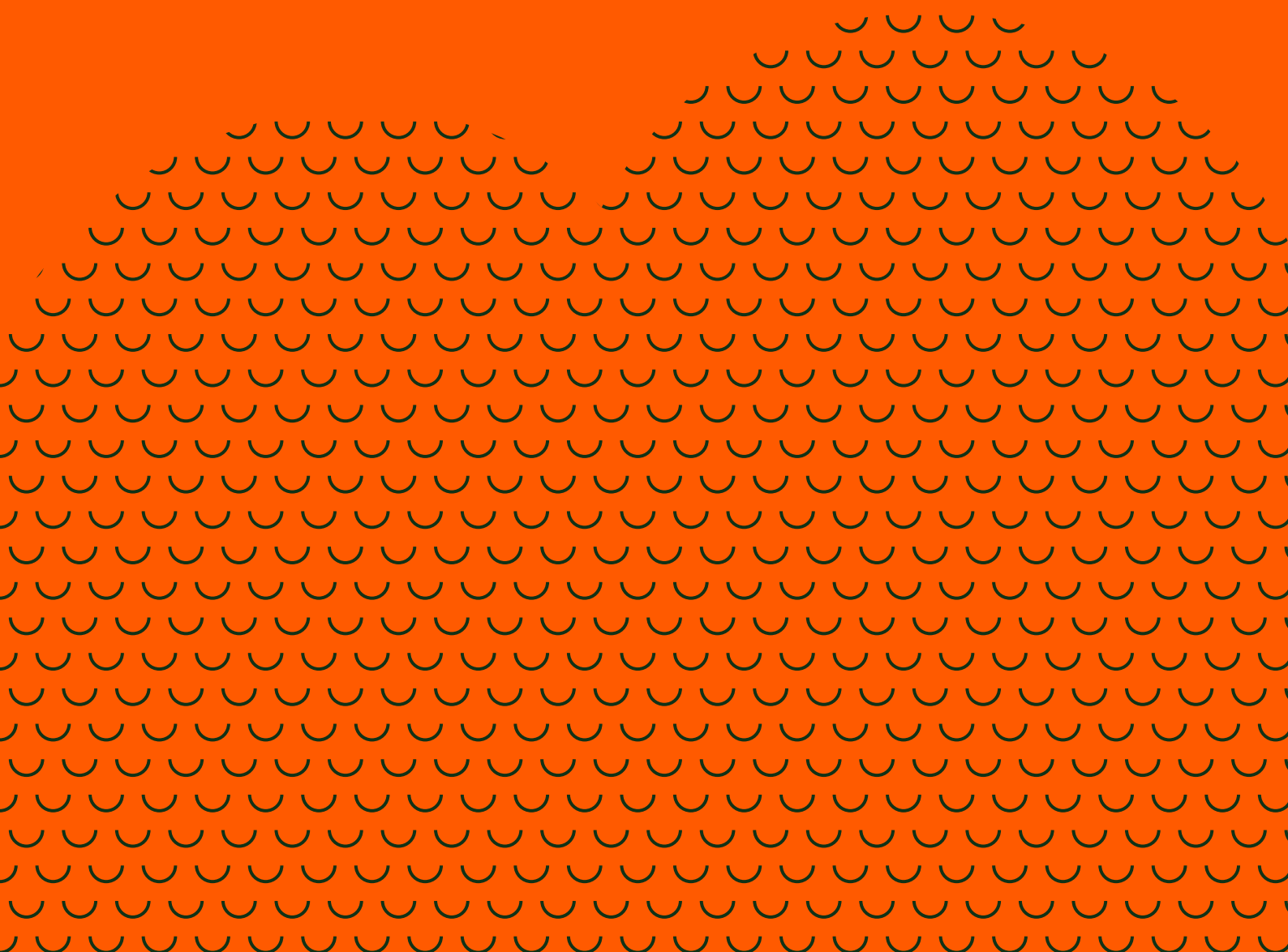


STAFF GUIDE TO STUDENT REPRESENTATION

AT BUCKINGHAMSHIRE NEW UNIVERSITY 2025-26



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Introduction from the Vice Presidents Education and Welfare

Partnerships between staff and students are at the heart of a thriving academic community. When the student rep system works well, it creates real benefits for everyone involved.

