Student Representation Policy

Introduction

1. Newcastle University’s Student Representation Policy is a partnership between Newcastle University, its students and the Newcastle University Students’ Union (NUSU). The aim of the policy is to ensure that every Newcastle University student is represented in the University’s decision-making processes and that every student can contribute to the enhancement of their programme and learning experience.

2. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Student-Staff Committee Constitution and Terms of Reference and the Roles and Responsibilities: School Representative documents.

Purpose

3. This policy sets out the joint commitment of the University and NUSU to run an effective system of student representation and is built on a shared interest in promoting good practice in representation.

4. This policy is to be used by the University and NUSU to guide the operation of student representation mechanisms.

5. This policy, which addresses the operational aspects of the student representation process, will be made available to all students.

Key Principles

“To ensure that students are at the centre of the learning experience and their feedback lies at the heart of our future strategy”

(Newcastle University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy)

6. Student representation provides students the opportunity to contribute to and enhance their programme and learning experience.

7. The University is committed to responding to student feedback, at all levels, in order to monitor and enhance the quality of the student learning experience. However, student representation is defined, for the purposes of this policy, as those formal processes and structures that:

   a. allow the student voice to be represented effectively at all levels of the University for the purposes of enhancing programmes of study and improving the student learning experience, and
b. provide a mechanism for feeding back the outcomes of this representation.

8. Student representation requires a collaborative culture in which the University, its students and NUSU have a shared responsibility for promoting an environment that empowers the student/learner voice.

9. In meeting this responsibility, the University and NUSU recognise that the role of student representative is a responsible and prestigious one, and that it provides individual representatives with opportunities for personal development and the acquisition of valuable graduate skills. Training will be provided for all such representatives.

10. In meeting this responsibility, the University and NUSU recognise that a successful Student Representation Programme will be student-led. Student representatives will be expected to attend training relevant to their role, to take responsibility for ensuring that issues and concerns of the students that they represent are addressed appropriately, and that actions and subsequent outcomes are communicated to the wider student body.

11. In meeting this responsibility, a named Staff Facilitator, appointed by the Head of School, will provide the student-led committee with support and advice, particularly on matters relating to University policy and procedure.

The Student Representation System

12. Student representatives will be on every programme, in each School and at University level as follows:

a. Programme level: Course Representatives, as many as appropriate, will be members of relevant Student-Staff Committee (SSC), and the SSC Student Chairs and Secretaries will be members of Boards of Studies (BoS) or School Postgraduate Research Committees.

b. School level:

i. Taught students – Taught School Representatives (one per Academic Unit) will be on the appropriate Faculty Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee (FLTSEC).

ii. Research students – Research School Representatives (one per Academic Unit) will be the appropriate Graduate School Committee (GSC).

c. University level:

i. The Education Officer and School Representatives will compose the NUSU Education Executive Committee (EEC).

ii. The Education Officer and one Postgraduate School Representative will be on the University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC).

See Figure 1 for an organisational hierarchy of student representation. Also see Student-Staff Committee Constitution and Terms of Reference, and Roles and Responsibilities: School Representative.
13. Each of these representatives will seek the views of their student constituency on all relevant matters.

14. SSCs will pass items for action to BoS or other relevant bodies via the Student Chairs and Secretaries. If a SSC identifies issues that cannot be addressed at Programme level, these items will be reported to the relevant FLTSEC or GSC via the relevant School Representative.

15. All School Representatives from each Faculty will meet prior to FLTSEC/GSC meetings to identify issues to be raised based on feedback from SSCs and to consider the agenda. If School Representatives identify issues that cannot be addressed at Faculty level, then these issues will be reported to the Education Officer at EEC.

16. EEC will pass items for action to ULTSEC via the Education Officer and one Postgraduate School Representative, who will be ULTSEC members.

17. All student representatives will ensure that actions taken and their outcomes are reported back to the students that they represent.

18. Facilitated by the School, student members of the SSC will be elected by the student community that they represent.

19. Student Chairs (and Secretaries, where applicable) of SSCs will be elected by the student members of those committees. Wherever possible, elections will take place at the final meeting of the academic year for the following year.

20. SSCs will have a Student Chair and a student majority. SSCs also should elect a Student Secretary, where there is interest in this position. The named Staff Facilitator will support student Chairs and Secretaries. Academic Units will provide NUSU with the name of each SSC’s Staff Facilitator by the first working day of October.

21. All student representatives must participate in induction training provided by NUSU to help them fulfil their role. Academic Units will provide NUSU (rdc.union@ncl.ac.uk) with the names and email addresses of Student Chairs, Student Secretaries and Course Representatives by the first working day in November and will encourage these representatives to attend training. Academic Units are encouraged to supply names of Student Chairs, Student Secretaries and Course Representatives as soon as possible to ensure sufficient time for all to be trained before the first SSC meeting of the year.

22. The Student Experience Sub-Committee will oversee delivery of the principles of this policy with support from Learning and Teaching Development Service and NUSU and will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the representation structure.
University Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC)
- Education Officer
- Postgraduate Representative

NUSU Education Executive Committee (EEC)
Composed of School Representatives and chaired by the Education Officer

Faculty Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committees (FLTSECs)
- Taught School Representatives

Graduate School Committees (GSCs)
- Research School Representatives

Boards of Studies
- Chairs and Secretaries of Student-Staff Committees (SSCs)

School Postgraduate Research Committees
- Chairs and Secretaries of SSCs

SSCs
Usually several per Academic Unit to cover all programmes and stages
- Course Representatives

SSCs
Separate SSCs for postgraduate research students are recommended
- Course Representatives

Figure 1. Newcastle University Student Representation
The Student Representation Policy originally was approved by ULTSEC, April 2009, with revisions approved by ULTSEC in July 2011 and March 2014.
Representative of LTDS and NUSU agreed minor updates in March 2016.

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<th>Intended for use by:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Heads of Academic Units</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Staff Facilitators, SSC</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Student Representatives</td>
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<td>• Directors/Heads of Excellence in Learning and Teaching</td>
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<td>• Directors of Postgraduate Studies</td>
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<td>• Chair, Boards of Studies</td>
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<td>• Chair, School Postgraduate Research Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <a href="mailto:ltds@ncl.ac.uk">ltds@ncl.ac.uk</a>, x88491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students’ Union Representation &amp; Democracy Coordinator, <a href="mailto:rdc.union@ncl.ac.uk">rdc.union@ncl.ac.uk</a>, 0191 239 3983</td>
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