

## Staff Student Committees – Information and Standard Terms of Reference

Staff Student Committees (SSC) are formed of University staff and Student Reps who meet together to discuss issues relating to the overall academic experience of the undergraduates, postgraduate taught students or postgraduate researchers in their constituency.

Each Staff Student Committee is responsible for representing students or postgraduate researchers in a particular constituency. A constituency may refer to a department, study programme, year group or research group.

### Membership

- Student Rep Chair or Co-Chair
- Staff Liaison Contact (SLC) (*who may also be the Staff Co-Chair*).
- Secretary (*This role can be carried out by a member of staff or a Student Rep*)
- Student Reps
- University staff members (*SSCs are likely to benefit from having other University staff members on their Membership, preferably with representation from both academic and support staff*).

*Please note that role descriptions for the positions of Student Rep, Student Rep Chair/Co-Chair and Student Rep Secretary can be found in 'A Guide for Running a Student Rep Election'. Information on how these roles are selected or elected can also be found in this guidance document.*

### Terms of Reference

Each Staff Student Committee has the flexibility to operate slightly differently in order to meet the needs of its Student Reps. However, the Terms of Reference below outline the purpose and requirements that all Staff Student Committees must adhere to.

- a) To discuss topics relating to learning, teaching and research, and the overall academic experience of the SSC's constituency. Topics may include but are not limited to:
  - i. The content and quality of academic programmes and/or modules
  - ii. Learning and research resources, facilities and events
  - iii. Learning and teaching methods
  - iv. Assessment and assessment feedback methods
  - v. Support structures for constituency members.
- b) For Student Reps to raise any views, questions and experiences, gathered from their constituency, which relate to the academic experience of their constituency members.
- c) For SSC members to discuss the views, questions and experiences raised by Student Reps and to explore the ways in which any issues raised may be addressed or resolved.
- d) For SSC members to feed back information and outcomes on issues discussed and actions agreed at previous SSC meetings.
- e) University staff SSC members may ask Student Reps to gather the views of their constituency members on relevant University matters.
- f) The SSC is responsible for providing feedback to its constituency on the work it is undertaking and the issues it has discussed.
- g) The SSC must not engage in unduly personal discussion of individual staff members or individual constituency members.
- h) The SSC must not discuss the personal complaints or grievances of any individual constituency members. Should these topics arise, the constituency member should be signposted to where they can receive appropriate support, or informed of which alternative channel they can raise their concern.
- i) An SSC meeting during the summer term should be used to discuss and agree the content of the SSC Annual Report (unless an alternative means of agreeing the report is determined by the SSC). All members of the SSC should be involved in writing the Annual Report. Please see paragraph p for more information.

At least once per year SSCs should discuss:

- j) Section A of the External Examiner reports relevant to the student body represented by the SSC (*Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught SSCs only*).
- k) The subject specific report of NSS results (available from [www.unistats.direct.gov.uk](http://www.unistats.direct.gov.uk)) and the School's NSS action plan (*Undergraduate SSCs only*). The PTES and PRES should also be considered by Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Researcher SSCs.
- l) A summary of the outcomes of the annual programme review (*Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught SSCs*) or postgraduate research annual review (*Postgraduate Research SSCs*) process.

## Reporting Structures

- m) For items arising out of SSC meetings needing immediate consideration and action, it may be appropriate for them to be taken to the School Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) or equivalent, or the College LTC. It may also be appropriate for issues arising from postgraduate research SSC meetings to be taken to the School Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee (R&KTC) or equivalent.
- n) Some issues raised by the SSC may not be resolved within SSC meetings or through additional work undertaken outside of SSC meetings (but still within the School). In this situation, the SLC should submit a report outlining the relevant matters of concern to the College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC), the College Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), and/or the College Graduate Board (for Postgraduate Researcher related issues). The Student Rep Chair/Co-Chair should be involved in agreeing the content of this report before it is submitted to the relevant Committee. or the College R&KTC.
- o) SSCs must provide their minutes to the School Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, who will regularly report to the College QAEC on the operation of SSCs within their School. College QAECs may ask to see copies of SSC minutes where specific issues needing attention have arisen.
- p) All SSC members are to contribute to the Annual SSC Report due for completion in the Summer Term.
  - i. The Annual Report will address operational matters and include a summary of issues considered by the SSC during the academic session.
  - ii. The Academic Quality Unit (AQU) and the Guild of Students Vice President Education, will summarise the responses received from the Annual Reports and produce College level summary reports for College QAEC and College LTC, and a University level summary report to be considered at the October meeting of the University Education Committee (UEC).
  - iii. In response to the issues raised in the summary reports, College and University level actions will be determined.
  - iv. The agreed College and University level actions will be communicated to students and postgraduate researchers via the Guild of Students website.
  - v. SSCs are to formally consider the agreed College and University level actions at one of their Autumn Term meetings.
  - vi. The UEC will monitor progress made against the agreed actions in the Spring Term.

## Additional information about Staff Student Committees

How often should an SSC meet?

SSCs are required to meet at least once per term and at least three times per year. However we would encourage SSCs to meet more regularly than this if possible, in order to address issues as quickly as possible.

Do minutes need to be taken?

Yes, minutes of every SSC meeting should be taken and distributed as soon as possible to all SSC members. Minutes may also be distributed to the SSC's constituency as a way of informing them about the issues discussed at SSC meetings and any actions that have been agreed. SSC minutes must also be submitted (by the SLC) to the appropriate School committees and to the School Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (see paragraph k).

**For more information on Staff Student Committee meetings, please refer to section 6.5 of the Student Representation System Policy 2011-12.**