves for election to the relevant role.
- Be prepared to canvass students who will be voting.
- Abide to this Code of Conduct at all times.

The Students' Union Will:

- Promote and administer the Academic Rep elections in partnership with the University and will also encourage students to nominate themselves.
- Report the results of elections to students and the necessary academic and professional support staff in line with the Academic Representation Elections policy
- Ensure that all Academic Reps are adequately trained and equipped to represent students

Section 3: Problems

If a member of staff or a student has an issue with an Academic Rep fulfilling their role:

1. Talk informally to the Academic Rep
2. Report the matter to the Students' Union Student Voice Dept.
3. Refer the issue to the Vice-President Academic Affairs
4. The VPAA will resolve the issue with reference to the Academic Representative Code of Conduct and Academic Representative Removals Policy.

If Academic Reps have an issue with support from Staff, in relation to their role:

1. Talk to the Programme Leader
2. Talk to the Head of School / Department with Support from their School Rep
3. Talk to the School Rep/ College Officer
4. Report the matter to the Students' Union Student Voice Dept.
5. Ask the Vice-President Academic Affairs for assistance