Student reps share the experiences and views of students on your course and within your College, bringing fresh perspectives and new ideas. By working closely with University and Students' Union staff, they help drive positive, student-led change that makes a difference not only for their current cohort but also for future students.

This year, we're excited to build on what has already been achieved, to strengthen the support available, and to make the representation system even stronger across the University. None of this would be possible without the commitment and openness of academic teams who work alongside reps to make change happen.

The energy and engagement of students at BNU are what shape the student experience, and we're really looking forward to working with you again this year.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes,

Erin and Beth



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Key Dates

September Cohort

Elections nominations	Monday 29 September - Friday 17 October 2025
Elections voting	Monday 20 October - Friday 24 October 2025
Coffee Sessions	November 2025 - January 2026
Winter break	
PCM Period 1	Monday 19 January - Friday 30 January 2026
Coffee Sessions	February - May 2026
Spring break	
PCM Period 2	Monday 20 April - Friday 1 May 2026

January Cohort

Elections nominations	Monday 5 January - Friday 23 January 2026
Elections voting	Monday 26 January - Friday 30 January 2026
Coffee Sessions	February - May 2026
Spring break	
PCM Period 1	Monday 20 April - Friday 1 May 2026
Coffee Sessions	May - July 2026
Summer break	
PCM Period 2	Monday 13 July - Friday 24 July 2025

April Cohort

Elections nominations	Monday 6 April - Friday 24 April 2026
Elections voting	Monday 27 April - Friday 1 May 2026
Coffee Sessions	May - July 2026
Summer break	
PCM Period 1	Monday 13 July - Friday 24 July 2026
Autumn break	
Coffee Sessions	September - November 2026
PCM Period 2	Monday 12 October - Friday 23 October 2026

Representation Structure at BNU

Student Reps

We have a network of over 250 Student Reps, providing a strong and credible student voice across the University.

Reps are elected by their peers to represent their course, acting as the first point of contact for student feedback. They help improve communication with staff, challenge assumptions, and bring fresh perspectives that enhance the experience for both current and future students.

Student reps follow either the Standard Pathway (for full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students with no placement requirements) or the Condensed Pathway (for part-time, distance, foundation, and placement-based students: e.g. nursing, social work, sports therapy).

All Reps receive training and support from the Students' Union, and can earn up to £100 through The Big Deal by completing key requirements such as gathering feedback and attending Programme Committee Meetings.

Senior Reps

Senior Reps provide an extra layer of support by representing students at subject-area level. They work closely with Student Reps, feed issues into College Officers, and co-chair Programme Committee Meetings to create open, peer-led discussions.

Each subject area has one Senior Rep. These subject areas are organised into three broad groups: Creative Arts, Technology and Engineering; Health and Society; and Leadership and Innovation. Senior Reps are trained and supported by the Students' Union and can receive up to £100 in recognition of their contribution, on top of their Student Rep payment.

College Officers

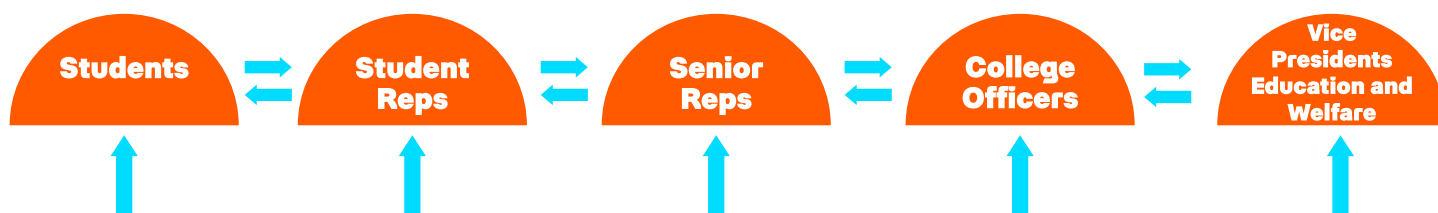
College Officers bring together feedback from across entire Colleges, helping identify key themes and examples of good practice. They ensure insights from Student and Senior Reps are shared with both the Students' Union and the University.

