

Course Rep Handbook

2025/2026





Welcome!

We are so thrilled to have you on board as a Course Rep! Whether you are just starting out as a Course Rep or are returning for another year, we would like to say a huge thank you for giving your time and energy to make sure the voices of students on your course are listened to at the University of the Arts London (UAL).

You will be joining a community of over 1000 representatives across all UAL Colleges as the voice for students and work with your school/department, School Reps and Elected College Officers to help make your education and experience at UAL the best it can be.

We have created this handbook so that you can find all the information about being a Course Rep in one place.

We hope that you are able to quickly and easily find what you're looking for here, but if you still have questions or worries about being a Course Rep, please don't hesitate to contact us. At the SU we have a whole team dedicated to working with you all on student representation, and you can drop us an email at coursereps@su.arts.ac.uk. We'd love to talk with you.

Best wishes,

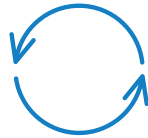
Hannah, Lee, Eleanor
and your 2025/26 Elected Officer Team

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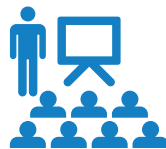
Your Role



As a Course Rep you will volunteer your time to speak on behalf of other students. Your role is vital to ensure that students views and feedback are part of the decision-making processes within your school/department, and across the University.



By working with staff on your course, school/department and other elected representatives to raise feedback and put actions into place, you can help to influence positive change that will improve the academic experience for both current and future students!



The role is flexible and fits around your studies with no prior experience being necessary. Our Arts SU staff team will provide you with all the relevant training and support you need.



It is a very much collaborative role, and you will build positive relationships with other Course Reps, staff and students as well as develop useful skills.

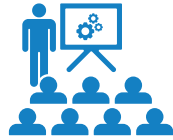


Course Reps are encouraged to take part in elections and attend Student Forums and Annual Membership Meetings throughout out the academic year. Course Reps are expected to communicate regularly with the Education Quality Ream by completing surveys, keeping up to date with our monthly newsletters, and providing feedback.



How to fulfill the role

As a Course Rep, you will be expected to:



Take part in in-person or online training sessions to build your confidence, understand the role and learn how to collect and communicate feedback effectively.



Make yourself known by introducing yourself to students, teaching staff and fellow Course Reps. Let people know what your role is and how they can contact you.



Actively gather feedback from students about their academic experience. Use informal chats, group discussions or surveys to collect views from across your course.



Attend and take part in Course Committee meetings by presenting the feedback you've collected to UAL staff. Work collaboratively to highlight issues and suggest solutions to improve the student experience.



Close the feedback loop by updating students on actions taken and any outcomes resulting from their feedback. Share updates with your peers and the Arts SU's Education Quality Team.



Help students access the right support by referring them to relevant staff or UAL services if their concern is personal, sensitive or not related to academic matters.

How we support you

In return, Arts Students' Union will:



Offer practical training and resources to help you grow in your role and make the most impact for your course community.



Provide opportunities for 1-to-1 and small group discussions online to help you work through challenges and share feedback constructively.



Bring Course Reps together at the annual Rep Conference to connect, collaborate, and grow their creative and social networks.



Let you know well in advance about any Students' Union meetings we'd like you to join, so you can plan ahead.



Deliver regular newsletters to keep you updated on key news, events, and opportunities throughout the year.



Shine a spotlight on your achievements by publicly recognising your efforts via the Rep of the Month award.



Your Role

What Course Reps DO NOT do:

It's important to look after your wellbeing and establish clear boundaries when undertaking the role of Course Rep. Understanding what you're not expected to do as a Course Rep is part of this. **You are NOT expected to get involved with students' personal problems, academic difficulties or individual complaints. This includes:**



- Personal disputes between students and academic staff or individual students, including allegations of harassment, discrimination or victimisation.

- Formal procedures including extensions, extenuating circumstances, academic misconduct, academic appeals and individual complaints or disciplinary procedures.

- Financial and funding queries, including student finance and debt.

- Health issues, whether related to housing, employment, immigration or wellbeing.

Issues like these require a different kind of expertise and in-depth knowledge, in order to ensure the most appropriate advice and guidance can be provided. If a student brings any of the above issues to your attention, please refer them to the **Arts SU Advice Service, Student Services** or other appropriate services as required (contact details can be found near the end of this handbook).

Other Benefits

There are a lot of perks to being a Course Rep, including:



- It will enhance your CV and strengthen your applications to future employers.



