UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD STUDENTS' UNION

Student Representation Staff Pack

Academic Year 2020 – 2021

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Introduction

The Student Representation system at Salford is coordinated by the Students' Union in partnership with the university. This pack is designed for Programme Leaders, Directors, and other School Staff who are registered to take part in the pilot for an alternative Student Voice mechanism in 2019/20. Thank you for the role that you play in making Student Voice a success.

As well as maximising the student experience and ensuring students engage fully and effectively with their courses, the Rep system plays a vital part in the University's internal quality processes and should be considered as an important part of the academic calendar.

This pack is intended as to act as a guide for implementing the new Student Voice mechanisms. Information about recruitment methods for Reps, and what support the Union can provide, can also be found in this pack. Do get in touch if you have any questions. contact details can be found at the end of this pack.

Basics of the Student Representation System

The Student Representation system is a way of ensuring two-way communication between students and the University. The system ensures that students have an opportunity to voice opinions about their course and involves student representatives working with the University to achieve positive outcomes.

Course Reps

Student representation should be found at every level and on every programme across the University. There should be one Course Rep for each level of each programme, regardless of size. More than one rep is permitted for large courses, (*if you feel your programme may need more than one rep please get in touch with the Student's Union to discuss your needs*). Once Course Reps' names are entered onto a central system (explained later), the Students' Union contacts Course Reps to invite them to attend training and other activities relevant to their role.

School Reps

In addition to programme level Course Reps, there are School Reps to assist the Course Reps with larger issues and concerns. School Reps represent specific subject groupings (or in some cases an entire Directorate) that are jointly agreed with the School's ADA. School Reps work closely with their Students' Union Officers and should have an active relationship with their Subject Lead and Associate Dean Academic. The Students' Union is responsible for the recruitment and training of School Reps, with promotional support from academic staff in the university.

Union Sabbatical Officers

An elected Student Officer (or Sabbatical Officer) represents each of the University's Schools on a full-time basis. These Officers along with the Union's President, head up the Student Representation system and sit on various University committees as well as leading the

Students' Union for their year in office. They support School Reps, sit on the School's Exec, and meet regularly with the School's ADA.

Key Dates for the 2020/21 Academic Year

The responsibilities of University staff and the Students' Union are explained later in this document, but for convenience, here are the key actions and deadlines:

Key Dates for the 2020/21 Academic Year		
Action	***Deadline***	***Further information***
Staff granted access to Student Representation Teams sites	Friday 28th August 2020	The Students' Union will give you access to your Directorate's Team by this date.
Autumn School Rep applications	Friday 9th October	Students can see which positions are vacant, and apply here - https://www.salfordstudents.com/schoolrep
Registration of new and returning Course Reps	Wednesday 14th October	Please Register your Reps HERE. (The full url can be found on page 14)
Course Reps added to Teams sites	Friday 16th October	Please try and add your Course Reps to your Teams site by this date. Further details are provided later in this guide.
Course Rep Training	Friday 16th October – 28th October	The Union will offer several training sessions between these date. Your Course Reps will be contacted directly by email.

