



HE Student Rep Handbook

2017-18

The College values students' opinions (both good and bad) on the quality and standard of your education.

If we do not hear about any concerns you have, we cannot resolve them!

Guidance on how to be an effective student representative

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Welcome!

Welcome to the HE Student Rep Handbook. This handbook is designed to be your first point of call for information during your time as a Rep but is just one of many ways we have in place to support your work representing your peers.

Collective representation through our Student Reps' is vital to the student body, especially as the quality of education and experience you have at College is of such importance. It's your comments that we want, it's you who can interact best with students from your course and find out what issues they are facing. You will be vital in conveying these issues and so your voice is crucial.

Don't forget that if you need help or advice with any issues regarding your role as a Student Rep then contact the HE Co-ordinator: 01204 482300 or Lesley.Groom@boltoncc.ac.uk

What is the role of a Student Rep?

Your role is to ensure that issues identified by students are taken forward to be dealt with by the College and ensures that students receive feedback on these matters.

You can do this by:

1. Identifying issues and needs as they arise
2. Raising the issues with your tutor or relevant College service
3. Attending meetings: Course Committee, HE Student Forum, and HE Committee
4. Contributing information to the meetings in written or verbal form
5. Reporting back to students on the issues discussed
6. Liaising with other Reps to feedback to students
7. Representing balanced views of your student group

Contacting peers with information can be achieved by:

1. E-mailing peers
2. Putting a photo and contact details of you on the notice board in the HE Room A3.43
3. Introduce yourself before or after a class

Why is the Student Rep's role important? Student Reps:

1. Enable students to be heard in the decision making process of their course and other college committees
2. Are the main point of contact between staff and students and enables a partnership to be formed between staff and students
3. Encourage students to provide feedback on all aspects of their course
4. Identifies features of good practice which could be developed in other HE courses and college-wide
5. Liaise with course tutors, Director of Adults and HE, and the HE Co-ordinator to establish issues to convey at the relevant meetings
6. Provide feedback to students/peers from HE committees and the HE Student Forum

The College aims to maintain the delivery of high quality programmes – the involvement and opinions of students is vital in achieving this goal and enhancing course for the future.

The HE Co-ordinator is the main point of contact for all academic issues. She can be contacted via email: Lesley.Groom@boltoncc.ac.uk or phone: 01204 482300 or Room A3.38a.

Where Student Reps fit into the College System

Student Reps are crucial to ensuring that the College listens to the student voice in all aspects of the learning experience. The College values what the student reps report to them at the meetings listed below. Therefore it is really important that the student reps listen to their peers on their course and feed back to them after the meetings have taken place.

1. Course Committee
2. HE Student Forum
3. College Forum

These committees and forum deal with academic affairs, enhancements, and standards for all HE courses. These are all primarily for YOU, as Student Reps, to voice the collective view of the student body.

1. **Course Committee** – All Students who are taking a HE Course should be given the opportunity to nominate at least one student representative on their course. The Course Committee will meet once per term, and the agenda and minutes will be circulated via Moodle each term so that all students on the course receive them.
2. **HE Student Forum** – The HE Student Forum will meet once per term and will have at least one student representative from each HE course. The Forum will also include the Director of Adult and HE and the HE Co-ordinator, and any relevant personnel from the College (when an agenda item requires their input). Student representatives will be able to feedback to students in addition to the minutes being placed on Moodle.
3. **College Forum** – The College Principal Chairs this Forum and it includes representation from all students within the College. HE students can sit on this Forum if they wish to.

Committees and Forum meetings: Student Rep participation

Meetings can seem daunting at first but remember you are there for the same reason as everyone else – to voice opinions and experience, and to contribute to enhancing the learning experience of all current and future HE students at the College.

Quick Tips for Course Committee meetings:

1. Speak to students on your course – EVERYBODY should have a chance to give you feedback to take to the Course Committee meeting. Ask your Tutor to allow you 15 minutes before the end of your class so you can get feedback from other students.
2. Write down any issues, concerns, AND positive feedback from your peers. You can number these and then you will already have prepared the issues ready for the committee.
3. Ask your peers if they want to give you issues on paper, as some students may feel that they don't want to say anything in front of other people. Remember, your peers may not be very confident at saying things in public so you need to encourage them by any means.
4. During the meeting make sure you take some notes on things that you think are important to feedback to your peers.
5. When you give the feedback from your peers make sure that you receive a response to them from the Chair and other relevant staff.
6. Remember that you are not just seeking a response to your own issues or your year group; what you raise will affect other years and those students who have not even started on their course.
7. Issues that could be discussed:
 - Teaching – positive and negative
 - Modules – positive and negative
 - Lecturers/Tutors – positive and negative – styles of teaching
 - Learning environment/facilities – positive and negative
8. Make sure you make a note of the date and time of the next meeting so you can plan to speak with your peers for feedback.
9. As soon as you are sent the minutes of the meeting, make sure you feed back to your peers so they are kept informed of any actions.

