**Staff briefing - Class Reps**

This briefing outlines the role of Class Reps including guidance and support with recruitment, and how staff can support Reps in their role.

**Class Reps at QMU**

* Class Reps play an important role by facilitating regular and constructive dialogue with students on their course. They work with academic staff to consider and address students’ views on their learning experience. Class Reps offer an effective way to find out any potential issues before they escalate and share teaching practice they value.
* Class Reps are offered introductory training which gives them all the information they need to carry out their role. On-going support from the Students’ Union is also available year round.
* All Reps are automatically members of the Academic Council which is chaired by the Student President and meets four times a year. This forum gives Class Reps a chance to hear about any news and developments regarding the teaching and learning experience at QMU. They can also raise issues with the Student President, which they consider might affect students across the University, as well as helping each other resolve programme specific issues and sharing examples of successes on their programme.
* The Class Representation system at QMU is supported jointly by the Students’ Union and staff from Governance and Quality Enhancement (GQE). There is a dedicated email address classreps@qmu.ac.uk for both students and staff.
* Nationally Class Reps are supported by Sparqs (student partnerships in quality Scotland), an organisation that support student engagement with learning and teaching (<http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/>)
* The Students’ Union collates and maintains a central list of all appointed Reps each academic year.

**Recruitment and training**

* Programme Leaders are contacted at the start of the academic year and should provide lists of Reps by the end of week 3. PLs or other members of the Programme Team carry out elections. In 2018/19, a small number of programmes will pilot later recruitment of L1 Reps, with senior Reps covering L1 classes in Semester 1.
* A short role description, guidance on the election process and PowerPoint slides to promote the role to students are available to all staff on [the Quality intranet site.](http://intranet.qmu.ac.uk/sites/regquality/default.aspx)
* Lists of reps should be sent to classreps@qmu.ac.uk as soon as possible. This email is managed jointly by the SU and GQE. The lists are then provided to the School Office.
* The Students’ Union has a team of Student Representation Assistants (SRAs), experienced Class Reps, who can deliver a class shout out on request to help with recruitment.
* The Students’ Union contacts Reps with training dates. Once elected Reps can also register directly for training at the email above.
* The team of Student Representation Assistants (SRAs) also deliver the introductory training. Around five sessions normally run in weeks 4 to 8. A session will also run at the start of Semester 2. The training is supported by a Class Reps’ Guide.

**Helping your Class Reps**

* Consider posting the role description and PowerPoint slides on your Hub site. These outline what Class Reps do and will raise awareness of the role amongst all students.
* An essential part of their role is to gather students’ views and provide them with updates and responses from staff to any points raised. One of the most effective ways to do this is speaking to the class. Offer time to your Class Reps, 5 mins, at the start or end of the class. Good times to do this are at the start of the year when new Reps are in post, and just before and just after Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCCs).
* Work with Class Reps to agree arrangements for Student Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC) including responsibilities for organising and chairing the meetings, booking rooms and taking minutes, as well as format of meetings and which programmes are covered. Ensure minutes from SSCCs are submitted to Programme Committees.
* Class Reps are made aware of the function of SSCC and Programme Committees through the introductory training. However, it is important that academic staff inform Reps of any local arrangements.
* Class Reps also use other methods to collate students’ views, including social media. They are offered guidance on this through their training and in the Guide.
* Enthusiastic Class Reps may want to support their peers with individual and personal matters. Whilst they can signpost students in the right direction as part of their role, you may want to remind them to look after themselves and not get too involved.

**How Class Reps can help you**

* Class Reps are there to help student engagement in shaping your programme and enhance the learning and teaching of the course.
* If you have planned changes to a programme they can support you to find out students’ views.
* They can help identify and alert you to potential issues before they escalate.
* They can inform the class on course announcements and feed back responses from staff directly to students.

**Contacts**

Any questions can be sent to classreps@qmu.ac.uk

**Hilary Glendinning and Cecile Guilloteau**

**August 2018**

**Appendix 1 – This information is provided in the Programme Leader’s Handbook**

**Student-Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC)**

The SSCC provides a forum for students to comment on and give feedback on the programme, as well as to raise issues of concern. The Committee typically includes two student representatives from each year. As a minimum, two members of the teaching Team will also attend, including the Programme Leader, although this will depend on the size of the cohort and level of programme. Students should be encouraged to chair the meetings and to take minutes.

Where it is not possible for a student to take minutes, a member of the Programme Team will take on this role. If module-related issues have not been resolved by the Module Co-ordinator, they may be brought to this Committee. Staff should endeavour to listen attentively and encourage students to offer solutions to issues.

The Programme Leader and members of the Team must ensure students elect their Reps and that Reps are in post early in the academic session.

The Programme Leader may report on the SSCC to the subsequent Programme Committee meeting and may raise issues on behalf of students. However, in some Divisions, it is the student convener who has this responsibility. When the Programme Leader is unable to deal with student concerns, they should be reported to the Head of Division.

It is important that students are made aware of the function of the SSCC and that decisions are disseminated to the full cohort. The mechanism for achieving this should be agreed with student members.

**Appendix 2 – Template SSCC action plan**

This can be used to record any agreed actions or responses to items raised at SSCC. It can then be shared with all students in the next class and/or on the programme Hub site.

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| **Date of SSCC:** **Programme:**  |
| **Item discussed** | **Response and/or agreed action**  | **Person responsible and agreed timescale**  |
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