

## QUALITY MANUAL: STUDENT REPRESENTATION, ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

*The University is committed to ensuring that students have the opportunity to contribute to and shape their learning experience, individually, collectively and through the Students' Union.*

*In this chapter, you will find descriptions of student representative roles, training, election and liaison meeting requirements, student representation at University committees and boards and requirements for student course and module handbooks.*

### 1.1 Principles

- 1.1.1 The University is committed to ensuring that students are provided with the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of their learning experience, individually, collectively and through the Students' Union. One of the principles of the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy, 2015-22 is to work with students as partners:

*"We recognise that student representation, engagement and partnership have important roles in improving the student experience and delivering an excellent education and outcomes."*

- 1.1.2 The role of student representative is vital to assure a high-quality student experience and to support student retention and success. The following principles provide the framework for student representation within the management of the learning experience.
- (i) Student participation and partnership is an essential core component in the design, delivery, review and enhancement of a high-quality educational provision.
  - (ii) There must be student engagement and representation on all University Academic Board committees and sub-committees, key Faculty committees and in all aspects of course management.
  - (iii) Student engagement in reviewing the learning experience is a key aspect of the normal operation of the University; it should enable student involvement in the proactive decision-making processes that underpin their educational experience both within their course of study and across the wider University.
  - (iv) The diverse nature of the student population requires that innovative and flexible approaches are adopted in order to overcome the barriers to participation such as mode or location of study.
  - (v) Students and staff are provided with sufficient information, background knowledge, training and on-going support to enable them to work together as full partners in the production of a high-quality student experience.
  - (vi) A successful student representation policy recognises that students must be made aware of the outcomes of their involvement in the quality assurance process.
  - (vii) The operation of student representation will be monitored by partnership between the Quality Standards Office and the Students' Union in order to ensure that students are enabled to make an effective contribution to the provision and enhancement of a high-quality educational experience.

## 1.2 Student Partnership Agreement



Our shared mission is to pursue excellence in higher education: transforming individuals, creating knowledge, enriching communities and building a sustainable future. This Partnership Agreement is part of this vision and was developed in equal partnership between Canterbury Christ Church University, Christ Church Students' Union and students.

### WE VALUE

- The development of the whole person, respecting and nurturing the inherent dignity and potential of each individual
- The integration of excellent teaching, research and knowledge exchange
- The celebration of being a part of a community which recognises the power of higher education to enrich individuals
- Our friendly, inclusive and professional community of students and staff, preparing individuals to contribute to a just and sustainable future.

### THE UNIVERSITY

To this end the University undertakes to provide students with:

- A high quality, holistic student experience and opportunities in relation to learning and the wider experience of university
- Access to appropriate support, information, advice and guidance on all aspects of studying, living and working before, during and after their programme.

### STUDENTS

To this end students undertake to:

- Be proud ambassadors for the University and the Students' Union and represent them in a manner that best promotes their respective reputations
- Take responsibility for managing their own learning: actively engaging in their programme and supporting their student representatives to help create meaningful dialogue and impactful change.

### THE STUDENTS' UNION

To this end the Students' Union undertake to:

- Represent the interests of students at the University at local and national levels, and champion student representation
- Provide independent advice on academic issues
- Provide a wide range of services and opportunities to support active student and community engagement.

### **1.3 Student Representatives**

1.3.1 There will be four strands of elected student representatives:

- Course (formerly Course) Representatives;
- School Representatives;
- Faculty Representatives;
- University Representatives.

1.3.2 All representatives will be elected through a transparent and independent democratic process. All students in the cohort to be represented will be eligible to nominate and elect their representatives and to stand for election.

1.3.3 The purpose of all student representatives is to act as a voice for the students, providing feedback to the University and Christ Church Students' Union on key issues which affect the student experience and to work proactively to develop and enhance the wider University experience. The system will be most effective when student representatives communicate regularly with the cohort being spoken for.

1.3.4 The Students' Union has a key role in the training and supporting of student representatives, working across the University to provide administrative support, expert advice and to facilitate the creation of a network of representatives.