Changes to the Student Representation System

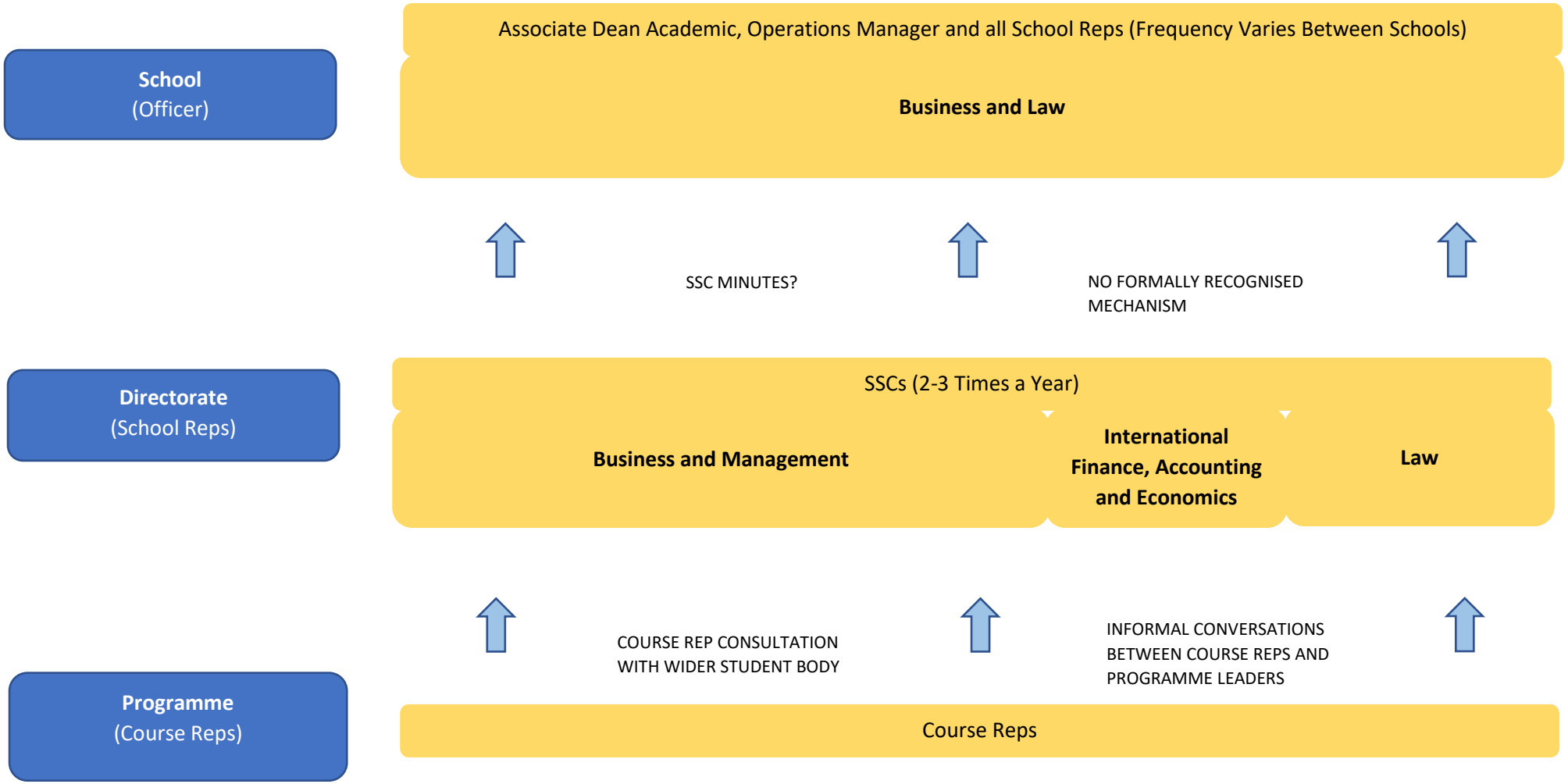
The proposed changes to the Student Rep system have been informed by consultation with ADAs, Programme Leaders, and various student representative. There was a consensus for the new Student Voice mechanisms to include the following:

- Introduction of student chairs and the meetings be more heavily student controlled.
- The ability to replace formal agendas and minutes with action logs.
- Mechanisms to resolve programme, often hygiene level, issues in a timely manner between SSC meetings. Be this through new digital technology, or an alternative meeting structure.
- SSCs, or equivalent mechanism, to have a clear focus on enhancement, with Reps more highly trained for higher quality discussion.
- Closer collaboration between Programme Leaders and Course Reps.