- You will build up a professional network by working closely with students, Arts SU and university teams.



- You will get access to free in-person and online training provided by Arts SU. You will have access to exclusive workshops and events such as our annual Rep Conference.



- You will develop new skills in problem solving, communication and team-working.



- You will get a unique insight into how Arts Higher Education works - useful if you ever want to apply your creative skills to working in this sector in future.



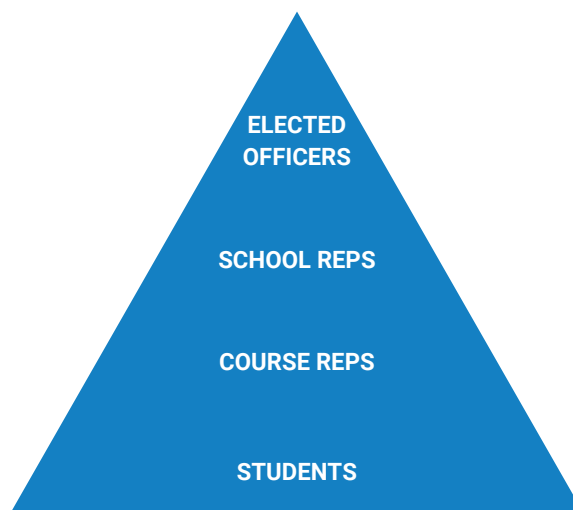
- Enjoy fun socials and events hosted by Arts SU.



- We always order way too much cake and coffee for trainings and meetings, so if you have a sweet tooth, you're in luck.

How do Course Reps fit in?

As a Course Rep, you are one of many groups of students at Arts SU and UAL who help gather student feedback and ideas.



This pyramid allows feedback and ideas to move swiftly between the different levels. Course reps help to give feedback on the views of students to your school/department and the Students' Union via their School Reps and College Officers.

These levels are supported by Course Committees (attended by course reps), Boards of Study (attended by school reps) and College Academic Committees (attended by College Officers) which each feed into each other and ensure feedback is raised and dealt with where most relevant.

Arts SU will organise a number of opportunities throughout the year for Course Reps, School Reps and College Officers to meet with each other to share feedback and develop ideas on how to improve the academic experience at UAL.



What is a School Rep?

A School Rep is someone who has been elected to volunteer their time to speak on behalf of students at school/department level. Similarly to Course Reps, the role is flexible and fits around the students' studies with no prior experience being necessary.