1.3.5 The names and contact details of all student representatives will be held by the Students' Union and by the University's Quality and Standards Office, and will be publicised to the student body via the virtual learning environment and any other suitable medium. The Students' Union and the Student Communication Unit will support this activity.

1.3.6 Student representation is to be approved as an item for inclusion in section 6.1 of the HEAR and student representation is a suitable volunteering activity for progression through the Christ Church Extra Award.

### **1.4 Course Representatives**

1.4.1 Both undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses will have Course Representatives. There will be one or more Course Representatives(s) for each level of a course. Course Student Representatives will represent students and act as their voice on a course. Activities will include taking part in Staff-Student Liaison Meetings (SSLM) and other course meetings. Course Student Representatives will be expected to Chair SSLMs on a regular basis.

1.4.2 The number of Course Representatives will be determined by the number of students at each course level. There will be a minimum of one Course Representative for every 40 students for each level of a course, irrespective of whether it is a full-time and part-time course.

1.4.3 Elections will normally be held towards the start of each level of a course. The Students' Union will identify and publicise a two-week period during which the elections will take place. Off-site students would be given a longer time in which to vote.

1.4.4 Prior to the elections and training of Course Representatives, no course should hold an SSLM or any other meeting requiring student representation.

1.4.5 There is no limit to the number of times that a student may serve as a Course Representative.

1.4.6 The name, position and current institution of each External Examiner will be communicated to all students through inclusion in the Student Course Handbook and published via the virtual learning environment.

1.4.7 External Examiners' reports must be shared with Course Representatives, through Student-Staff Liaison Meetings and any other mechanism deemed appropriate by the School/Centre. Course Representatives and other students should be included in discussions during the formulation of the course team's response to External Examiners' reports. The reports and the responses must also be available via the virtual learning environment.

- 1.4.8 Course Representatives must be involved in discussions during Boards of Study and participate in the creation of reports and responses to External Examiners' reports

## **1.5 School Representatives**

- 1.5.1 There will, as far as the student population of a school allows, be one undergraduate and one taught postgraduate Student Representative for each School, who will normally represent the School on the Faculty Quality Committee and the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee. The Chair of the Committees will ensure that both undergraduate and taught postgraduate population are represented. These School Representatives and such additional representatives as required, to ensure that School Representatives are not over-burdened, will sit on relevant School Committee and/or working groups.
- 1.5.2 School Representatives will normally be elected from Course Representatives with existing experience of the role or from students who have participated in a form of academic quality assurance, for example, as members of University Approval panels. Any student is, however, eligible to take on the role of School Representative.
- 1.5.3 School Representatives can be serving concurrently as Course Representatives.
- 1.5.4 Separate arrangements will be made for the representation of postgraduate research students through the Graduate College and the Postgraduate Research Association.
- 1.5.5 School Representatives should co-ordinate communication and meetings between the Course Representatives within the School and create a supportive network.

## **1.6 Faculty Representatives**

- 1.6.1 There will be Faculty Representatives elected as are required to enable students to sit on each Faculty Board and to represent the Faculty on those University Committees and Working Groups which require Faculty representation. This will include one undergraduate and one taught postgraduate representative on each Faculty Board. Separate arrangements will be made for the representation of postgraduate research students through the Graduate College and the Postgraduate Research Association.
- 1.6.2 Faculty Representatives will normally be elected from Course and School Representatives with existing experience of the role or from students who have participated in a form of academic quality assurance, for example, as members of University Approval panels. Any student is, however, eligible to take on the role of Faculty Representative.
- 1.6.3 Faculty Representatives can be serving concurrently as Course and/or School Representatives.
- 1.6.4 Faculty Representatives should co-ordinate communication and meetings between the School Representatives within the Faculty and create a supportive network.

## **1.7 University Representatives**

- 1.7.1 Students are represented on a number of University Committees and Working Groups by Students' Union Sabbatical Officers. Where additional student representation is required, and is not provided by Faculty Representatives, additional representatives will be directly elected.
- 1.7.2 University Representatives will normally be elected from Course and School Representatives with existing experience of the role or from students who have participated in a form of academic quality assurance, for example, as members of University Approval panels. Any student is, however, eligible to take on the role of Faculty Representative.
- 1.7.3 University Representatives can be serving concurrently as Course, and/or School and/or Faculty Representatives.