Quick Tips for HE Student Forum meetings:

1. Speak to students on your course – EVERYBODY should have a chance to give you feedback to take to the HE Student Forum meeting. Ask your Tutor to allow you 15 minutes before the end of your class so you can get feedback from other students.
2. Look through the minutes of your course committee and see if there is anything you want to raise at the Forum. Only raise issues that you feel have not been addressed or actioned fully at course committee. Write down any issues, concerns, AND positive feedback from your peers. You can number these and then you will already have prepared the issues ready for the Forum.
3. Ask your peers if they want to give you issues on paper, as some students may feel that they don't want to say anything in front of other people. Remember, your peers may not be very confident at saying things in public so you need to encourage them by any means.
4. During the meeting make sure you take some notes on things that you think are important to feedback to your peers.
5. When you give the feedback from your peers make sure that you receive a response to them from the Chair and other relevant staff.

6. Remember that you are not just seeking a response to your own issues or your year group; what you raise will affect other years and HE courses at College.
7. Issues that could be discussed:
 - Any issue related to Information Learning Technology (ILT)
 - Any issue related to Student Services and Student Support
 - Any issue related to communication and information
 - Any issue related to the learning environment/facilities
 - Any other issue you feel is affecting students in a negative or positive way.
8. Make sure you make a note of the date and time of the next meeting so you can plan to speak with your peers for feedback.
9. As soon as you are sent the minutes of the meeting, make sure you feed back to your peers so they are kept informed of any actions.

Your Feedback to your peers after the meetings

- You should receive copies of minutes of the meetings which you can use to communicate to your fellow students.
- Liaise with your Tutor to establish a time to feedback to the class as soon as possible after the meeting or send a group email to the class.
- Remain in good contact with your Course Leader as well as any other staff involved with your course.
- Do not be afraid to return to the next meeting with any issues you do not feel have been resolved.

Student Feedback

Expressing the views and issues that students have can be done in different ways:

Formal student feedback is where a 'snapshot' of information from students on their experience at various stages is collected, analysed, reported and acted upon. This would include:

- Module/Unit evaluations
- End of Year Course evaluations
- National Student Survey (NSS)
- Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE)
- External reviews of the College and HE provision, such as the QAA review.

Encouraging students to get involved in these surveys will provide a greater depth of knowledge to the staff. The greater number of replies identifying problems means that these could be resolved quicker.

Informal Feedback happens continuously. Sometimes it can just be an unscheduled conversation between you, your class and tutors after lectures. This type of feedback can inform change at a local level but not necessarily reach a wider audience.

The College Charter for Higher Education Students (Approved by HE Student Forum)
Before your course we will provide:

1. Details and information about each HE course
2. Entry requirements needed for each HE course
3. Information regarding student achievement and student satisfaction in previous years (unless the course is new)
4. Honest, open and impartial advice and guidance to help you make the right decisions about the course
5. Information about fees and any financial support that might be available, including additional financial support
6. Extra help if you need additional support

At the start of your course, we will:

1. Give you an induction onto the course and College and explain clearly your rights and responsibilities as a member of the College community
2. Show you round the College and familiarise you with the buildings and facilities
3. Give you a Programme Handbook and module handbooks
4. Discuss with you any additional support you may need

During your course, you can expect:

1. A high quality learning programme delivered by well qualified and experienced staff
2. Regular meetings with your tutor to discuss your progress
3. Opportunities to express your views about your course and College
4. Your written work and assignments to be returned promptly, with written feedback that can help you in your studies
5. Opportunities to take part in enrichment activities
6. Help with careers information advice and guidance
7. Access to confidential counselling and welfare services e.g. housing, finance, health issues

We expect you to:

1. Work hard, achieve your goals and fulfil your potential
2. Attend regularly and punctually and to notify College of any absence immediately
3. Wear your Student ID Card at all times and understand that to ensure the safety of yourself and others, staff may approach you to confirm your identity as a member of our College community
4. Be prepared for your classes and bring the required equipment to College
5. Show respect to others (staff, students and visitors) at all times, regardless of their ethnic background, gender, sexuality, age, religion or other personal circumstance
6. Use respectful language in and around College
7. Show respect for the College buildings, facilities and property as well as the property of others and to participate in ensuring the College environment remains in the best possible condition
8. Uphold the College's No Smoking Policy. Smoking is prohibited in all College Centres and for a distance of up to 20 metres from all College buildings. Only designated shelters can be used as smoking areas.
9. Respect the College's "Gum Free" status
10. Comply with the requirement to eat and drink only in designated areas
11. Comply with the College's positive approach to sustainability e.g. by ensuring that you dispose of litter responsibly and recycle resources wherever possible
12. Be fully compliant with the College's zero tolerance approach to drugs and alcohol

The benefits of being a Student Representative

You will gain valuable transferable skills:

- Listening, writing and verbal communication
- Public speaking and presentation
- Time management and planning
- Lobbying and negotiation
- Being a team member
- Confidentiality
- Attending committees
- Representation
- Confidence

Added Value:

- It can be fun
- It is an essential role that has real value to the College
- It ensures the issues that concern you are raised effectively
- It is a way of contributing
- It can feature on your CV
- It can initiate REAL changes and benefits for students

National Union of Students (NUS)

The NUS is an organisation which has been established to look after the rights of students. They campaign for a fair deal for students. Membership is on a voluntary basis.

The NUS Extra Card costs students £12 for one year and provides students with “significant extra benefits” including discounts and concessionary rates of entry for many facilities e.g. shops, travel schemes, leisure activities. The NUS Extra Card is not compulsory for students. If you want an NUS Extra Card – apply on line at: <http://cards.nus.org.uk/buy/default.aspx> and you will collect this from the Student Services Centre.

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