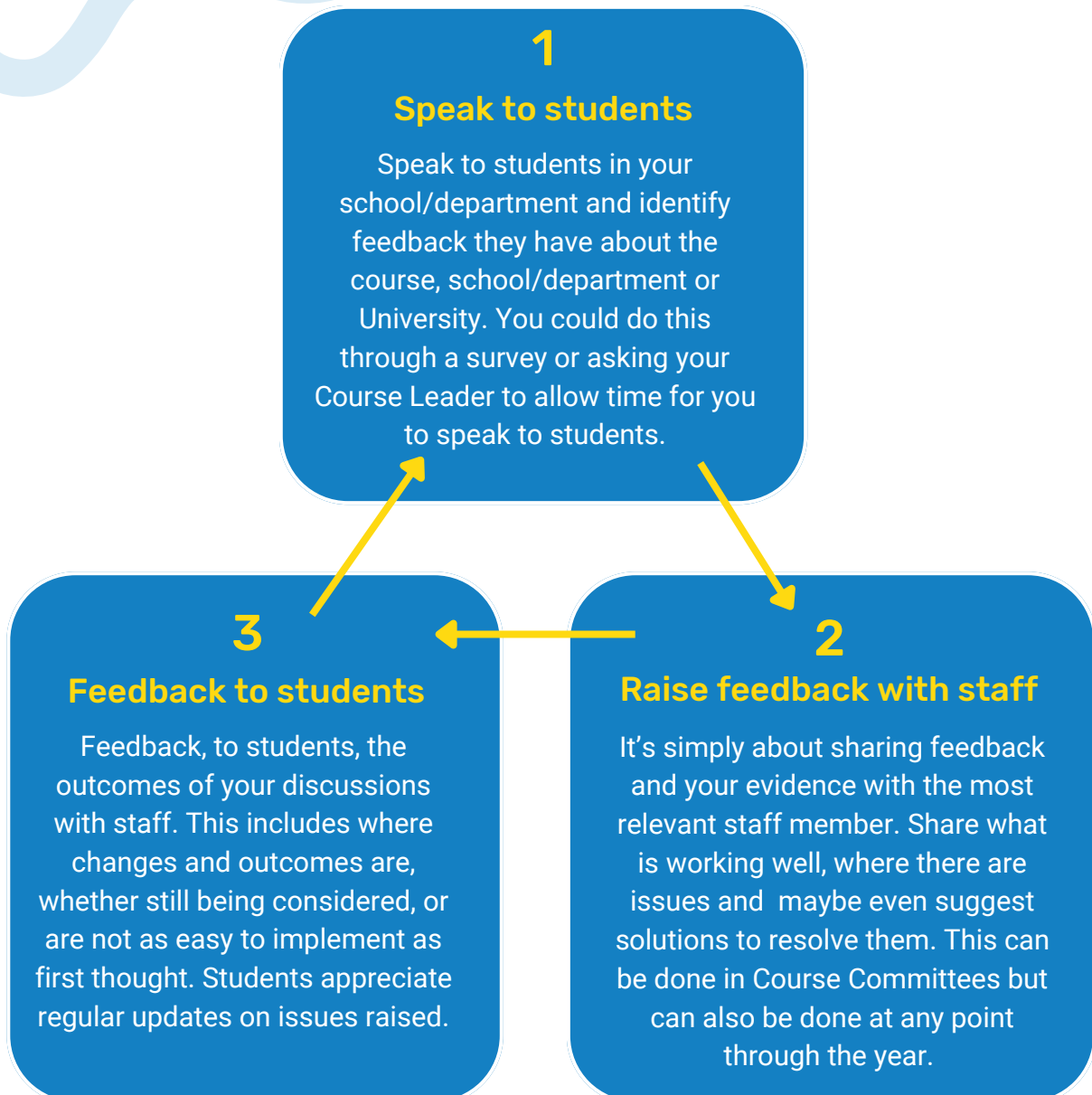
Once elected, School Reps meet regularly with their College Officer and Arts SU staff. They support Course Reps by raising feedback and issues at school level as well as representing students in their School once a term at Board of Study meetings.

They also attend ad-hoc meetings with key staff from their College throughout the year and support engagement and community development within the school. To find out who your School Reps are visit www.arts-su.com/yourvoice/schoolreps/

The Feedback Loop

The feedback loop is a simple way of fulfilling the role of Course Rep and ensures that feedback is raised, acted upon and seen by students.

Closing the feedback loop is core to your role. Carrying out all the steps ensures that the thoughts and feelings of students are being responded to and valued.





Gathering Feedback

To effectively represent your peers, you'll need to gather feedback from them throughout your time as a Rep. There's no one right way to collect feedback, so test out a few different things and see what works for you. Some suggestions could be:

- Create and circulate online surveys or polls using Google Forms or Survey Monkey.
- Ask your Course Leader if you can be allocated five minutes at the beginning/end of class to remind students to feedback on their academic experience.
- Ask your Course Admin Team if they are able to share on your behalf an email with students on your course, including how they can contact you.
- Create a Teams chat to stay in touch with other students on your course.
- Inform your course mates early on that you have meetings coming up (e.g. Course Committees) which you can take their feedback to.
- Let your course mates know a convenient time and place when you're available for a chat, this could be when you plan to be in a workshop, the library or grabbing lunch.

Gathering Feedback

What topics do I collect feedback on?

You collect feedback on students' **academic experience**: Teaching and Learning, Assessments and Feedback, Course Organisation and Management and Learning Resources.

Consider using some combination of these questions when gathering feedback from students.



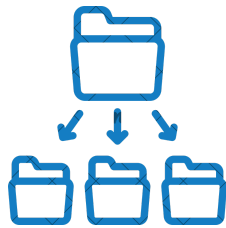
Teaching and Learning:

- How would you evaluate the overall quality of teaching on your course in terms of clarity, expertise, engagement and support?
- How clearly are the assessment criteria and learning outcomes communicated, and how confident are you in understanding what is required to succeed?



Assessment and Feedback:

- Do tutors provide feedback within the expected timeframes, and how does this impact your ability to improve your work?
- To what extent is the feedback you receive insightful, actionable and helpful in improving your academic performance?
- What specific changes to course content, structure, or delivery would enhance your engagement and learning experience?
- How well aligned are the course expectations, learning outcomes, and actual content delivered? Are there any gaps or inconsistencies you've noticed?