## **1.8 Election of Student Representatives**

- 1.8.1 All representatives will be elected through a transparent and independent democratic process. All students in the cohort to be represented will be eligible to nominate and elect their representatives and to stand for election. The election process will be on-line and will be organised and run by the Students' Union.
- 1.8.2 Deans, Heads of School, Course Directors or Committee Chairs are responsible for providing the Students' Union with the terms of reference of those committees on which student representation is desirable and/or essential. The Students' Union will publicise the opportunity and request nominations.
- 1.8.3 All eligible students can volunteer for those committees whose remit is of interest to them e.g. equality & diversity, widening participation. The Students' Union may also be provided with nominations by the person requesting representation.
- 1.8.4 The Students' Union will set up the electronic election process and inform the relevant student cohort. Even if there is only one nomination an election will still be held with an option for students to vote RON (re-open nominations.)
- 1.8.5 All students will be invited to stand for election as School or Faculty Representatives. There will be a minimum of 10 School Representatives and 3 Faculty Representatives.

## **1.9 Training of Student Representatives**

- 1.9.1 Training for all student representatives will be undertaken by the Students' Union in partnership with the University. Training will be offered throughout the academic year in a timely manner and dates will be disseminated in appropriate and varied ways through the Students Union and the Student Communications Unit.
- 1.9.2 Online training is available for off-site students and those who are unable to attend. Before undertaking any representation role, the student should complete the training either in person or online.
- 1.9.3 Training will include guidance on Chairing Meetings and the development of Chairing Skills plus guidance on what is considered a general concern and how an individual student issue should be handled.
- 1.9.4 Training by the Students' Union will take place regularly so these representatives will be ready to take up their positions in the following academic year.

## **1.10 Guidelines for Meetings Involving Student Representation**

- 1.10.1 All student representatives should be informed of the agenda and provided with all relevant papers for each meeting that they attend. This must normally be done at least one week before the meeting and with sufficient time to allow consultation with the student body where required. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the student representatives are given the opportunity for briefing before a meeting.
- 1.10.2 The meeting dates and times must be published at the beginning of the academic year and the first meeting must not take place before there has been an opportunity for the student representatives to have undertaken training.
- 1.10.3 Where a student is required to travel to another campus to attend a meeting, travel expenses should be paid for a journey over and above their usual commute to University.
- 1.10.4 Student representatives should be enabled to contribute to the agenda or a meeting where appropriate.
- 1.10.5 Anonymity is maintained at all times.
- 1.10.6 Student representatives must not be required to take the meeting notes under any circumstances.

1.10.7 The Chair of a committee is responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures are made available to student representatives. These should include relevant details of University and School/Centre structures, details of roles, policies and procedures relating to the business of the committee.

### 1.11 Governance of the Student Representation System

1.11.1 A review of the system of student representation, including Student Course, School, Faculty and University Representatives, will be undertaken annually by the Students’ Union and University in partnership. This will include gathering data regarding student representative attendance at meetings and feedback from all student representatives as well as from Course Directors, Heads of School, Deans and Chairs of University committees.

1.11.2 The Students’ Union will also provide the opportunity for students to provide feedback throughout the year and the Students’ Union and University will work in partnership to resolve any issues as they arise.

1.11.3 The University will seek to ensure that student representation meets the requirements of statutory bodies.

1.11.4 The figures below set out the requirements for student representation on institutional and Faculty committees. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the many possible types of student engagement in aspects of quality monitoring and review.

