

Guide 1

The Student Voice and Representation Agreement

Guide 1: School
Representation
(Structure, Roles and
Responsibilities)



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School Representation Requirements

The Student Voice and Representation Agreement (SVRA) has been designed as a guide towards understanding a set of minimum requirements that should be met when operating the School representation system; however, if both the school and student representatives are in agreement, the School may propose amendments to their structure, positions and operations, within this framework.

Any proposed changes must be communicated to DUSA's Vice President Representation and the University's Director of Quality & Academic Standards prior to any decision being confirmed.

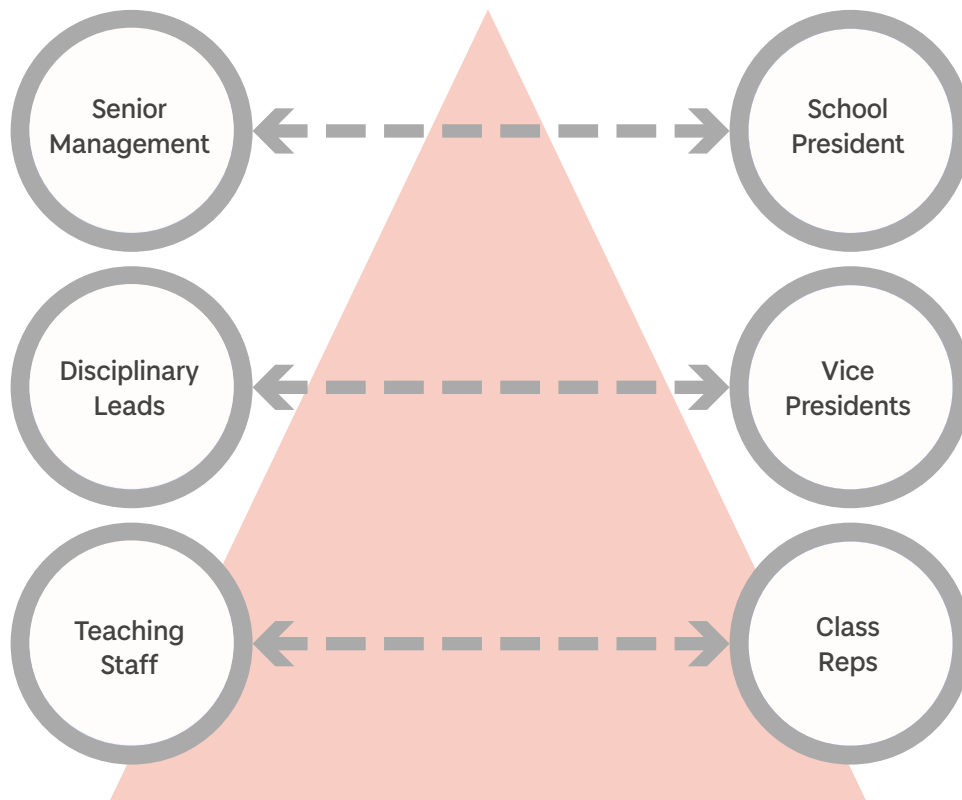
Expectations:

- All student representatives and staff work together in partnership and ensure that there is a respectful, honest and continuous conversation on enhancement of the learning experience
- Staff and student representatives work together to help all students understand how the representation system works and how they can get involved
- That the appointment of student representatives in the school is supported by student and staff leadership and is undertaken in a timely, fair, consistent and democratic manner.
- The opportunity to stand for representative positions is open to all students equally
- School staff will update the DUSA Vice President of Representation when Class Representatives and Vice Presidents have been elected/appointed, and confirm their names and university email address
- A record of elected representatives is maintained securely and updated by DUSA for the purposes of training, development and engagement activity
- DUSA and School staff ensure all student representatives are given access, and are encouraged, to attend training and development opportunities
- That formal meeting details (SSLC/TLC/QASC /School Board etc.) are properly and promptly communicated to relevant student representatives and staff
- That student and staff attendance at formal meetings is supported through physical and/or electronic means to support an effective meeting that captures a range of views
- That student representatives and staff work together throughout the year to engage students in activities to improve their learning journey
- That student and staff leads work together to communicate and update their wider cohorts regularly on actions taken and success achieved through accessible digital and physical platforms

² SSLC – student staff liaison committee, LTC – Learning and Teaching Committee, QASC – Quality and Academic Standards Committee

Structure

The School representation model is based on a three-level structure with representatives working with key staff members to ensure all duties are taken forward in partnership:



Class Representatives

Class Representatives typically represent students in a module or a cohort³ of students in undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Each module can have more than one representative if it would contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the student voice. The School Presidents, working with their respective Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching, should determine which model(s) to adopt within the School.

Class representatives play an essential role in ensuring that:

- students' feedback is captured and reviewed
- feedback is communicated constructively to relevant staff and other student representatives
- they contribute ideas and solutions at and out with formal meetings
- they communicate updates to their fellow classmates

Class representatives also play a vital role in supporting modules and programmes quality processes by contributing to reflective analysis of module evaluations and/or annual review activities and other enhancement processes

Students in a module or cohort should be given the chance to be considered for a Class Representative role, with the nomination and/or election process (see guide 2) taking place within the first 3 weeks of a programme's semester. For student cohorts who are continuing in a programme (e.g. year 2, 3 and 4 of undergraduate programmes or year 2 of part-time taught postgraduate programmes), it is encouraged that class rep elections/appointments are held at the end of the second semester prior to the commencement of the following academic year. This is to aid in the handover of representatives and to build a working relationship with the newly elected School President and Vice President group.

