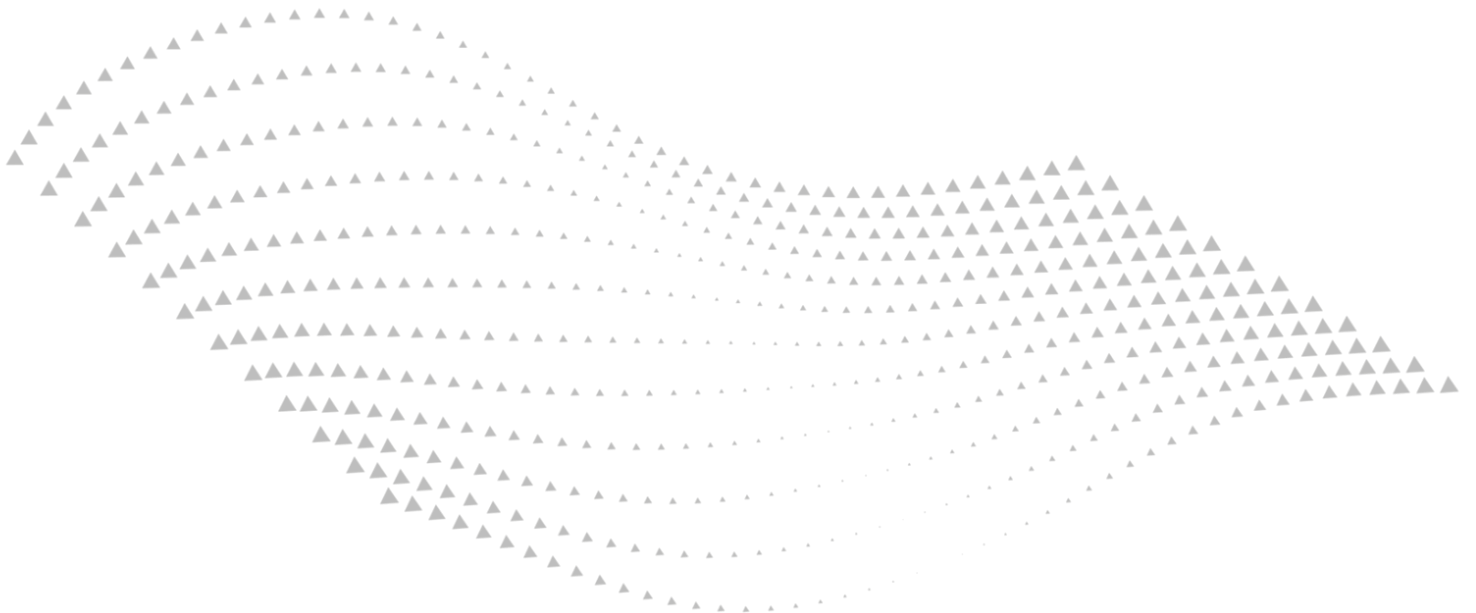


# **Student Representative Handbook**



Last approved: November 2023

Approved by: Student Experience Committee

Next review due: November 2027

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# **BIMM University Student Representative Handbook**

## **Welcome!**

Becoming a Student Rep is a fantastic way of changing things for the better, as well as meeting new people, developing your skill set and making your CV just that little bit more impressive. However, we understand that there may be some processes that you are unsure of and need guidance on, so here is a handbook to guide you to some of the answers, and to help you to gain a better understanding of how the Student Representative scheme works.

We are committed to upholding academic standards and ensuring that your student experience is the best that it can be. One of the roles of the Student Wellbeing team is to work closely with Student Reps to make sure that they have all the information that they need to do the best job possible for their cohort, and to also make sure that they are attending all the required meetings and training. So please make sure that you get in contact with one of the team if you are unsure of anything or need a little guidance along the way.

We hope that you have a great start to your first semester and enjoy your time as a Student Rep and are looking forward to working with you and are always on hand to talk to you if you want to raise any concerns or share your ideas.

## **Being a Student Representative**

As a student representative, you will represent the students on your course and raise their issues with the School.