**Figure 1.1 Student Representatives Required for Institutional Committees**

Committee	SU Sabbatical Officer Requirements	Student Requirements
Academic Board	SU President SU President (Wellbeing)	None
Academic Strategy Committee	None	None
Education and Student Experience Committee	SU President	1 student representative from each Faculty
Research & Enterprise Integrity Committee	None	1 postgraduate research student
Enterprise and Engagement Board	None	1 student member
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Working Group	SU President	1 student from each Faculty

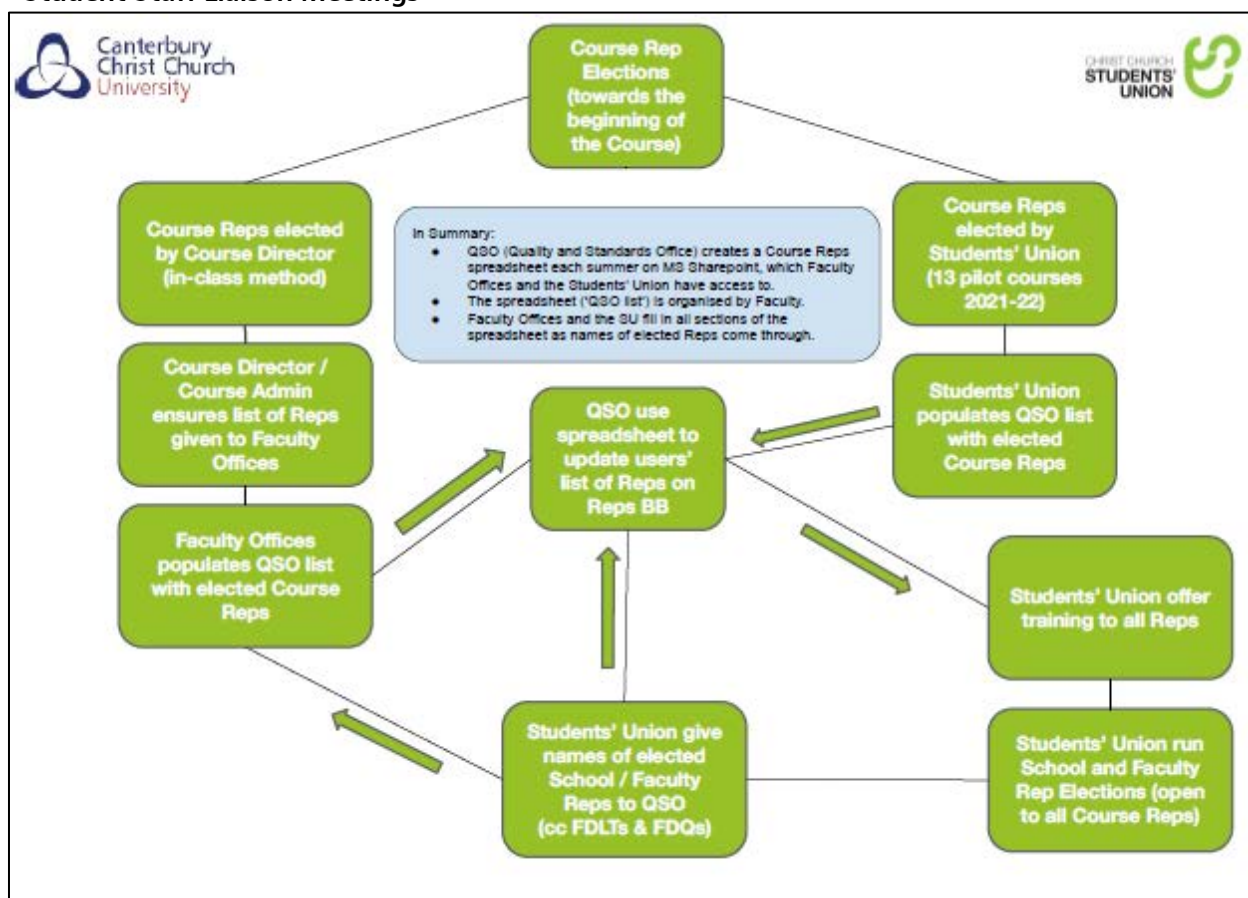
Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee	SU President (Development)	None
Professional Services Quality Committee	SU President	None
Quality Monitoring & Review Sub-Committee	SU President	1 student representative from each Faculty
Research Degrees Sub-Committee	None	2 postgraduate research students (representatives of the Postgraduate Research Association)
Research Quality Enhancement and Excellence Group	None	None

