



Strath Union & University of Strathclyde

Student Academic Representation Policy

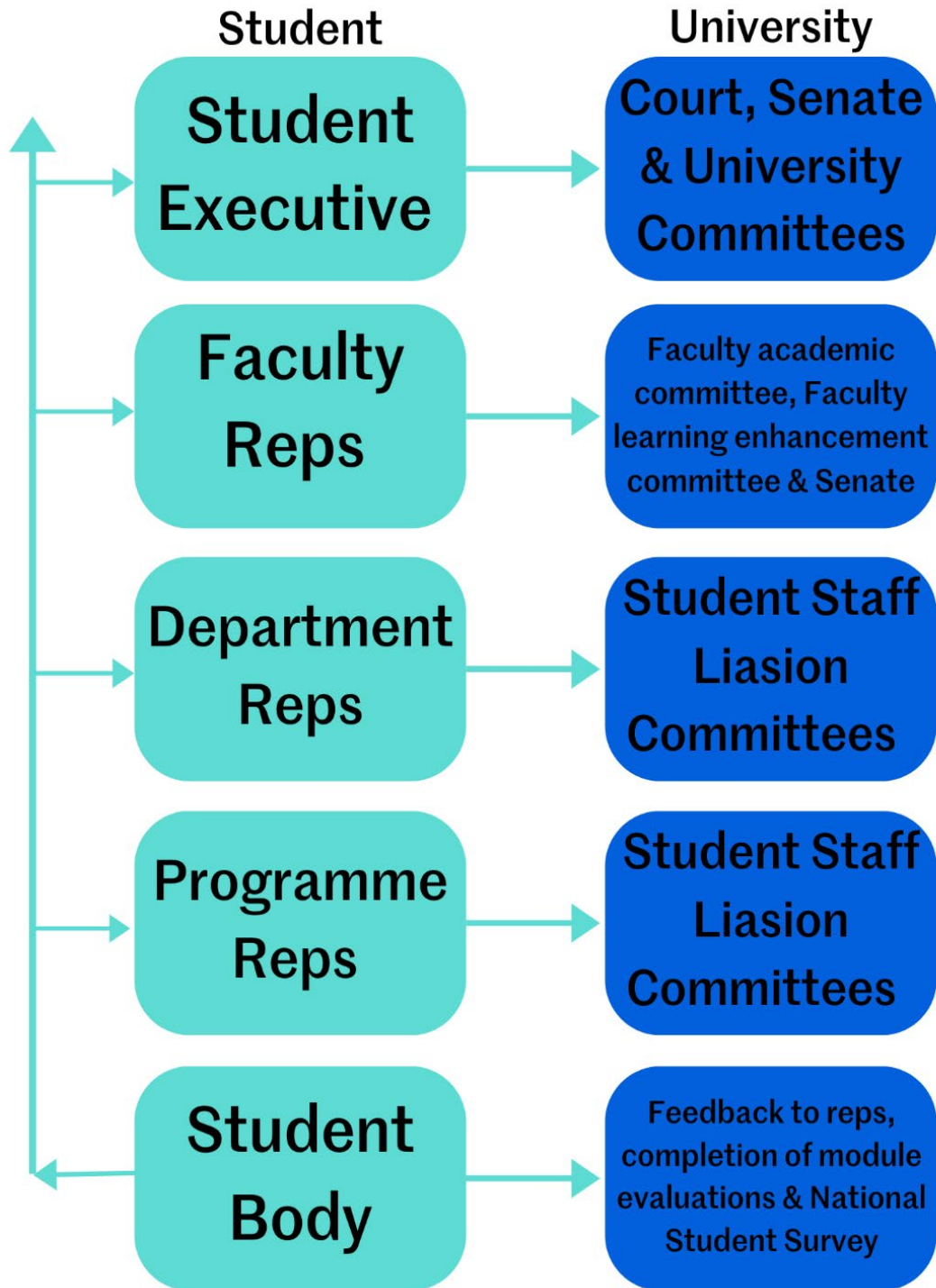
1 Introduction

The StrathReps project is transforming student representation at University of Strathclyde by allowing students to stand in elections, elect candidates and easily contact their representatives through the Strathclyde app. It is a technological solution to support an efficient and effective process for identifying, engaging, receiving, and acting on student feedback through representatives. This aims to standardise processes across University departments/ schools and reduce staff admin time whilst amplifying the student voice on campus for the improvement of their learning environment.

Class representatives were elected for each individual class in session 2019/20, these are now being replaced with programme representatives. Programme representatives will represent all of the modules within their programme. There will be the same number of programme representatives as there were class representatives. The reasoning for changing from class representative to programme representative is in line with the University's model of programme and modules. The changes to the representation structure will ensure that each student has a minimum of two representatives: programme and faculty rep.

