



Student/ Learner Representatives Information Pack

Department of Health Sciences





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Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a Student or Learner Representative for the Department of Health Sciences, whether this is as a *Department Representative* or *Course Representative*. We are very excited that you have taken on representing our undergraduate students, postgraduate students or apprenticeship learners to improve the quality of our programmes and the experience for all.

Each of these roles are integral to the department's ability to engage effectively with the student and learner communities and we value you highly.

Within the [Department of Health Sciences](#), we are committed to providing mechanisms for the representation of students' and learners' views and opinions. We feel that it is vital that your collective voice is heard and responded to at every level so that everyone can have the best experience whilst at the University and studying our programmes.

Student and Learner Representatives, elected by and from the student and learner community, are one of the ways in which the student and learner voice can be heard, and as a representative you play a major role in developing a better University overall for students and learners.

Academic representation is a partnership between the York University's Student's Union ([YUSU](#)), the Graduate Students Association ([GSA](#)) and academic departments. Together, we all aim to ensure that students and learners contribute directly to the processes of reviewing, maintaining and enhancing the quality of the academic experience and the community at York.

We look forward to working with you and hope that you will enjoy this important role!

This information pack contains key information about each role, responsibilities and expectations and your support network.

Key Department and University Contacts

Name:	Role:	Email:
Student and Academic Support Service		dohs-sass@york.ac.uk
Matthew Jacobs	Head of Student Services	matthew.jacobs@york.ac.uk
Danielle Simpson	Student Support & Engagement Manager (Student & Academic Support Service)	danielle.simpson@york.ac.uk
Sophie Godfrey	Office Coordinator (<i>Primary Contact</i>) (Student & Academic Support Service)	sophie.godfrey@york.ac.uk
Sue Faulds	Chair of Board of Studies	sue.faulds@york.ac.uk
Veronica Gillies	Programmes Office Administrator (Quality Assurance)	veronica.gillies@york.ac.uk
York Student's Union (YUSU) (UG)		engagement@yusu.org
Deb Dey	Academic Officer for YUSU	academicofficer@yusu.org
Ben Durkan & Sam Pritchard	YUSU Faculty Reps for the Faculty of Sciences	facultyrep-sciences@yusu.org
Graduate Student's Association (GSA) (PG)		representation@yorkgsa.org

Student & Academic Support Service (SASS):

Location: Ground floor of the Seebohm Rowntree Building, Campus West

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday, 08:30 - 16:30

Telephone Number: 01904 321321

Email: dohs-sass@york.ac.uk



Professionalism Statement

Throughout the role as a Student or Learner Representative, similarly to the expectations of you as a student or learner on our programmes, there is a level of professionalism which is expected.

The primary aim of any of our student and learner roles is to represent your cohort view's, feedback and to build their community. You form a community and departmental contact and as such several of you will be expected to attend departmental meetings and share the student/ learner voice.

Although you may be voicing the collated student and learner feedback, you are advised to remain impartial as much as possible when representing their voice. We certainly encourage passionate interest and we would like you to be invested in the student and learner experience. However, predominantly your role is to form the voice of students and learners collectively.

The role should not be a platform that enables anyone to implement their personal wishes if these are not appropriate to the role or to the best interests of our students and learners.



Department Representative

There are around 30 Department Representatives across the University, and within our department **one is usually elected for both undergraduate and postgraduate students** respectively. They are both invaluable contacts for our student communities, the Course Representatives and across the department for academic colleagues and professional support staff.

Both Department Representatives take on a leadership role and support the group of Course Representatives. They act as their team leader - serving as Course Representatives' primary contact, they collate student feedback (gathered by the Course Representatives) and raise key issues to the wider department. These are voluntary positions with an aim to initiate positive change towards the student experience, and to provide regular updates to YUSU, GSA and the department.

Recruitment:

The Department Representatives are recruited during the period between each academic year (the summer break).