### **Duties:**

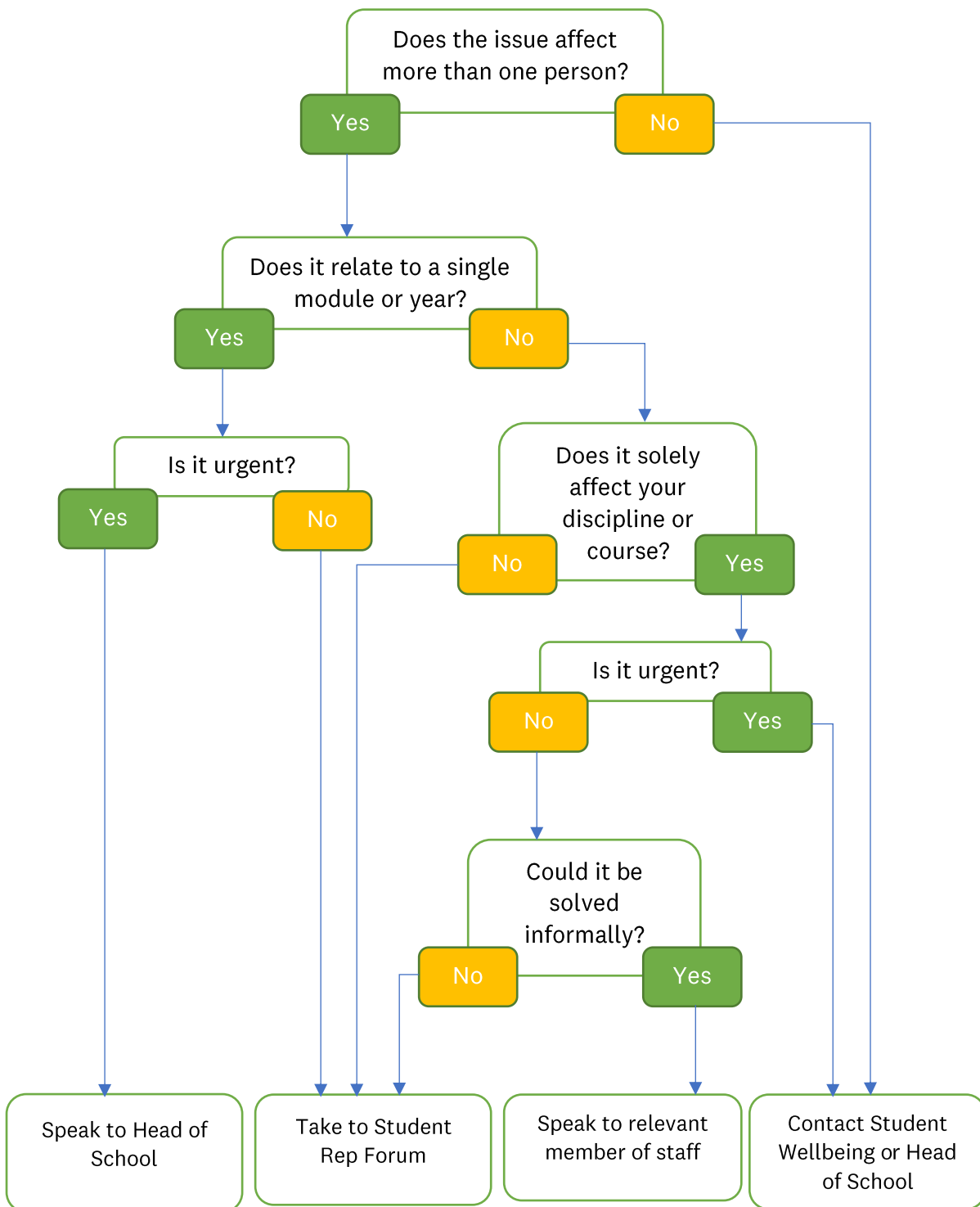
- Make sure the students you represent know who you are and how they can contact you.
- Proactively seek out and identify student views on matters relating to their academic student experience.
- Attend meetings and present student issues or provide student opinion on issues.
- Raise student issues on both a formal and informal basis.
- Update the students you represent on the outcomes of any issues raised.
- Attend Student Rep training.
- Communicate with the Student Wellbeing Team and Course Leaders.

### **Boundaries:**

- Student disciplinary issues: It is not a Rep's role to represent students on disciplinary matters. Students with these issues should be referred to the Student Wellbeing team.
- Allegations of harassment or bullying: Students with these issues should be referred to the Student Wellbeing team.
- Complaints: Students who wish to make a complaint should be referred to the Student Wellbeing Manager/Head of School. Formal issues should be raised via our [Complaints procedure](#).
- Personal problems: If a student has personal problems, you should refer them to the Student Services team as they are trained to give specialist advice and have expertise in this area.