Course Organisation and Management:

- How effectively does your school or programme communicate the actions they've taken in response to student feedback, and do you feel these changes reflect your concerns?
- Have you experienced any issues with your timetable (e.g. clashes, late changes, gaps between classes), and how well were these handled?
- How clearly and promptly are changes to course content, schedules, or teaching arrangements communicated to students by staff?
- How accessible and easy to understand is the information about applying for extensions or reporting extenuating circumstances?
- To what extent are course materials, reading lists, and online resources made available in a timely and accessible manner?

Learning Resources / Other:



- How user-friendly and reliable are the digital learning platforms (e.g. Blackboard, Moodle), and do they support your learning effectively?
- What specific improvements to learning resources and support services would help you get more value and enjoyment from your course?
- To what extent do you have consistent and timely access to the essential resources for your course e.g. textbooks, equipment, software, workshop spaces, and facilities?
- How clearly and early in the course are any additional costs (e.g. materials, trips, printing, specialist equipment) communicated and explained to you?
- How helpful and relevant have you found the University's support services (e.g. academic skills, careers, disability support) when you've needed to use them?



Course Committee Meetings (UAL)

These meetings take place 3x a year, usually 1x per term.

Course Committee Meetings (sometimes referred to as Programme Committee Meetings) are the formal opportunity each term for Course Reps to present feedback to staff, help resolve issues, and highlight what is working well on your course.

Course Committee's monitor how the course operates and considers issues related to the content and organisation of the course. During these meetings, Course Reps should raise course-level feedback that they've collected from the students on their course.

These meetings are organised by UAL (not the Arts SU) and information about these meetings and when you need to attend them will come from your course team. As a representative of your course you should make every effort to attend them.

Each committee may be set-up differently depending on your school or college. To find out more about how your specific Course Committee works, you can speak to your Course Leader and/or set up a 'pre-meeting' with them to talk through how it works.

Course Committees feed-in to Boards of Studies which are attended by your School/Department Dean and School Rep.



Online feedback clinics (Arts SU)

These flexible 1-to-1 or small group sessions take place throughout the year on an ad-hoc basis, between Course Reps and a member of the Arts SU's Education Quality Team.

If Course Reps need extra support, advice or guidance in their role, they can contact the EQ team throughout the academic year by emailing the team at coursereps@su.arts.ac.uk to request a 1-to-1 or small group session

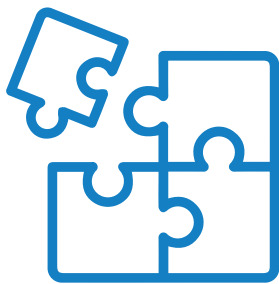
The EQ Team will then schedule a 1-to-1 or small group session that takes place online to provide a dedicated space to discuss student feedback, get advice on where and how to raise concerns and explore ways to better engage students in conversations about their course.

Course Reps can also use the sessions to ask questions or raise any issues about their role.

- **Advice on how to engage students more effectively with sharing relevant feedback.**
- **Support with *how* to raise a specific piece of student feedback with a member of staff.**
- **Information on which individual or team at UAL you should raise a particular piece of feedback with.**
- **Clarity on any information provided in this handbook and training resources.**

This is a new support initiative being trialled for the first time this year. These 1-2-1 sessions are open to all Course Reps at any point during term times. All you have to do is reach out to us via the coursereps@su.arts.ac.uk email to arrange a time.

Who can I turn to for extra support?



The vast majority of students who volunteer to be a Course Representative have a wonderful experience and enjoy the time they spend in the role. However, it's essential that you know how to access support if and when you need it.

This is in many ways why Arts SU exists. We are a registered charity and independent from the University of Arts, London supported by a staff team working purely for the benefit of its students.

Every student at the University is automatically a member of the Students' Union! This means you can access all the support and opportunities we provide. Your needs and interests are also **represented by our 6 Elected Officers** who are elected every year.

What might a Course Rep need help with?

- Breakdown of communication between student representatives and staff.
- Feeling overwhelmed by student feedback and/or complaints.
- Confusion about how to raise feedback with students or staff.
- Worries about how the role might be impacting your studies.
- Lack of engagement or feedback from students.
- Uncertainty or anxiety about how to deal with a particular issue.

This is not meant as an endless a list and if you're experiencing a problem that isn't listed here and still need support, we want to hear from you.

Who can I contact if I need support?