In collaboration with the department, YUSU and the GSA, applications and interviews are completed to ensure that each Department Representative is in place for the start of the new academic year. The Department Representatives are then able to support induction for new and returning students, and engage with the recruitment of Course Representatives.

Key Responsibilities:-

1. Act as a **team leader** for department's Course Representatives (UG or PG respectively).
2. **Collate the feedback** from Course Representatives and present the findings to the department.
3. Act as a **contact** between the department and the Faculty of Sciences Representative.
4. **Attend** departmental and University level meetings where appropriate.

Expectations of the role:-

1. **Attend** department Student Staff Forums ([SSF](#)) (UG or PG respectively).



2. **Attend** department Board of Studies ([BoS](#)) meetings.
3. **Attend** YUSU Academic Leadership Team meetings.
4. **Attend** department Student Partnership meetings.
5. **Lead, support and coordinate** the Course Representatives (UG or PG respectively).
6. **Communicate** feedback from Course Representatives to the department - this can be completed either verbally or delivered at meetings.
7. **Communicate** any key updates with the YUSU Faculty Representative/s for Sciences.
8. **Engage** with the SASS team initiatives and events - such as student engagement events and the Course Representative recruitment cycle.
9. To undertake a **few hours per week of work** towards the role during term time.

YUSU also has a Department Representative [role description](#) available online for reference.

Training, Induction & Support:-

YUSU

Induction & Training:

Following the recruitment process, [YUSU](#) offers *training sessions* specifically for the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Department Representatives, both during induction and throughout the academic year. These are recorded if Representatives are unable to attend and these are available [online](#). These cover a range of topics, which include engaging with committees, and communication and leadership skills.

Support:

During the recruitment, induction and training periods, Department Representatives will be introduced to YUSU's [Student Support and Representation Team](#). This team provides key information and coordination of each of these processes. Department Representatives will be able to access guidance and support throughout the academic year from their team.

YUSU delivers *1 hour fortnightly meetings* for all of the University's Department Representatives to attend. Here all Department Representatives can share best practice, network and access support from fellow students in the role.

Department Representatives will be invited to attend training and meetings directly from YUSU (engagement@yusu.org).



Department Representatives are also able to access advice and support from YUSU's [Academic Officer](#). This part-time role is annually recruited for and they represent the interests of all students across the University, specifically related to academic matters. They are involved in the University's Council and are aware of wider University discussions. The Academic Officer also coordinates the network of Academic Representatives to facilitate an effective dialogue between department student communities and the central University.

The Faculty of Sciences [Faculty Representative](#) can also provide support throughout the academic year. They are elected during the main YUSU elections in the spring term for the coming academic year. This voluntary position involves voicing student and learner feedback and concerns at the high level committees within the Student Union and across the University.

GSA

Support:

Postgraduate Department Representatives are also able to access support from the [Representation and Democracy Coordinator](#) at the GSA. The GSA can provide information specifically related to postgraduate taught and research student matters across the University. This advice ranges from academic to pastoral support.

DoHS Student & Academic Support Service ([SASS](#))

Induction & Training:

In addition to the training and support delivered by YUSU, each Department Representative will be invited to have an *introductory meeting* with members of the department's Student & Academic Support Service.

This will currently be with Sophie Godfrey ([Office Coordinator](#)) and Danielle Simpson ([Student Support & Engagement Manager](#)).

During this departmental induction, the Department Representatives receive a detailed outline of what the role will involve specifically for Health Sciences, and further explanation on the key responsibilities, expectations and time commitment towards the role.

Support:

Within the department, support throughout the academic year will be provided by the SASS *Office Coordinator*. This role acts as the first point of contact in the department for all Student



Representatives. You are able to raise any issues with them, discuss support required in the role and guidance. They can be contacted via email, phone or in person in the SASS office.

