City University London Students’ Union

Programme Representatives 2014 – 15

Your guide to enhancing the student experience

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Representation is the most important part of what City University London Students’ Union (CULSU) does, and the Programme Reps – you – are at the heart of what we do! Through you, the Students’ Union represents over 17,500 students at City University and 21,000 students across London.

Every year, Programme Reps achieve a huge amount of gains for City students and improve the academic experience of those they represent. Last year, for example, the Programme Reps:

- Made City University London a Living Wage employer so all staff and students get the London living wage of £8.80
- Acquired free Microsoft Office 2013 for all City University students on five devices whilst they study
- Increased the buddy system to SASS and Health, on top of Law and Cass

I am your Vice President for Education at City University Students’ Union. It’s my job, with your help, is to make sure that our students educational experience is up to scratch. Students can come to us with anything whether it’s a poorly organised programme, assessment and feedback, not enough library space or lecturers booking classes on Wednesday afternoons.

It’s our responsibility to take your issues to the academic and service staff that can make all the difference to the experience at City. We’ll be putting on school, PGR and PGT networking events throughout the year so you can meet students outside your programme.

Look out for the Student Voice Awards in April, where we will be shining a light on the staff and reps that make your student experience, make sure you get your nominations in for any outstanding staff who’ve made a difference to your academic journey.

I will be around all campuses throughout the year so try and say hello! I’m always available via email, FB & Twitter and will be trying to touch base with all of you over a cake and a coffee. I want you to feel free to message me with anything, by any means, anytime.

Issy Cooke
Vice-President Education

“For Students, by Students, Enhancing the Student Experience”
WHAT WILL YOU DO?

YOUR ROLE: To represent the views of students on their student experience

• Represent students on your programme
• Talk to Programme Directors, tutors and administrators regularly
• Promote surveys to collect feedback (e.g. Your Voice, the National Student Survey, the Postgraduate Taught Survey)
• Run academic campaigns
• Be aware of the academic issues of students on your course
• Actively contribute to Staff-student Liaison committees and Student Experience committees
• Collaborate with your School Representative Officer
• Attend the SU Conference in November and School/departmental events
• Attend Training and engage with fellow reps through the Online community and SU events
• Talk to students on your course
• Feedback what you are doing and what decisions are being made
• Actively engage with the Students’ Union and its activities throughout the year
What Will You Get From The Year?

Gain a Programme Rep Award:
• We have a Rewards & Recognition Scheme designed to acknowledge the significant contributions Reps make to their fellow students, programmes and the University as a whole. The Scheme consists of awards at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels.

Being a Programme Rep is Rewarding:
• Help drive improvements in your course to help current and future students
• Enable the student voice to be heard on the City student and academic experience
• Help students to understand how the University works.
• Are informed and empowered to have a say in decisions affecting your courses
• Support students through their time at City for yours and their success

You Get Lots of Guidance and Support:
• You’ll get face to face training from the students’ union
• There will be regular resources and feedback events to help you collect feedback from the students in your programme.
• There will be a Union Conference which will help you develop as a rep, network and enhance your personal development in the role.
• Union officers and staff are also here to support you so if you want a chat, or feel there is additional training you would benefit from, tell us!

Bring a Programme Rep is a Great Addition to Your CV:
• You’ll be able to demonstrate you have taken on additional responsibility while managing your time, that you are motivated and have a range of skills that employers value.
• As a rep you will be exposed to presenting views to various audiences and demonstrate your communication skills.
• You will be considered a leader, and demonstrate negotiation skills while trying to solve problems.

Being a Rep Allows You to Network:
• Through our training and events programme you will have the opportunity to network with fellow reps and academic staff, and there is an online community for Programme Reps that provides peer to peer support and a platform to discuss your personal development, to put questions to other reps and reflect and share your successes.
• It’s a great way to meet other people from outside your course. School representation officers will invite you to lots of meet up events and fun activities with fellow programme reps. Expect lots of free food and drinks!
• In November, there will be a Union Conference which will help you develop as a rep, network and enhance your personal development in the role.
This diagram shows how student views are represented within the University and the Students’ Union.

