1. Introduction

The student representative system falls under the representation function of the Students’ Union. The University and Hertfordshire Students’ Union are committed to ensuring that the student voice is heard, an important mechanism to do this is the receiving and responding to student feedback. A successful student rep system can provide valuable feedback regarding the academic experience particularly course content and design.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish a Code of Practice regarding the student rep system. This Code of Practice will support student reps by outlining their roles and responsibilities as well as what they can expect from the Students’ Union. This document will primarily outline the relationship between the Students’ Union and the student reps themselves.

This document also outlines the disciplinary procedure associated with the student rep system. By becoming a student rep, an individual is expected to meet the expectations outlined in this document and abide by the disciplinary procedure in Section 8. Student reps are student leaders and thus hold a position of power within this institution. Any complaints and grievances made against student reps will be taken seriously.

3. Expectations

3.1. The primary expectation of a student rep is to gather feedback from their peers and deliver this to the appropriate body, for example, a Module Leader, School Community Organiser, Elected Officer or the Students’ Union.

3.2. Once elected, a student rep will attend student rep training offered by the Students’ Union.

3.3. Student reps are expected to attend their Programme Committee Meetings (PCMs).

3.4. Student reps should engage in activities offered by their School, School Community Organiser (SCO) and by the Students’ Union where applicable. For example, a student rep can complete nominate themselves for Rep of the Month through the Students’ Union or help promote NSS engagement amongst students within their School.
3.5. Failure to meet the expectations in 3.2 and 3.3 will mean that an individual will not be recognised as a student rep for that particular academic year.

3.6. Student reps who have not engaged (not attended training or subsequent meetings and meetings) will be sent an email at the end of Semester A asking if they wish to continue with their role for Semester B. This provides an opportunity for student reps to resign their position if they wish to. Programme Leaders will then be notified about which student reps did not engage during Semester A.

4. **Election Protocols**

4.1. All elections should take place as early as possible, ideally by Week 4 of Semester A for standard Undergraduate programmes. This is so that those who are elected can be invited to training events.

4.2. Elections are typically held in classrooms and facilitated by a SCO or academic member of staff.

4.3. There must be a suitable amount of time after the notification of an election to allow for students to volunteer themselves. Level 5 and 6 students can be elected earlier in Semester A as the cohort should have an awareness of the student rep system.

4.4. By volunteering themselves, a student rep gives permission for their details to be shared with relevant departments and teams involved with the student representation process such as SCOs, elected officers, the Student Voice team and Programme Leaders so that they can be fully supported within their role.

4.5. A student rep is elected for the duration of the academic year, should they wish to stand in a subsequent year they will have to nominate themselves again.

4.6. The election process can be held in class, online or via an anonymous poll. The format should be agreed by Associate Deans, SCOs and members of staff where appropriate.

4.7. The Students’ Union will be able to guide and advise on election and recruitment upon request.

5. **Training and Support**

5.1. Training will be provided for all student reps; this will happen across both campuses during Semester A.

5.2. Student reps that missed the initial training process will be able to complete subsequent top-up training in Semester B.

5.3. Student reps can rely on support from the Students’ Union, SCOs, academic members of staff and their fellow student reps in relation to their role.
5.4. The Students’ Union will endeavour to contact student reps prior to their PCMs.
5.5. The Students’ Union will gather feedback from Programme Committee Meetings, feedback forms and SCOs in order to tailor activities to better support student reps.
5.6. Additional training and development opportunities will be advertised to student reps to further their personal and professional development.

6. Programme Committee Meetings

6.1. Attending PCMs is a core component of the student rep role. Student reps are expected to attend the meeting or send apologies with any relevant business or items that they wish to raise.
6.2. PCMs are a useful platform for student reps to raise any issues which are pertinent to the students which they are representing.
6.3. A well run PCM will allow opportunities for each individual to deliver their feedback.
6.4. PCMs are organised by the School and normally occur twice in an academic year.
6.5. PCMs are usually chaired by an academic member of staff with minutes taken. An action list should be completed for the next meeting.
6.6. Any actions or progress discussed at the PCM should be reported back to students by the student reps themselves.