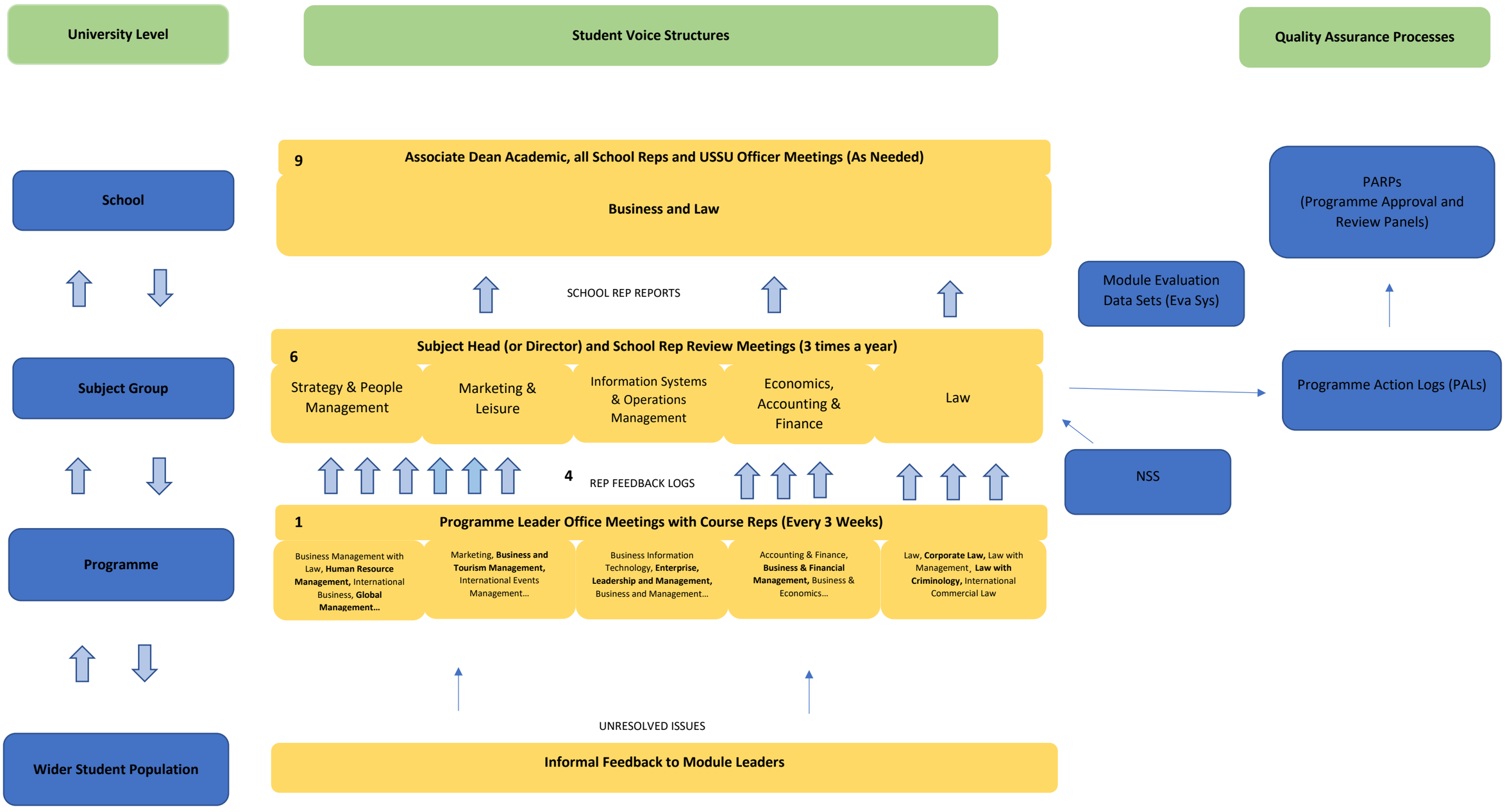
An alternative structure was designed and approved by SELTEC in May 2019 and was trialled through a pilot scheme in the academic year 2019/20. A review of the pilot then went to SELTEC in May 2020, and further expansion was approved.