**Figure 1.2 Student Representatives Required for Faculty Committees**

Committee	SU Requirements	Student Requirements
Faculty Board	None	At least two students (taken from areas of study determined by the Faculty Board)
Faculty Quality Committee	None	A student representative from each school and centre
Faculty Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee	None	A student representative from each school and centre
Faculty Research and Enterprise Committee	None	1 Postgraduate research student
Faculty Ethics Panel	None	1 Postgraduate research student

**Figure 1.3 Administrative Process for Course Representation Elections in 2021-22**

### 1.12 Student-Staff Liaison Meetings



1.12.1 Student-Staff Liaison Meetings play an integral role in the University's approach to student engagement in academic governance. This policy has been drawn up in consultation with Course Representatives and with the Students' Union and represents the minimum standard that is required from each course. Courses may implement this guidance as appropriate to their needs and structure and are encouraged to develop the role of Course Representatives beyond this minimum standard. It should be noted that Student-Staff Liaison Meetings should not be seen as the only way through which students should be engaged. The student body should be consulted proactively on key course developments. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that the minimum standards are met.

1.12.2 Student-Staff Liaison Meetings are a forum for the active partnership between course staff and Course Representatives. Students should participate in:

- informing and enhancing teaching, learning, assessment and content of course modules, through both formal and informal channels;
- providing advice from the student perspective with regards to course planning and development;
- providing feedback on the availability, sufficiency and appropriateness of learning resources;
- informing and where appropriate improving the organisation and management of the course;
- facilitating a fair and equal University experience for the diverse members of the student population;



- providing a written or verbal report on student views to all appropriate committees.
- providing feedback to the student body with regard to the meetings and the issues discussed.

### **1.13 Composition of Staff-Student Liaison Meetings**

- 1.13.1 There must be a Student-Staff Liaison Meeting (SSLM) to cover each course (or group of courses). These should be held a minimum of one per semester, to enable continuous consultation and feedback.
- 1.13.2 Student-Staff Liaison Meeting should comprise
- all Course Representatives for the Course;
  - the Course Director;
  - sufficient members of the academic staff as determined by the Head of School in consultation with the Course Director to enable the meeting to be effective.
- 1.13.3 Whilst the Student-Staff Liaison meeting will determine who should act in the role of chair, it is expected that this shall be a Course Representative.
- 1.13.4 If a Course Representative is unable to attend a SSLM due to being off-campus an alternative method, such as a live-stream should be found to ensure inclusion.

### **1.14 Timing of Staff-Student Liaison Meetings**

- 1.14.1 It is the responsibility of the Course Director to set the meetings in a timely manner and circulate the details to all relevant Course Representatives. The meeting dates, times and locations must be published in the Student Course Handbook.
- 1.14.2 The first SSLM should not take place before the elections and opportunity for training of Course Representatives has taken place.
- 1.14.3 Student-Staff Liaison Meeting dates, agendas, minutes and action points should be made available to Course Representatives via the course Virtual Learning Environment and/or any other suitable medium.
- 1.14.4 Student-Staff Liaison Meetings should normally be held in the location that the course is delivered. Where a student is required to travel to another campus to attend a Student-Staff Liaison meeting, travel expenses should be paid for journeys over and above their usual commute to University.

### **1.15 Conduct of Meetings**

- 1.15.1 Student-Staff Liaison Meetings are mechanisms for discussing matters relating to courses and course delivery; Student-Staff Liaison Meetings should be used to discuss matters of general concern not particular matters relating to individual students.
- 1.15.2 Staff and Course Representatives should be able to contribute to the agenda making sure there is plenty of time to discuss all issues.
- 1.15.3 Course Representatives and staff should not discuss students or staff by name during the meeting, making sure confidentiality is kept at all times.
- 1.15.4 Notes of the meeting will be taken by a person provided by the School/Centre and circulated to all parties to check the accuracy. Notes should be approved by the next meeting and actions confirmed. Under no circumstances should Course Representatives be asked to take the notes.

### **1.16 Business of Meetings**

- 1.16.1 In order for Student-Staff Liaison Meetings to be effective their business should include

- External Examiner reports and the response made by the School/Centre; these should also be made available to the wider student body via the virtual learning environment.
- summary reports on course and/or module evaluation data.
- analysis of relevant Student Survey data.