7. Engagement, Monitoring and Enhancement

7.1. Teaching staff will encourage student engagement in these processes; for the whole student body not just exclusively for student reps.
7.2. Student reps are responsible for making themselves known to their cohort, but will receive support from the Students’ Union and their academic programme to ensure that this is the case.
7.3. Student reps will engage their peers by ‘closing the feedback loop’ and responding to any concerns raised by students.
7.4. The Students’ Union recognises that the needs of the student body are constantly changing; as a result, the Students’ Union will frequently ask for feedback from service users and ensure that the student rep system is relevant, exciting and fit for purpose.
7.5. The Students’ Union will maintain a database of student reps so that they can easily communicate with them. This list will be organised by School and identify which student reps are trained and who is still awaiting training.
7.6. The Students’ Union will benchmark their work against other Students’ Unions and the TSEP Course Rep Benchmarking Tool (or relevant benchmarking tool) each academic year.

8. Disciplinary Procedure

As students of the University, student reps must follow the same policies and regulations that all other students adhere to in the UH Student Code of Conduct - [https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/233102/SA01-Student-Code-of-Conduct-v08.0.pdf](https://www.herts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/233102/SA01-Student-Code-of-Conduct-v08.0.pdf).


The Students’ Union has a specific disciplinary procedure which student reps must follow, as outlined below. The intention of this disciplinary procedure is to ensure that student reps are reaching satisfactory standards and any complaints made against student reps are dealt with satisfactorily.

8.1. Breach of Conduct

As part of this procedure, a breach of discipline means (but is not limited to):

- Threatening, bullying or harassing any other person, whether physically or verbally;
- Assaulting any other person;
- Damaging any property, whether deliberately or negligently;
- Acting in contravention of the Students’ Union Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Acting without due regard for the safety of others;
- Acting with dishonesty or with intent to defraud;
- Using their position as a Student Rep to seek an unfair advantage in a Students’ Union election; or
- Slander of an individual associated with the University;

8.2 Raising a Complaint

A student or staff member can raise a complaint about a student rep by emailing reps@hertfordshire.su; the email should contain the phrase ‘Complaint’ in the subject. An investigation will then be conducted by the Student Voice team; this can involve contacting the complainant and any other parties relevant to the case. The student rep will be invited to attend a meeting with the Student Voice team. This is the final stage of the initial investigation where the following actions can be taken:

- No further action;
• Informal warning – Minor cases of misconduct can be resolved informally with the potential of follow-up meetings and mediation being introduced to monitor the situation;
• Formal warning – Moderate cases of misconduct can result in a formal warning. Any further misdemeanours will take this action into account;
• Removal from position – In severe cases of misconduct, a student rep can be removed from their position. In this scenario, their SCOs and Programme Leader will be informed.

8.3 Communicating Outcomes

After the investigation has taken place, the Student Voice team will communicate their decision via email within two working days. The Student Voice team reserve the right to notify the Trustee Board of any outcomes that have been reached.

8.4 Appeals

A student rep has the right to appeal any decision made by Student Voice team as part of the investigation. A student rep must notify the Student Voice team, in writing, within five working days of the date of the decision. An appeal can be made on the following grounds:

• A procedural or administrative error as part of the original investigation;
• The level of disciplinary sanction imposed; and
• Consideration of any new material evidence not produced as part of the original investigation;

8.5 The Appeal Process

The appeal will be heard by the VP Education. An appeal hearing will normally be held within 14 working days of an appeal letter being received by the Student Voice team. The appeal process should review new evidence produced by the student rep and/or any relevant information that meets the grounds for appeal outlined in Section 8.4.

The VP Education can consult with colleagues within the Students’ Union but should NOT involve members of the Student Voice team who were part of the original investigation. The outcome of the appeal could be (but is not limited to):

• To uphold the disciplinary sanction;
• To reduce the disciplinary sanction to a lower level;
• To increase the disciplinary sanction and/or impose other remedial action;
• To impose other remedial action; or
• To overturn the disciplinary decision and sanction;
8.6 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Records will be kept of alleged breaches of disciplinary rules and of subsequent developments, including written notes of all formal interviews under the disciplinary procedure and, where applicable, the appeals procedure.

The records are confidential and will be retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (or the current data protection legislation).