³A cohort of student is sometimes also known as an intake or year group. A student may represent at the level of a singular module and the students enrolled on that module, or they may represent year x of a programme for all the modules that they take in that year. The suitability of the model will depend on programme structures and size of cohort within the School.



Class Representatives will normally begin their term as soon as they are elected and/or at the beginning of the academic year and will finish in the role once they have reached the end of the module or year of study. The Associate Dean for Learning & Teaching and the School President may decide on the best starting and finishing times as suits the needs of their school.

Individuals may act as a representative of more than one module at a time and over the course of their programme. Students should not automatically continue as representatives in the next academic year (though this does not bar them from re-running for the position); and a process should be undertaken to provide an opportunity for all students to stand for the position within their module, cohort and/or programme.

All Class Representatives will be provided with training by DUSA (See Guide 3).

Vice Presidents

Vice Presidents represent the student voice in each of the Schools disciplines' and provide an important link between the Class Representative and the School President, by being aware of, and capturing what is happening in their discipline's learning environments.

They also ensure that decisions and information is effectively communicated to the Class Representative they work with.

Vice Presidents can deputise for School Presidents when they are unable to attend a meeting or are unable to take forward their duties. Vice Presidents can also act as an interim in situations where there is no

available School President. This should be in agreement with DUSA's Vice President of Representation and Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching) in each School.

Vice Presidents work directly with the heads of each discipline and partner with them to take forward action plans and activities. The Vice Presidents can also support the School President by chairing their disciplines Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC) and working with School staff to organise and run the meetings.

Vice Presidents also take a lead in promoting representative opportunities within the School and supporting engagement in any elections (Guide 2). They would normally, be elected from the current or previous Class Representative group; however, the role is open to any student who wishes to be considered.

Vice Presidents, would normally be elected within the first five weeks of the new academic year or may be elected in Semester 2 of the previous year. Vice Presidents elected at the end of semester 2 would begin their term of office at the beginning of July and will conclude their term at the end of June the following year. Students may stand for multiple terms of office as Vice President.

The School leads for representation, in conjunction with support from the School President are responsible for running the election/appointment process for the Vice President group.

All Vice Presidents will be provided with training by DUSA (Guide 3).

School Presidents

School Presidents lead student representation in each academic school and are in place to represent all students regardless of course or level.

School Presidents work directly with senior School management and in particular the Dean, Associate Dean Group and School Manager.

The School President is also a full voting member of the Students' Representative Council (SRC) and the School Presidents Forum (SPF). They are supported by DUSA's Vice President of Representation and Vice President of Academia.

The School President is elected (Guide 2) from amongst current and fully matriculated students of each school. Candidates are expected to identify goals, which, if elected, they are mandated to take forward across their year in office.

The School President works with all their student representatives to capture and respond to student feedback and supports partnership working with staff. They will also work to resolve and escalate serious issues to senior School or University management when required.

School Presidents will support students to fully participate in quality enhancement processes (Module evaluation, Periodic Programme Reviews, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies etc.) and should take a role in encouraging students to contribute to these important activities.

The election of School Presidents is coordinated by DUSA and the Vice President of Representation. School Presidents begin their term of office at the beginning of July until the end of June the following year. School Presidents may stand for multiple terms of office.

All School Presidents will be provided with training by DUSA (Guide 3).



International College Dundee (ICD)

The ICD representation system involves the election of two Class Representatives per semester (September and January) from the student body in each of its two disciplines.

A minimum of three "Student Forums" will be organised by ICD across the academic year to bring class representatives and lead staff members together to discuss key issues and developments.

ICD will elect a Vice President from a pool of former ICD students who undertake support and development roles within the ICD in conjunction with their own studies. The Vice Presidents will be elected by ICD students by week 5 of the academic year and Vice Presidents will chair the Student Forums.

The Vice President will also provide feedback and work closely with the School President of Social Sciences throughout the year. ICD Vice President may be invited to Social Science SSLC by School President.

Supportive student roles

In addition to the core student representative positions outline above, some schools have opted to create themed or community-based positions which are appointed by the School President.

Though these are not essential, they can provide additional capacity and specialisation to focus on areas, such as:

- Employability
- Community
- Sustainability

School representation leads are encouraged to consider whether additional roles with specific remits would assist in enhancing the learning experience. Where these are established the DUSA Vice President of Representation should be informed.

Other key Representative and student positions

Welfare Champions

The role of a Welfare Champion is to provide volunteer peer-to-peer support for students who are struggling with life at university, they will work with the Vice President of Student Welfare (VPSW) in DUSA to integrate and create campaigns targeting specific issues raised within the school.

The support aspect of the role focuses on guiding students to understand what services are available to support them both within DUSA and the University.

In 2019-20 the role was piloted in the School of Art & Design, School of Dentistry, School of Life Sciences, School of Humanities and later School of Social Sciences. Those students involved have helped raise awareness of current campaigns and tackled issues raised in their school.

1. The Role

- Signposting – referring students to support services
- Knowledge of student services to appropriately recommend what services are available
- Matters that are confidential, peer-connect training will cover this.
- Creating school specific campaigns and aiding the VPSW in raising awareness of current initiatives and issues.
- Become integrated in the SRC sub-committees to discuss and develop plans of action on welfare related matters.

Halls Representation

Students who reside in University of Dundee Halls have a representation system which feeds into the SRC. Each flat will have a representative which will work with Student Services colleagues to communicate their experience and work to improve their residence.

Students living in university halls also have a seat on the Students' Representative Council (SRC) and a representative is chosen from the "Flat Reps" to take up that post with Student Services colleagues running the process.



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