There are two main points of contact at Arts SU should you need them during your time as a Course Rep:

Education Quality Team

Email: coursereps@su.arts.ac.uk

The Education Quality team can support and advise with any aspect of the role which involve the collection and sharing of feedback be it involving other reps, students and/or staff.

Examples can include disputes or a breakdown in communication you may encounter with other reps, students and/or staff as well as situations where you struggle to engage students in the collection of feedback.

Advice Service | Website: www.arts-su.com/advice
Email: advice@su.arts.ac.uk

The Advice Service team can support any individual student with difficulties of a more personal nature and unique to them. The team provides advice on academic and housing issues and links students to a range of university student services.

Examples can include if you feel overwhelmed by student feedback or concerns, are worried about the role impacting your own study or need to signpost a student with a query that is individual or personal to them whether it be an appeal, meeting with the university or complaint.

If you're unsure who to contact don't worry. We all work closely together and can put you in touch with the relevant team and/or individual.

Top-tips for being an effective Course Rep



- **Don't feel you have to wait until your course committee meeting....** raising feedback at the earliest opportunity either with your Course Leader or the Education Quality Team can often ensure issues are resolved earlier and not left until it's too late.
- **Try different approaches when asking for feedback...** whether its online surveys, emails or just talking to students before and after class, there are different ways you can gather feedback. Find at least two ways that work for both you and those you represent.
- **Work with your fellow reps...** meeting and talking with other Course Reps on your course, and School Reps at your school, is a great way of gathering and sharing student feedback. You can also share the workload and compare notes to get a clearer understanding of the issues and solutions needed.
- **Tell us about your successes...** we know many reps work hard to influence positive change on their course but it's equally important to make sure others are aware of these.
- **Engage in the wider Arts SU community** by voting in elections and annual Student Forums, completing Arts SU membership surveys and staying up to date with our monthly newsletters.
- **Attend training and seek support when needed...** don't be afraid to ask for help where needed, and if unsure of who to speak to, email coursereps@su.arts.ac.uk



Arts SU Elections

Arts SU use elections to decide who should speak and work for you on a range of issues while you're a student at UAL. Nominations open in early January with elections held in March each year for the following academic year.

We encourage all students to consider standing with a variety of roles available, broadly split between two types:

Elected College Officer Roles (or 'SABBS') – These full-time paid roles are carried outside of studies. They represent and speak on behalf of all students, are collectively responsible for promoting and defending the rights of students, campaigning on issues and promoting involvement in Union activities.

School Rep Roles – These roles are carried out on a voluntary basis alongside studies. They work closely with Course Reps and key staff to understand students' academic and learning experiences, advocating for changes and development related to learning, teaching and the community.

Why should Course Reps vote in SU Elections?

Elections are about deciding who will represent and make decision on behalf of students in the coming year. Even if you don't realise it, every Course Rep has a vested interest in the outcomes of the elections, because our Elected Officers will represent you on a variety of issues covering the student experience including students' academic experience. The question is, why wouldn't you vote! For more information visit: www.arts-su.com/elections.

Useful Contacts



Arts SU Elected Officers

www.arts-su.com/yourvoice/officers

Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Officer ccwofficer@su.arts.ac.uk

Central Saint Martins Officer csmofficer@su.arts.ac.uk

London College of Communication Officer lccofficer@su.arts.ac.uk

London College of Fashion Officer lcfofficer@su.arts.ac.uk

Community Officer communityofficer@su.arts.ac.uk

Union Affairs Officer unionaffairs@su.arts.ac.uk

Education Quality Team

www.arts-su.com/yourvoice

Course Rep Queries coursereps@su.arts.ac.uk

School Rep Queries schoolreps@su.arts.ac.uk

Student Communities Team

www.arts-su.com/yourcommunities

Sports sports@su.arts.ac.uk

Societies societies@su.arts.ac.uk

Arts Active Programme artsactive@su.arts.ac.uk

Arts SU Advice Service

www.arts-su.com/advice

For free, confidential and impartial advice on academic (including university policies and procedures) or housing and accommodation matter.

Contact an Advisor advice@su.arts.ac.uk

Companion Scheme companionscheme@su.arts.ac.uk

University Support Services

www.arts.ac.uk/students/student-services

For advice and support on various aspects of student life including money, personal issues. (including stress, anxiety and mental health concerns) and queries related to disability.

General Queries student.services@su.arts.ac.uk

Health and Wellbeing Advice studenthealth@arts.ac.uk

Counselling Service counselling@arts.ac.uk

Disability Service disability@arts.ac.uk