Appendix A demonstrates the previous student representation structures, and appendix B represents the new structure for the 2020/21 academic year. For the purpose of this guide, the School of Business and Law has been used as an example.

Appendix A: The Previous Student Representation System



Appendix B: New Student Representation System



Guidance on the new model:

You can see a diagramme of the meetings that take place between Student Reps and University staff on the next page. The Business and Law School has been used for this diagramme, but the principles apply to across all Schools. The following guidance corresponds to the numbers on the diagramme:

1. Programme Leaders (PL) meet with their Course Reps approximately every three weeks in term time. This allows Programme Leaders to respond rapidly to student feedback in meetings that work with their schedule. These meetings will normally consist of the Programme Leader and 3-6 Reps (1-2 for each year of the course). School Reps are welcome to attend.

2. While the nature of these meetings is slightly less formal than SSCs, it is important to maintain some formality when arranging meetings with Course Reps. Providing reasonable notice of the meetings, sending out diary invites, and having consistency in when the meeting occurs, are all recommended. This helps Reps understand that the meetings are official, and they should attend.

3. To ensure there is a record of the feedback, Programme Leaders complete a digital Rep feedback log. Each Directorate has a Team, with separate channels for each programme. The log is stored within the programme's specific channel. All Course Reps, Programme Leaders, the School Rep, the Subject Heads, and Associate Dean have access to the Team, so everyone can see the feedback coming in from the different courses. The Rep feedback log should be updated live in the meeting to minimise additional workload. These logs are integral for demonstrating that we are fulfilling our obligations under the QAA Quality Code.

4. Rep feedback logs from PL and Course Rep meetings should be distinctly different from PALs, as the former may contain many day-to-day issues, and the latter should focus on long-term strategic plans. There is a prompt in the Rep feedback log if the Programme Leader feels something raised in the meeting is significant enough to move into the PAL.

5. Teams can also be used for discussion between the PL and Course Rep meetings in-between meetings, while still maintaining a record of interaction. Reps are still expected to attend meetings with their PL even if they have spoken with them over Teams between meetings. Teams calls can be used if Reps are unable to attend meetings in person. This provides flexibility for Reps who are distance learners or on placement.

6. Subject Heads (or Directors) meet with their School Rep approximately three times a year to discuss any recurring problems across programmes. It is at the School's discretion if they wish the Director or Subject Head to hold this responsibility. School Reps can use the Rep feedback logs in Teams to identify these recurring issues. They

may wish to discuss Programme Action Logs and hold a more active role in PMEP. School Reps record the outcome of these meetings in a report which is also stored in the Teams site.

7. The Subject Head and School Rep should check that Rep feedback logs are being completed across all programmes in their area. This proves a level of oversight to ensure that Reps are being consulted within the School.

8. Meetings between the Subject Head and School Rep can be scheduled around the University's Programme Monitoring and Enhancement (PMEP) to support the wider monitoring of programmes (see page 15 for more details).

9. School-level meetings between all relevant School Reps, the Officer, and the ADA take place as needed for strategic conversations regarding the direction of the School or larger projects.

10. Library staff, QEO, and other core services will also have access to the Teams site.

Getting your Team ready for September:

The new mechanisms for student voice will be supported via Microsoft Teams. All students have been granted access to this since September 2019. It is intended that Teams will be the central point of storage for Rep feedback logs from Student Rep meetings with Programme Leaders, as well as place for general conversation, replacing Blackboard and Outlook email.

The Students' Union will set up all Teams and add all relevant staff by the end of August 2020.