- a) The University of Strathclyde's Student Representation Policy is a collaboration between the University and Strath Union. This policy outlines the joint commitment between the University and Strath Union to ensure the provision of an effective student representation system that allows the student voice to be heard and for students to be represented.
- b) This policy will provide clear definitions of the different student representatives and their responsibilities.
- c) This will also map out clear structures for engagement between reps and university structures(staff).
- d) This policy builds upon the joint agreement stated in the [Student Partnership Agreement](#).

2 Governance





- a) Using the structures listed, students can share their feedback with representatives who then deliver this to staff in committee meetings. Students can also give direct feedback using module evaluations and National Student Survey.
- b) This policy complements the [Strath Union Strategic Plan](#) and [University of Strathclyde Strategic Plan](#) by amplifying and incorporating the student voice into decisions made at University of Strathclyde.
- c) Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC) have been set up as a recognised channel of communication between students and the University Authorities (University Ordinances 5.1.1).
- d) [The Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework](#) relies on student engagement in processes such as Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) and Institutional-led Reviews for the continuous improvement of the student experience.

3 Student Representative Groups

- a) StrathReps refers to all student representatives at University of Strathclyde.
- b) **Student Executive Team** represent all students at University of Strathclyde in their respective areas of expertise and consists of six sabbatical officers.
 - President
 - Vice President Community (VPC)
 - Vice President Education (VPE)
 - Vice President Inclusion (VPI)
 - Vice President Sport (VPS)
 - Vice President Welfare (VPW)

Strath Union President leads the student executive team and is the main representative of student views for the University. However, the president works in partnership with all members of the student executive team to ensure the student views carried forward are representative of the entire student population at University of Strathclyde. Sabbatical officers strategically allocate themselves to University committees to ensure there is student input in decision making. All six members of the student executive team have seats on University Senate and Student Experience Committee each year.

- c) **Faculty Representatives** represent all students in their faculty. Any current student within the faculty is eligible to stand for this. It is however encouraged that they would have the prior experience of being a representative. Faculty representatives are supported by Strath Union staff and the Vice President Education to enable them to effectively represent all students and help them manage the department/ school/ programme representatives



within their faculty. Faculty reps will work closely with the Vice Dean Academic who will chair the faculty level committee meetings they attend. Faculty reps are supported by department/ school and programme reps who give them regular feedback on issues across the entire faculty to ensure they represent all student views.

Faculty representatives have additional duties in University level committees and serve as additional sources of student voice where it is imperative to the improvement of the student experience. Faculty reps hold a seat on University Senate and Student Experience Committee, alongside the six sabbatical officers. The role of the faculty representative is to enhance the learning experience, support information exchange and foster a culture of open communication between staff and students.

Elections of the faculty reps takes place in March, at the same time as the election of the sabbatical officers, and they hold office for one year but are able to stand for re-election.

Faculty representatives are ambassadors for the student representation system and often participate in events which encourage students to share their views or experiences and use this information to inform faculty/university level meetings.

- d) **Departmental / School Representatives** represent all students in their department or school. Department / school reps liaise with programme teams and faculty to address issues of concern to students where these cut across more than one module or different years of study. Department/ school reps will be supported by Strath Union, VP Education and their Faculty rep to help them manage programme reps within their department/ school and co-ordinate feedback. Department/ school reps are not required to sit on faculty level committees but their consultation could be advised when making changes relevant to their area. Department/ school reps support programme representatives and help co-ordinate feedback between the department/ school and their students.

Department/ school reps were introduced formally in 2019/2020 and are therefore relatively new to the University structures and committees. It is advised that departmental/ school reps work closely with the Head of Department/ School to provide regular feedback and sharing of information whilst attending Student Staff Liaison Committees and other department/ school level consultations.

- e) **Programme Representatives** represent all students in the year of their programme. They serve as the first point of call for students with issues within their programme. These include representatives for part-time, graduate apprentices, degree apprentices and distance learners. Programme representatives were previously referred to as class representatives, programme representatives therefore represent all modules they study.

Programme representatives will work closely with programme and module leaders to resolve issues and provide feedback for the modules within their programme.