Monthly Student Networking meetings are run by the Office Coordinator, which are open to all Health Sciences Department Representatives, Course Representatives and Department Community Coordinators. These meetings provide an opportunity to network, share best practice, talk through similar issues or feedback received and overall this acts as a support network.

Department Representatives will be invited to attend department specific training and networking meetings directly from the SASS Office Coordinator. The relevant Secretary will invite Representatives to the necessary wider department meetings such as the Staff Student Forums and the Board of Studies.

Department Representatives are also supported by *each other*. We would encourage both Department Representatives to network from the beginning of the academic year and support each other throughout to ensure that they are accessing the most from the role.

Communication & Awareness:-

Each Department Representative will have their details included on the departmental Student/ Learner Representation pages on the [website](#). This will include their name, contact email address and a photograph. The details will also be posted on the Student/ Learner Representation noticeboard outside the Student & Academic Support Service office.

Students and learners will be directed to these pages and the noticeboard to learn who their Department Representatives are.

Each Department Representative will have access to a YUSU managed email account - healthsciencesrep@yusu.org (UG) and healthsciencespgrep@yusu.org (PG). There is no expectation for Department Representatives to use their personal UoY email address. Through this email address, students or learners can provide feedback via email or verbally to them in person.

Department Representatives will also have access to the 'Student Communication' sites on our department's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). These pages can be used to post relevant



information, updates and requests for feedback where applicable. Each Department Representative will be added to these pages at the start of the academic year.



Course Representative

There are over 400 Course Representatives elected annually across the University. For each of our programmes and cohorts within the Department of Health Sciences, **at least one Course Representative for each is elected to represent our students and learners**. Similarly to the Department Representatives, they are vital in engaging with our student and learner communities, and across the department with academic colleagues and professional support staff.

All Course Representatives act as primary contacts for students and learners to raise their feedback with - whether this includes positive or constructive feedback on our programmes and their overall experience. These are voluntary positions with an aim to improve the student and learner academic experience and to provide regular updates to the Department Representatives and the wider department. They act as the department's ear to the ground to be made aware of programme specific queries.

Recruitment:

The Course Representatives are recruited during the first term of each new academic year.

In collaboration with the department, YUSU and the GSA, nominations and elections are completed to ensure that each programme and cohort has a Course Representative to represent their collective voice. The Course Representatives are then able to support department initiatives and events during term time.

Key Responsibilities:-

1. Act as a **primary point of contact for students and learners** to raise their feedback with (UG or PG respectively).
2. Act as a **point of contact for the Department Representatives** and to **inform** them of student and learner feedback.
3. To **support** the identification and resolution of programme specific queries.
4. To **represent** the student and learner voice to the department, which feeds into the wider University.
5. **Inform** the department of student and learner feedback and programme specific queries.
6. **Attend** departmental and University level meetings where appropriate.

Expectations of the role:-

1. **Attend** department Student Staff Forums ([SSF](#)) (UG or PG respectively).
2. **Attend** department Board of Studies ([BoS](#)) meetings.
3. **Attend** department Student Partnership meetings.
4. **Communicate** directly with students and learners in your cohort/ on your programme on a regular basis to gain their feedback.
5. **Communicate** feedback from students and learners to the Department Representative - this can be completed either verbally, via email or delivered at meetings.
6. **Communicate** any key updates or actions completed towards feedback raised with students and learners on a regular basis.
7. **Engage** with the SASS team initiatives and student and learner engagement events - such as 'A-cake-demic' events.
8. **Encourage** students and learners to engage with all opportunities to provide feedback - such as module evaluations, the National Student Survey (NSS) and departmental reviews (eg. Annual Programme Reviews & the Periodic Review.)
9. To undertake a **few hours per week of work** towards the role during term time.

YUSU also has a Course Representative [role description](#) available online for reference.

Training, Induction & Support:-

YUSU

Induction & Training:

Following the elections, [YUSU](#) will send information on the core aspects of the role. This is prior to attending a *training conference* specifically for Course Representatives. This is held on two dates and Course Representatives can choose which selection of sessions they would like to attend. There are a range of compulsory and optional sessions, which cover a range of topics, such as effective communication, collecting feedback and committee training.