The vast majority of staff will have used Teams while having to work from home this year. However, there are a few actions that you need to complete that these instructions will outline:

Instructions for Programme Leaders:

1. You will be added to a Team for your Directorate by the Students' Union.
2. Once you've identified your Programme's channel, you will find a copy of a Rep feedback log saved as a tab at the top. This will allow you and your Reps to see and update the log without having to open and close the file.
3. IMPORTANT: Once Course Reps are recruited in September/October, Programme Leaders then need add these students to the team via the ▪▪■ and clicking 'add members'. Please do still register your Course Rep's details with the Students' Union via the MachForm as in previous years.
4. As Course Reps will only need to focus on their Programme, they can hide any channels they do not want to see. They can also edit notifications for specific channels via the on each one. Reps must always receive notifications for the general channel.
5. Course Reps can also edit their notification settings via their profile photo on the top right of the page and clicking on 'settings' to get to 'notifications'. It is worth checking that they are receiving notifications here so nothing is missed (they can also receive email notifications if they need an extra prompt).
6. The conversation section of each Programme channel can be used for updates or chats with Reps who can't attend office hours in person.
7. You can also add a task management app called Planner via the at + the top, where you can allocate tasks to specific members of staff or students. This is not compulsory, but it is a useful tool for receiving email reminders when a deadline is approaching, should you want them.
8. Don't forget that if you don't @ the team, or a specific person in the team, when you make a post, members won't receive a notification.

Instructions for Subject Heads (Or Directors):

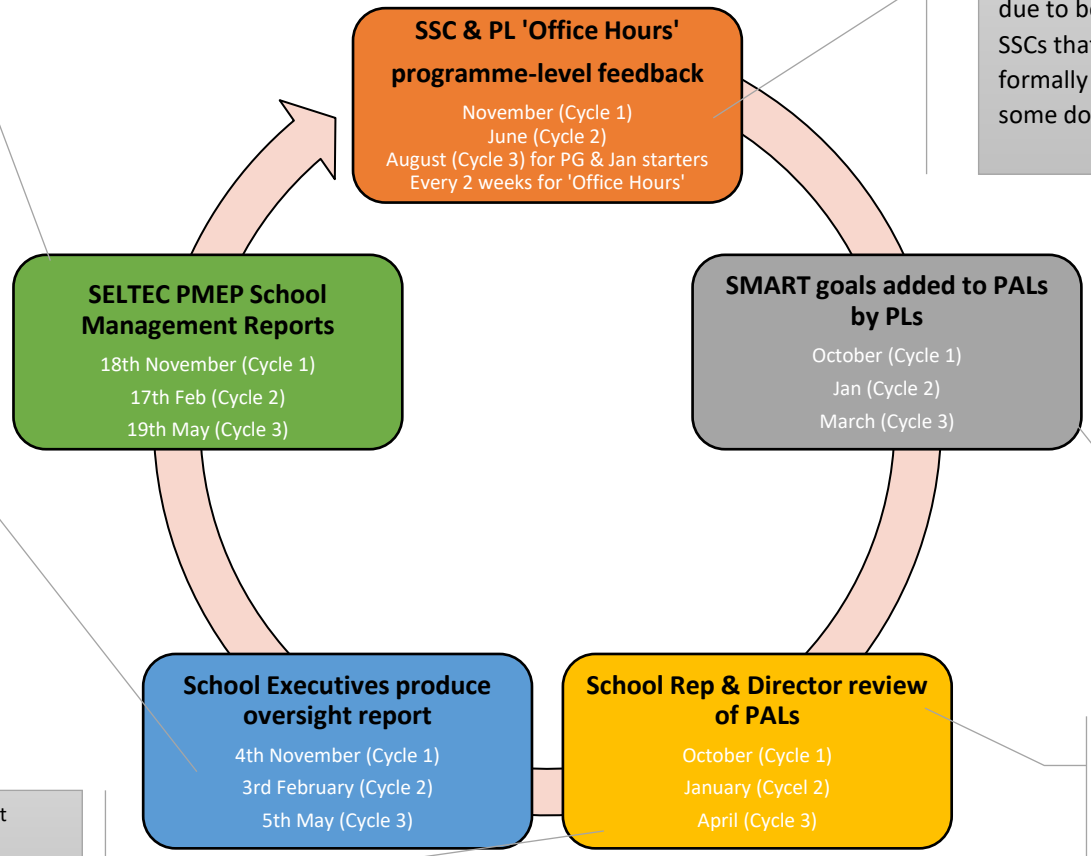
1. You will be added to the Team by the Students' Union.
2. School Rep reports can be located in the general channel, saved as a tab at the top. Where there are several School Reps in the Directorate, their reports will be labelled by subject grouping. You can discuss this report during meetings with your School Rep.