If you are concerned about a student you consider to be suffering or to be at risk of suffering significant harm, you should raise this with a member of the Student Support Team in line with our [Safeguarding Policy](#).

## Issue Decision Tree



## How Feedback Is Collected and Used

### Student feedback is collected via:

- Student Representation Forums (feeding up the committee structure via Boards of Studies)
- Informal Feedback
- Module Evaluation Surveys (MES)
- Other Surveys

### It is then used to inform (list not exhaustive):

- Immediate resolution / interim solution to an issue
- Regulation changes (where appropriate) or changes to our internal processes
- Course / Module Amendments
- Research
- Boards of Studies / LTEC / QACC agendas and subsequent minutes

The Student Rep scheme is an important way for your School to understand student issues, but as a Rep you should highlight to other students how else the School is collecting feedback. If you are not receiving any information on what is happening with your feedback, don't forget to ask!

### Communication

Communication is most simply an exchange of information and is a fundamental part of your role as a Rep. As a Rep you'll be communicating with the students you represent, members of staff and other Student Reps.

### The 7 Cs of communication

- Clear: Ensure that you speak clearly
- Concise: Do not lose the message by being long-winded
- Correct: Be accurate & avoid giving misleading information
- Complete: Give all the information and not just part of it
- Courteous: Be polite, non-threatening and avoid conflict
- Constructive: Be positive, offer solutions instead of solely being critical
- Confident: Don't be afraid to speak up!

### Tips for communication with the students you represent

- Make sure the people you represent know who you are and how to contact you.
- Let students know what's happening with their feedback.
- Ask for help if you're struggling to get feedback from your group. Start with your friends - work from there to the rest of your cohort.
- Ask specific questions rather than requesting general feedback – think about what it is that you want to know.
- Use your page on Canvas or request an all-student email.
- Don't give up!

When you graduate and start applying for jobs, being able to demonstrate skills valuable to the position is a great resource to have in addition to academic qualifications. Becoming a Being a Student Rep is an opportunity to develop transferable skills.

### **Skills you can develop as a student rep:**

<b>Motivation:</b>	By demonstrating that you're motivated enough to find time during your studies to make a difference to the student experience.
<b>Confidence &amp; assertiveness:</b>	By putting yourself forward to speak to people on your course and raise issues with staff.
<b>Organisation &amp; time management:</b>	By fitting your Rep duties around your studies and other commitments.
<b>Resilience:</b>	By not being discouraged by obstacles and persevering towards a resolution on your issues.
<b>Team working:</b>	By working with other Reps and staff to solve issues.
<b>Interpersonal Skills:</b>	By listening and communicating with a variety of people in a variety of situations.
<b>Initiative &amp; professionalism:</b>	By taking on issues and deciding how you're going to go about raising the issue and finding a resolution.
<b>Research:</b>	By getting feedback from a wide range of students using methods that provide valid data.

## **Promoting Yourself as a Student Rep**

To make sure other students know who you are, why not set up a Student Rep profile or a group on Facebook or by using other social media platforms – you can also collate data on the importance of issues based on the number of 'likes' a post receives.

Why not put together an e-newsletter containing outcomes from Student Representative Forum meetings that you can email to your course mates. This could include the Board of Studies agenda, dates for students to remember and successful changes that have happened due to the Student Rep Scheme.

Or how about asking Student Services to set up a quick poll about a particular issue on Canvas for you and to assist you in collating the results. They can help you to email it out to your student cohort too!

It is important to promote yourself and who you are to other students throughout the year to ensure that they remember you and your message. It isn't enough to tell them once – you should tell students several times a semester and make your presence known to them. That way, they are more likely to remember you, and the Student Rep message.

## Gathering Feedback

### Module Evaluation Surveys (MES)

Each semester, we ask students to complete short surveys on their experience of modules studied. We do this because we value your views on the experience we provide and wish to improve what we do in response to your feedback. Surveys are carried out in Weeks 10-11 of the module each semester for the majority of modules. For modules that are taught over two modules, rather than in one semester only, these modules will be surveyed in weeks 10-11 of their final semester of delivery. The results of these surveys will be shared with senior management and our awarding bodies. The surveys are confidential. See our [Quality Handbook](#) for more information.