The [training will be accessible online](#) after the event for reference and if Course Representatives are unable to attend either date.



YUSU are also introducing further training opportunities, available via an external provider - [Alkhemly](#). These sessions will be offered during term one and include online delivered sessions, such as Microlearning.

Support:

During the recruitment, induction and training periods, Course Representatives will be introduced to YUSU's [Student Support and Representation Team](#). This team provides key information and coordination of each of these processes. Course Representatives will be able to access guidance and support throughout the academic year from their team.

Course Representatives will be invited to attend training and meetings directly from YUSU (engagement@yusu.org).

GSA

Support:

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Induction & Training:

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and Learner Representatives. You are able to raise any issues with them, discuss support required in the role and guidance. They can be contacted via email, phone or in person in the SASS office.

Monthly Student Networking meetings are run by the Office Coordinator, which are open to all Health Sciences Department Representatives, Course Representatives and Department Community Coordinators. These meetings provide an opportunity to network, share best practice, talk through similar issues or feedback received and overall this acts as a support network.

Course Representatives will be invited to attend department specific training and networking meetings directly from the SASS Office Coordinator. The relevant Secretary will invite Representatives to the necessary wider department meetings such as the Staff Student Forums and the Board of Studies.

Course Representatives are also supported by *each other*. We would encourage all Course Representatives to network from the beginning of the academic year and support each other throughout to ensure that they are accessing the most from the role.

Communication & Awareness:-

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Students and learners will be directed to these pages and the noticeboard to learn who their Course Representatives are.

Course Representatives will also have access to the 'Student Communication' sites on our department's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). These pages can be used to post relevant information, updates and requests for feedback where applicable. Each Course Representative will be added to these pages once they have been elected.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How will I know which meetings that I should be attending?

A: In addition to the meetings listed in the role descriptions above, during each term you will be invited to relevant departmental meetings and committees depending on your programme and role.

For example, Veronica Gillies will invite you to the Undergraduate Staff Student Forum if you are a representative for undergraduate students.

Q: Where can I communicate with students, learners and fellow representatives?

A: In addition to communicating face to face with students in and around teaching and placement blocks (where possible), you can also communicate via the Student Communication VLE pages, at staff and student meetings, at YUSU/ GSA organised meetings, via targeted emails and at the monthly Student Representative Networking meetings.

You may also want to set up social media channels to communicate socially with students, or to request feedback. However please note that these are unable to be facilitated by University staff.

Q: How do I collect feedback?

A: The primary way to collect feedback is to communicate with students. This should be with a wide range of students, and in different ways.

For example, face to face, through meetings, socials, polls, Google forms, social media channels, course group chats.

Note: It is important to inform students of why and how feedback is being collected and what it will be used for. Inform them where the feedback will be presented and if there is a deadline for receiving feedback.



Q: Where can I pass on feedback?

A: Department Representatives can pass on feedback at relevant departmental meetings such as the Student-Staff Forums, Board of Studies and at monthly Student Representative meetings.

Course Representatives can pass on feedback from students to the Department Representative.

Both can pass on feedback to the Faculty Representative to be received through to the Academic Officer for YUSU, or the GSA Representative.

Q: What can I do to support my fellow students?

A: The remit of these roles is to communicate with the students and learners and represent their voice. You are in post to support the development of the student and learner community, and to promote a positive experience whilst studying with us.

Students and learners may feel that they would like to ask you for support with their studies, pastoral or other considerations that they may be facing.

If you find that you are being asked to provide support that does not fit with the role, please do raise this with the Student & Academic Support Service. Their team can signpost sources of support to students and learners where appropriate.

Q: What if I have a serious concern about a fellow student?

A: Should you encounter a situation where you are concerned about a fellow student you have a number of options available to you.