How can the new system better support the Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure (PMEP)?

The pilot should better support requirements of PMEP by providing more frequent programme-level feedback. This should resolve previous challenges caused by SSC minutes not being published in line with the PMEP reporting cycle to SELTEC. The Subject Head level meetings with School Reps can provide another opportunity for students to influence PMEP, by acting as a space for review of the PALs. The PMEP cycle can therefore inform when meetings between Subject Heads and School reps should take place. The following cycle for 2020/21 can be used to inform when meetings are scheduled. The cycle should take place three times in a year:

Dates that SELTEC is due to meet and consider the School Management Reports as part of the 'audit' of PALs.

These are the months that SSC minutes are currently due to be uploaded onto Blackboard. Minutes for SSCs that take place in the 3rd Trimester are not formally required, so this is just to recognise that some do take place.



These are the dates that the reports are due to be submitted to SELTEC. It is expected that the School Exec will convene before this date to hear from Directors on how the PALs are performing.

This would need to take place with enough time for the Directors/ Subject Heads to review any changes with the School Rep before the School Executive meeting. It should be easier for these changes to be influenced by student feedback under the more frequent pilot mechanisms.

Informed by categories of PMEP School Management Reports:
Is the PAL up to date?
Is the PAL likely to succeed?
Are actions on time/as planned?
Is there good practice to be shared?

This should form part of the meetings between Directors and School Reps, in addition to discussion about recurring patterns. Review of PALs should involve comparing strategic direction with experience displayed in the course rep action logs.

Next Steps for Subject Heads and Programme Leaders:

School Reps recruited in the Spring of 2020 have already received training and have been briefed on the current reforms to the Student Voice system. School Reps on pilot programmes will be notified by the Students' Union and provided with additional support and training in October 2020.

Training for Course Reps will be covered as usual by the Students' Union in the new academic year and split between pilot and non-pilot programmes. The Students' Union will cover basic guidance on how to use Microsoft Teams, and what to expect from the new online platform.

Programme Leaders

Once your Course Reps have been recruited, the following should take place:

- Programme Leaders should email their Course Reps to introduce themselves again. Remind Reps of where your Office is, and book in a reoccurring meeting with them every 3 weeks. This does not need to be longer than 30 minutes long.

- At the first meeting between the Programme Leader and Course Reps, an expectation should be set for the minimum number of office meetings that the Rep will attend. Explain to the Reps that Teams can be used to report issues if they cannot attend the meeting in person – this may be useful for placement and commuting students.

- The first meeting should also be used to check that the students feel confident accessing Teams (particularly that they have notifications turned on).

- The Students' Union Rep feedback log, which you can tweak to fit your needs, should be used to keep a record of what you discuss with your Course Reps. This doesn't just have to be feedback you receive in meetings, this could be conversations you have in person or via Teams. In cases where a Rep has not been successfully recruited, the action log can still be used as a place to store feedback that you receive from other students. This log will be used to demonstrate that we are meeting our obligations of the QAA Quality Code.

- Teams can be used to remind students about attending approaching a meeting with their Programme Leader by @'ing them a few days before.

- Feel free to encourage conversation between Reps within your Programme channel by dropping questions in the general chat area.

Subject Heads (or Directors)

Once the names of your School Reps have been circulated, the following should take place:

- Subject Heads should also email their School Rep to introduce themselves. You will need to mutually agree a time to meet approximately three times a year (in line with the PMEP cycle).