1.16.2 Heads of School/Centre are responsible for ensuring that appropriate School/Centre and University policies and procedures are made available to Course Representatives. These should include relevant details of University and School/Centre structures, details of the role of the Course Director and policies and procedures relating to student matters and quality processes. This information should also be available through course handbooks.

1.16.3 Course Directors should timetable feedback to the student body from Student-Staff Liaison Meetings to occur as part of the teaching week.

### **1.17 Other matters**

1.17.1 Students should be informed how the feedback will be given, such as through the Virtual Learning Environment. Time should be set aside to enable feedback from Student-Staff Liaison meetings to be given to students where dissemination is to occur as part of the teaching week.

1.17.2 Where a student must travel to another campus to attend a Student-Staff Liaison meeting, travel expenses should be paid to those Student Course Representatives having to travel over and above their usual commute to University.

### **1.18 Student Handbooks**

1.18.1 The student handbook templates help to ensure that students have essential and consistent information about their course of study and modules and are aware of sources of further information, advice and support. The required University templates for student handbooks can be downloaded from <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/quality-and-standards-office/regulations-policies-and-procedures/student-handbook.aspx>.

### **1.19 Student Course Handbook**

1.19.1 Students should be provided with one course handbook only, using the above template, for each course of study. Separate handbooks may be provided for modules and placements.

### **1.20 Student Course Handbook (Collaborative Provision)**

1.20.1 The Student Course Handbook (Collaborative Provision) is a slightly adapted version of the Student Course Handbook for use by collaborative partners. It maintains the need for consistent information while recognising that there are some inevitable differences in the information provided to our students studying with a collaborative partner. It ensures that students are also provided with information regarding the local delivery arrangements.

### **1.21 Module Handbooks**

1.21.1 This handbook is to be given to students at the beginning of each module. It is intended to cover all the essential information that students are entitled to know at the beginning of a module. It should be published by module leader/course administrator under the "Module Information" area on each module Blackboard. It is important that the University moves towards a unified template so that all students, including those studying combined honours, receive equitable information.

1.21.2 All modules are required to use the Module Handbook template from 2021/22 academic year.

## **1.22 Initial Approval of Handbooks**

- 1.22.1 For new courses, student course handbooks are to be presented to the course approval event for approval. The panel may set conditions and recommendations relating to the student course handbook.
- 1.22.2 For new collaborative partnerships, the partner approval event must be provided with the student course handbook (collaborative partners). The panel may set conditions and recommendations relating to this.

## **1.23 Ongoing Approval of Handbooks**

- 1.23.1 All handbooks should be reviewed prior to each new cohort to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose. Where amendments are made to handbooks, the revised version of the handbook requires approval by the Head of School or their nominee prior to issue to students.
- 1.23.2 The introduction of Boards of Study in 2020 provides a single location for the annual sign-off of handbooks by Heads of School. All completed handbooks should be provided to the Board of Study. Recognising challenging circumstances, 2020/21 was a transition year in terms of this change in practice.

## **1.24 Ongoing Approval of Handbooks (Collaborative Provision)**

- 1.24.1 For Validated provision handbooks should be drafted by the Partner Course Director, who should liaise with the Academic Link Tutor (CCCU) during drafting, and submitted to the Board of Study for approval. A copy should be provided to relevant CCCU partnership office (IPAD / UK Partnerships).
- 1.24.2 For Franchised provision handbooks should be adapted from the in-house student course handbook by the Partner Course Director, localised text checked by the Academic Link Tutor (CCCU), and submitted to Board of Study for approval. A copy should be provided to relevant CCCU partnership office (IPAD / UK Partnerships).
- 1.24.3 For Transnational provision handbooks should be drafted by the Partner Course Director, checked by the Academic Link Tutor (CCCU), checked by the Senior Academic Link Tutor (CCCU), submitted to Board of Study for approval. The SALT (CCCU) should ensure continuity between courses within a partner/jurisdiction and mediate with the relevant Boards of Study to ensure consistency (the SALT may take advice from a bilingual Academic Link Tutor when in a language other than English). Student course handbooks for TNE partners will be saved on each TNE partners Teams site ABOUT THE QUALITY MANUAL