WHAT WILL I CONTRIBUTE TO MEETINGS?
Your role is to represent students, so you need to collect feedback from those on your course. This means that sometimes, issues you raise may not match your own views but this is what representation is all about – making sure everyone’s voice is heard.

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THAT I’M REPRESENTING STUDENTS EFFECTIVELY IN MEETINGS?
Before you go into a committee meeting, you should make sure you know:

- What the Committee is responsible for; the ‘terms of reference’
- Where the committee fits in to the decision making process (look at the structures map in this handbook if unsure, or speak to your VP Education, Issy)
- Who to ask if you want to put an item for discussion on the agenda
- How far ahead of the meeting are the agenda and papers for discussion sent out

THE KEY PEOPLE ON EACH COMMITTEE:

- **Chair:** This is the person to lead each meeting, making sure all items are addressed and that decisions follow necessary rules and regulations. These people are often members of staff with management responsibility for the areas being discussed. The School Dean chairs the Board of Studies, for instance.
- **Secretary:** This person works with the Chair to prepare the agenda for the meeting, circulate papers, writes minutes (notes of what is said) and follows up on action points. These people can offer help and advice about the committee you sit on, and can also provide you with former papers, minutes and the terms of reference.
- **Committee Members:** The other people in these meetings are there due to their positions (lecturers, administrators, student reps), because they have been elected or because of their useful expertise. Membership of committees is agreed by Senate.

Make sure you read any papers that are sent out ahead of the meeting, particularly if they relate to issues you know you wish to speak on. Think about what you want to say. If you are unsure, you can speak to the VP Education or the Chair for advice. You can also let the Chair know that you wish to contribute on a specific agenda item ahead of the meeting.
COMMITTEES YOU MAY ATTEND AS A REP

STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEES
At SECs students and staff discuss matters concerning the broader student experience and non-academic student-related matters. Issues raised here also go to the University Executive Committee and Students’ Union Executive to inform institutional planning and management. Students are expected to hold the majority of seats on these meetings. They are held at least once per term.

The committee is chaired by the Assistant Dean, Education with invitations to academic and professional staff, students, and the VP Education and VP Activities from the Students’ Union.

There are three meetings a year.

STUDENT STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE
Staff-Staff Liaison Committees are responsible for engaging with students to consider their views on the quality of the programme; seeking views on strengths, areas for improvement and responding to issues raised. You will work with the membership to establish actions to enhance their learning experience, communicate actions to the wider student cohort, propose changes to the programme content and delivery and consider the outcomes of student surveys and evaluations including module evaluations, Your Voice survey and national surveys such as the NSS, PTES and PRES.

The committee is chaired by the Programme Director with invitations to members of staff with responsibilities for programme delivery, at least two programme reps and other staff members by reason of their role as determined by the Board of Studies (reflecting the subject area’s organisational structure).

There are three meetings a year.

PROGRAMME COMMITTEES
These consider the on-going development, content, delivery and evaluation of the programme. They support the Programme Director in the effective management of the programme and consider things discussed at SSLCs. These meetings also take place at least once per term.

PROGRAMME APPROVAL AND REVIEW COMMITTEES (PARCS)
PARCs are responsible for reviewing new or re-developed programme proposals.

PARCs are chaired by a School’s Associate Dean Education (ADE) with relevant staff and students present and meet as and when required.

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE (LTC)
LiTcs are responsible for developing and enhancing L &T approach and practices.

These are chaired by the ADE with relevant staff, students and senior members of the Learning Development Centre. They meet at least three times a year.

BOARDS OF STUDIES
These report to University Senate and are responsible for assuring and enhancing academic quality and standards for all modules, programmes and awards within Schools. As you can see from the diagram students’ views have progressed upwards from the other committees programme reps take part in. Boards of Studies have a comprehensive remit looking at academic policy and strategy. They are chaired by the Dean of each School and attended by Heads of Departments, the Vice-President Education and the SRO. There are a minimum of three meetings per year.
KEY EVENTS

Friday 28th November 2014
Programme Rep Conference
followed by
Students’ Union Annual General Meeting

Monday 9th February 2015
Nomination Deadline for Students’ Union Elections

Monday 23rd February 2015 – Thursday 26th February 2015
Voting in Students’ Union Elections