**Student Staff Committees: Best Practice Guidelines**

UWTSD is committed to supporting effective student representation for all its students. Students, the University and Students’ Union work in partnership to ensure that the student voice is heard at all levels of decision making.

Within the Student Charter the University commits to:

* Work with students to respond to their feedback on their experience;
* Let students know what has been done with their feedback;
* Use feedback to continually enhance the student experience.

The Student Staff Committee plays a key role in ensuring that open and transparent decisions are made in relation to all programmes at UWTSD. The committee takes a partnership approach to the decision-making process and is made up of key Course Reps and Staff.

Course Reps and Staff work in partnership to discuss matters relevant to the academic provision, respond to feedback and develop solutions

The following Best Practice Guidelines were rewritten for the 2021/22 Academic Year. These guidelines were written in partnership with the Student Voice Reps. The Reps reflected on their experiences and what guidance they wished to suggest to staff in order for both staff and students to get the most out of the Student Staff Committees. The document aims to be an aid to staff responsible for Student Staff Committees. Further support on Student Staff Committees or working with Reps can be sought from the Students’ Union.

**Scheduling**

1. The first Student Staff Committee of the academic year should be scheduled at a mutually convenient time for Course Reps at all levels, programmes and pathways to attend where possible.
2. During the first Student Staff Committee the membership should set the schedule for the year. When scheduling dates and times the Student Staff Committees should avoid:
* Exam weeks.
* Holidays for students.
* Weeks where there are likely to be multiple assignment deadlines.
* Times of day likely to clash with timetabled teaching sessions (where possible).

Consideration of the profile of Course Reps on individual Student Staff Committees should be made in order to best accommodate the membership.

1. Programme teams should aim to host 3-4 Student Staff Committees per academic year. Placement of these within the academic year are dependent on each unique programme.
2. The Secretary for the meeting should share the annual schedule with the Students’ Union (studentvoice@uwtsd.ac.uk).
3. The Secretary for the meeting should send a reminder of each meeting date at three and one week prior to the meeting in order to provide Course Reps adequate notice and time to collect feedback.

**Supporting Reps**

1. Prior to the first Student Staff Committee of the year Programme Leaders should offer Reps the opportunity to meet for an introductory meeting. This can be done in person or online.
	1. During the introductory meeting shared goals should be set for the year which require additional focus and student consultation. Please note that these can be added to at any point during the academic year.
	2. These goals should be based on recommendations made to or by the programme through processes such as the Annual Programme Review or as a result of survey data such as the National Student Survey.
2. Prior to subsequent Student Staff Committees Programme Leaders should liaise with Course Reps to discuss potential agenda items. This allows for Reps and Staff to undertake sufficient consultation or research in advance of the Student Staff Committee. This can be done in a range of ways including person or online.
3. In months where a Student Staff Committees do not take place Programme Leaders should ensure that they offer Course Reps the opportunity to meet and discuss any matters with them. This can be done in person or online.

**Agendas**

1. The Secretary should invite Course Reps to add items to the agenda in advance of the Student Staff Committee. This can be done in conjunction with the three-week reminder.
2. The Secretary for the meeting should send out the agenda and any accompanying papers one week prior to the Student Staff Committee. This can be done in conjunction with the one-week reminder.
3. Secretaries and Chairs should refer to Appendix CS1 when building the agenda in conjunction with thematic issues related to the academic year. (e.g., Induction; NSS results; Assessment Preparation; Placements).
4. When circulating agendas or papers including key questions that need to be discussed is good practice. This helps Course Reps prepare for the discussion and understand what decisions may be taken.

**During a Student Staff Committee**

1. Chairs should ensure that all members feel and act in a manner that all perspectives are being valued equally.
2. Staff should ensure that when fulfilling the Course Rep role students are supported to see themselves as leaders.
3. Staff and Course Reps should make decisions together in partnership.

**After a Student Staff Committee**

1. The Secretary for the meeting should follow up with any Course Rep who was not in attendance and did not send apologies.
2. The Secretary should circulate minutes and a reminder of all actions agreed during the Student Staff Committee within one week of to all members.

**Feedback Loop**

1. An online page (e.g., Moodle or Microsoft Teams Group) should be built for storage of all Student Staff Committee papers. All students represented by the Course Reps in attendance of the Student Staff Committee should have access to the page.
2. The Secretary should notify all students when papers are uploaded to the page.
3. Chairs of Student Staff Committees should encourage Course Reps to feedback to the students that they represent in a timely manner.
4. Where important decisions are taken at the Student Staff Committees Programme Teams are expected to communicate such decisions to all students affected.

**Accessibility**

1. When requested hard copies of papers should be made accessible for students.
2. When using the Traffic Light System text should not be changed from black.
3. Reasonable adjustments will be made during the meeting for students with disabilities where appropriate.

**Support**

1. Where the Student Staff Committee system has challenges, Programme Managers or Academic Discipline Directors should contact studentvoice@uwtsd.ac.uk to discuss the matter with the Students’ Union.
2. Where Course Rep attendance or engagement is not as expected Programme Managers or Academic Discipline Directors should contact studentvoice@uwtsd.ac.uk to discuss the matter with the Students’ Union.
3. If you would like any support to get the most out of a Student Staff Committee or Course Reps please get in touch with the Students’ Union to discuss.