- f) **Student Academic Representatives** refers to student reps who primarily advocate and support students on academic and related issues such as assessment and feedback, timetabling amongst others. Examples of academic reps include: Faculty, Departmental / School, Post-Graduate Research, Graduate Apprenticeship and Programme Representatives.
- g) **Postgraduate representative** is elected each year in the Strath Union elections by all postgraduate students. The postgraduate representative will represent all postgraduate students at University of Strathclyde (postgraduate taught and postgraduate research).
- h) **Post-Graduate Research (PGR) Representatives:** Similar to programme reps, they represent post graduate research students within their research group or department / school. PGR representatives work closely with the Doctoral Research Group.
- i) **Liberation representatives** such as BAME rep, disabled students' rep, LGBT+ rep and women's rep work closely with faculty reps and executive officers to ensure the work they carry out is inclusive of students with protected characteristics. These reps also have a seat on Student Parliament and represent their students on various working groups within the University. Liberation representatives are managed by the Vice President Inclusion.
- j) **Other representatives** at Strath Union include mature students' rep, part time students' rep, interfaith rep, democracy convener and international students' rep. These representatives hold a seat on student parliament and liaise with other representatives to ensure their students needs are met by the University and Strath Union.

4 Guiding Principles

- a) All students will have at least one Programme Representative and one Faculty Representative as a minimum for academic representation.
- b) Any elections run should be fair and transparent.
- c) All eligible students should be able to stand for election.
- d) Election of all representatives should support and encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- e) If only two students come forward for a programme which requires two representatives then an election will not be triggered and these students will be registered once the nomination period ends. If over the required number of representatives nominate themselves for the role then an election will be triggered.
- f) The number of representatives needed per programme year will depend on the number of students within it. This can be determined using the following ratios:



- 0-49 students – two reps
 - 49 -100 students – three reps
 - 101-149 students – four reps
 - 150+ students – five reps
- g) Strath Union is responsible for providing training and support for any StrathReps.
- h) The University of Strathclyde is committed to engaging with student feedback in order to monitor and enhance the quality of the student experience. Feedback gathered via the StrathReps app function will signpost students to representatives who attend departmental/ school Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) and share student feedback.
- i) Responsibility for closing the feedback loop with students is shared between those in receipt of the feedback e.g. department/ school and relevant representatives to inform those concerned of the progress made.
- j) Strath Union is committed to provide training, support, and facilitate the process by which Programme Representatives can embody and engage student’s feedback to improve their overall experience at university.
- k) The University of Strathclyde is committed to respect and value the input of StrathReps at relevant meetings and discussions.
- l) This Policy will be reviewed after StrathReps launch in 2021/2022 by student executive team, Student Experience Committee, Strath Union and with input from student representatives.

5 Representative structures

The diagram below outlines the ways in which the above-named representatives liaise with the University community to represent the student voice.

STRATH REP	LEVEL	UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE
Student executive	Institutional	Attend University Court, University Senate, Student Experience Committee, executive team meetings and university level committees. Vice President Education is responsible for managing all academic representatives named in this document and guiding them on how to manage other reps.



Faculty reps	Faculty and Institutional	Responsible for managing department/ school reps within their faculty and collating feedback to take to faculty level meetings. They are also responsible for relaying feedback from faculty meetings to department/ school and programme reps. Attend Student Experience Committee, Senate, Doctoral School Management Board, Faculty Academic Committees (FAC), Faculty Learning Enhancement Committees (FLEC).
Department reps	Department/ school	Responsible for managing programme reps within their department/ school and collating feedback to take to department/ school level meetings. They are also responsible for relaying feedback from department/ school meetings to faculty and programme reps. Attend department/ school level meetings such as SSLC and attend FAC or FLEC (on occasion as recommended by Faculty rep).
Programme reps	Class and Module	Attend SSLC, liaise with Coordinators and Administrators, Programme leaders and lecturers.

6 Student Academic Representative Elections

Elections will take place within the Strathclyde app during the formal election periods. Students will be prompted by notifications within the app to inform them that they are eligible to nominate themselves for elections. The nomination period will last for roughly one week before the election period is opened. During the elections, students will be able to vote for their chosen candidate in all roles for which they are eligible to vote.

Once voting has closed then the successful candidate will be notified and their details will be displayed to the students they represent to allow for effective and easy communication between students and their representatives.

In some circumstances programme representatives may need to be elected outside normal election periods and therefore the programme leader would need to contact Strathreps-project@strath.ac.uk to explain why they will be unable to participate in normal election schedules. Offline elections can be accommodated in exceptional circumstances and where the student data or timing may not facilitate online elections. Offline and exceptional elections would also need approval from the StrathReps Project Team which consists of representatives from university staff, student executive and Strath Union staff who can be reached on the above email.



Elections should be kept within the app and during election periods as much as possible to avoid confusion and maximise the number of students voting for their representative.

For more information on student representation, elections and SSLCs please go to <https://www.strathunion.com/voice/studentreps/>.