### Ideas and tips

- To avoid clogging up your personal inbox, set up a devoted Student Rep email account.
- Create an online survey for students to complete. A good site for this is [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com).
- There are noticeboards available for you to use. Just ask Reception if you can put a poster up!
- If you give a lecturer enough notice, you could stand up at the start of a lecture to introduce yourself or ask for feedback on a particular subject.
- We're always happy to help by sharing any resources we have. As long as it's Student Rep related you can ask to print any resources you need.

## Important Reminders

<b>Emails:</b>	Check your student email account regularly - it's our main form of contact with you.
<b>Just ask:</b>	Make use of the support available to you - if you need help, just ask.
<b>Be proactive:</b>	Don't wait for the next meeting - if there's an issue, raise it straight away with the relevant staff member.
<b>Be inclusive:</b>	Remember to represent your entire group, not just your friends.
<b>Don't take on too much:</b>	If you feel that being a Rep is affecting your studies, get in touch with Student Wellbeing. Your studies should always come first!
<b>Keep a record:</b>	Make a note of the meetings you attend in your diary.

# Committee Guidance for Students

## 1. Introduction

Students are represented on a number of the University's committees. A list of student representation required for committees is sent to Schools at the start of each academic year, and student reps can sit on committees from Semester 1 of that year.

In most cases, student representatives on University committees are full members, i.e., they are eligible to attend and speak at meetings and "have their say", voting where appropriate.

Students play an important role in decision-making within BIMM University and participating in the University's system of governance can be a valuable experience in the following ways:

- It can help you to understand, and allow you to contribute to, the processes of decision-making within the University.
- it can widen your experience and knowledge of the University.
- and it can inform your understanding of policy and decision-making structures more generally, including those which you might encounter in your post-Higher Education career.

So, although committee agendas and paperwork take some time to read thoroughly, the time you invest will ultimately be rewarded.

## 2. The role of the committee

The main BIMM University Academic Committees are Academic Board and its subcommittees:

Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee (LTEC)

Quality Assurance and Compliance Committee (QACC)

Research and Ethics Committee (REC)

Student Experience Committee (SEC)

Boards of Studies (BoS)\*

Having been appointed to a committee, you can find out more about its role and membership by consulting the [BIMM University Governance Infrastructure](#) and selecting the committee you have been asked to represent.

If you have any further questions about the role of the committee to which you have been appointed, you should contact the relevant committee Secretary (whose name you will find on the membership). In any case, the Secretary to the Committee will contact you well in advance of the meeting to confirm the date with you, and check your availability, travel and dietary requirements where appropriate.

## 4. Agenda Items

Agendas are generally sent out two weeks in advance of a meeting, with a full pack of papers following a week later. If you have any problems at all receiving agendas, minutes or other papers, or if you have not received your agenda, you should contact the Committee Servicing Officer immediately.



## **5. Meetings**

As the student representative on a committee it is important that you make every effort to attend all possible meetings. Remember: you are there to represent the whole student body at your School. Where you find that you are unable to attend a meeting, you should offer your apologies by contacting the office of the committee Servicing Officer in advance.

As a full member of a committee, you are in a position to contribute to discussions and the decision-making process at meetings. It is therefore important that you read thoroughly all the papers for the meeting and form a clear idea of the purpose of each agenda item. Agenda items can usually be divided into two types: those for information and those for consideration and decision. Keeping this in mind will help to make your contributions at meetings relevant and focused, as will having a clear picture of the committee's role. Before you contribute to discussion, have a think about whether what you are going to add is appropriate for the audience. If you want to discuss an item that is not on the agenda, this is usually not permissible unless it is relevant to the business being discussed. Issues regarding learning resources, facilities and other matters which you feel affect your student learning journey should be raised at Student Representation Forums.

## **6. Confidentiality**

As a member of a committee, you may have access to confidential material from time to time. Confidentiality is always required where the committee is discussing named individuals and discretion may be required for other sensitive items of business. Papers which are confidential are usually marked as such, but if you are in any doubt, you should seek the advice of the committee Servicing Officer. Do not forward your committee pack to any other email address and if you print anything, be careful not to leave these lying around,