- At the first meeting between the Subject Head and School Rep, you should familiarise yourselves with the School Rep Report template provided by the Students' Union. This document should be completed by the School Rep and help them reflect on their work in the role.

- The first meeting should also be used to check that the student feels confident accessing Teams (particularly that they have notifications turned on).

- If there are any recurring issues that are outside of your control, encourage your School Rep to contact their Union Sabbatical Officer, who will attempt to triage the issue to the relevant committee.

Recruitment

School Reps

The Students' Union has already conducted a round of recruitment for School Reps 2020/21. Any unfilled positions will be advertised on the Union's website over the summer until the 8th October 2020, with interviews taking place the following week. The Students' Union will be in touch with Programme Leaders to help promote these opportunities in the new academic year.

For reference, students can apply to be a School Rep here:
https://www.salfordstudents.com/schoolrep
You can find an up to date list of your School Reps here:
https://www.salfordstudents.com/student-voice/reps/school-reps

Course Reps

Recruitment for Course Reps should remain the same for the academic year 2020/21. It is anticipated that Programme Leaders will introduce the Student Rep system early in the academic programme, and ideally within the first two weeks. The Union welcomes any opportunity to speak to new and returning students on Programmes that traditionally struggle with recruitment of Reps. This will be operated on an as-needed basis, with requests for lecture shout-outs by Sabbatical Officers accepted in August. Please note that any short notice requests will be hard for us to facilitate due to Officer diaries being very busy in September.

The deadline for registering Course Reps with the Students' Union will be **Wednesday 14th October.** Further details of how to recruit and will be circulated in August, including the latest materials to promote the opportunity.

For reference, the form to register new reps will be:
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=QCm1Zbb0vUGDPTAz7Lz24eBybP5yXMhEh0I7U1IMPPdURTE1TUlOR1VGUVNJODlUOUhSWkg3TlhVWC4u

Working with Student Reps

The Student Reps should be made to feel welcome in all meetings as they are a member of that meeting as much as anyone else. They may not be aware of University acronyms and 'buzz words' so a little extra time and care to explain procedures would be beneficial to all members.

Please do remember that Reps are volunteers and dedicating their spare time to helping other students in their group. Any recognition for that would be appreciated such as a get-together at the end of term or special thanks at the end of the year.

If a student(s) in the same group as the Rep is unhappy with their performance, it is only the students in that group can call the Rep to account. They can do this by proposing another candidate or by a vote of no confidence. If you are struggling with a Rep not attending meetings, we recommend you first reach out to the Rep to explore why they have been absent. If they still fail to engage, please contact the Students' Union. Our internal guidance states that all Reps must have received training within the first 6 weeks of the semester. If an unresponsive Rep has not attended training, we may be able to move to recruit another student.

Blackboard

Creating a page on your school Blackboard with a list of their names, e-mail addresses and perhaps their photo would be extremely useful for both you and the Student Reps. A forum so that they can exchange ideas with each other would also be helpful. The site could also hold a discussion board, you could make previous minutes and action plans available and also you could post APMEs/MEQs on there before the meetings take place to ensure that the meetings length is kept to a reasonable limit.

Useful links and contacts

Students' Union Staff Contacts
Madeleine Colledge
Student Voice Coordinator
Tel: 0161 351 5425
Email: m.colledge@salford.ac.uk

Students' Union Sabbatical Officers 2020-21

Arts & Media Officer – Shian Chaudhry
Email: S.Chaudhry3@salford.ac.uk

Health and Social Care Officer – Jessica Wilkinson
Email: J.Wilkinson17@salford.ac.uk

Science and Technology Officer – Ade Oni Oluwalogbon
Email: A.Oni1@salford.ac.uk

Business and Law Officer – Akeem Ojetola
Email: A.Ojetola@salford.ac.uk

President – Temi Adebayo
Email: T.Adebayo3@salford.ac.uk

Website: https://www.salfordstudents.com/student-voice/reps