You can contact Matthew Jacobs, Head of Student & Academic Support Service/Conduct, Behaviour, Respect & Support to Study Lead by email on Matthew.Jacobs@york.ac.uk or via the University [Report to Support function](#)



Committees and Meetings

Each Student or Learner Representative will be expected to attend relevant department meetings. These are described above in the role outlines however please see below further information about each.

For students and learners on programmes working towards professional registrations, attendance at minuted meetings counts towards practice hours, provided that the time would otherwise have been spent in practice at the time. Student or Learner Representatives will be unable to count the time towards practice hours if the time would otherwise have been in theory or undertaking private study.

If a meeting that you are required to attend clashes with a timetabled session, you will not be counted as 'absent' however you will be required to inform the session leader of the absence. If a meeting falls within placement time, you are required to organise your clinical time so that you do not miss practice hours.

Please note that only the time spent in the meeting should be counted and not time spent travelling. The minutes of the meeting will demonstrate attendance.

Student and Learner Representatives should identify how attendance at a meeting might relate to a practice learning outcome or competency and include evidence of this in E-OAR (MYEPAD). Each respective Programme Leader will be able to advise whether attendance at a specific meeting can be counted as practice hours.

Board of Studies (BoS)

The Department of Health Sciences' Board of Studies has overall responsibility for the student experience, teaching and learning, and quality assurance of all programmes of study offered by the department.

The Board ensures effective discharge of the teaching objectives of the University and is ultimately responsible for the content, structure, delivery, quality assurance and recommendation of final results. The quality of the programmes is assured by the monitoring and evaluation of the department's teaching programmes, via external and internal methods, including student feedback and the performance and progress of individual students.



The Board of Studies meets once a term. Its membership includes staff who contribute to the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the Department, and student and learner representatives who attend for each meeting's main agenda.

All Student and Learner Representatives will be invited where applicable directly by the Secretary to the Board of Studies each term.

Student-Staff Forum (SSF)

The Student-Staff Forum is an informal meeting, held termly, to enable all Student and Learner Representatives to raise issues with members of staff within the department whose roles involve supporting the student and learner experience and maintaining the quality of our teaching and learning provision.

The forum is divided into two meetings, one for undergraduate students and learners and one for postgraduate students. The division ensures that relevant issues for different student and learner groups are raised in a more appropriate manner. Issues which are relevant to all students and learners are brought to the Board of Studies for consideration and a wider discussion.

The Student-Staff Forums report to the Board of Studies to ensure that student and learners concerns are minuted and responded to appropriately.

All Student and Learner Representatives will be invited where applicable directly by the Secretary to the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student-Staff Forum each term.

Department Library Committee

The Health Sciences Department Library Committee is held to discuss all matters relating to the University Library. For example, to provide feedback, raise problems and to suggest new ideas. It is chaired by a member of academic staff from the department.

The Committee meets three times a year (usually in October, January and April) and includes members of academic staff from across the department as well as librarians at hospital sites where students are based on placement.



All undergraduate and postgraduate student and learner representatives are invited to highlight any concerns or feedback related to Library resources, services and facilities from their cohorts.

This is an opportunity to impact the way in which the Library supports the department and to ensure that both are working together to provide the best possible service for our students and learners.

The Committee Secretary will circulate a feedback form with each agenda to capture your comments if you are unable to attend.

Academic Liaison Librarian

The Academic Liaison Librarian for Health Sciences, [David Brown](#), attends each meeting in order to respond to student or learner comments and to pass feedback to the Library for consideration.

David's role is to act as a link between the department and the Library, ensuring that students, learners and staff are aware of current Library projects and changes, and that the Library is aware of the department's needs. David is a key contact to bring any suggestions for how to improve the Library.

David regularly provides teaching input in our programmes about literature searching and other digital skills, as well as individual support and guidance for students and learners.

You can contact David via email at lib-healthsci@york.ac.uk.