Each College has two Officers (three for Health and Society). They receive additional training, closer SU support, and are rewarded up to £350 for their role in strengthening representation.

Elected Officers

Every year, students elect four full-time Officers: the Union President, Vice President Achievement and Belonging, and two Vice Presidents Education and Welfare.

These Officers are BNU graduates or students on a year out, are paid roles with responsibility for leading the Students' Union. They represent students at the highest decision-making levels, shaping academic quality, wellbeing, inclusivity, and student-led communities. As elected representatives, they are directly accountable to the student body.



Support from the Representation team

College Officers

College Officers play an important role in strengthening the link between students and staff within each College. They work closely with Student Reps and Senior Reps to gather feedback on both challenges and good practice, making sure this is shared with the Students' Union and the University.

Alongside this, College Officers support the Representation Team throughout the year, helping with tasks such as promoting feedback opportunities and staying in regular contact with reps. They also meet termly with their Associate Dean: Education to discuss feedback and highlight priorities raised by students.

There is up to two College Officers per College (three for Health and Society). Officers receive financial reward, tailored training, and ongoing support from the Students' Union.

If a College Officer is not in place, the Representation Team provides direct support to ensure student feedback is still gathered and acted upon.

Our officers for 2025-26 are:



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Supporting your Student Reps

Elections

Nominations

During the nomination period, the Students' Union visits classes to introduce the student rep role, explain responsibilities, and highlight the rewards. Interested students can nominate themselves online via the SU website or by contacting the Representation Team.

We aim for one student rep per 50 students, in line with University policy. For pre-qualifying nursing students, reps are elected from each personal tutor group to ensure fair representation of large cohorts.

Most postgraduate reps are also elected from their courses, though some distance learning or specialist programmes may not typically have a rep. In these cases, alternative feedback methods are put in place, while still offering the chance to elect a student rep if the group finds it beneficial.

Evidence shows that when a member of SU staff speaks directly to a class, elections are more likely to be contested, which makes these visits especially valuable.

What you can do:

- Arrange a short lecture shout-out with the SU (surepresentation@bnu.ac.uk).
- Share SU election materials with your Students.

Voting

All Reps are elected through a democratic online vote hosted at bucksstudentsunion.org/vote.

Voting in class cannot be accepted, as fairness must be guaranteed and students have the option to “re-open nominations (R.O.N)”

What you can do:

- Promote the election to your students.
- Allow candidates an opportunity to speak to their peers during this time.

Once elected, all reps are listed in the online database at:

bucksstudentsunion.org/yourvoice/student-reps/find-your-rep

Training

All elected reps complete mandatory training, which is linked to their financial reward. Sessions cover:

- An introduction to the role and responsibilities
- The University's committees and representation system
- How to gather and present feedback
- How to signpost students to support services

Training is offered in person and online, with later-elected reps directed to online modules. Feedback is gathered after each session to ensure continuous improvement.

What you can do:

- Ask your reps if they have received information about training.

Coffee Sessions (Standard Pathway Reps only)

Held twice a year, Coffee Sessions give you and your reps a chance to connect informally, strengthen communication, and resolve issues quickly. They can also be used to follow up on actions from Programme Committee Meetings (PCMs) or carry forward concerns from previous cohorts. Student reps receive a free coffee voucher and ideas to guide the discussion.

What you can do:

- Support your reps in arranging a session and actively engage in the discussion.

Your Voice Feedback

Student reps collect structured feedback from their peers, aligned with categories from the Office for Students 'B conditions'. This feedback is submitted in advance, reviewed by the Representation Team, and shared with staff ahead of meetings.

What you can do:

- Give reps time to publicise themselves and collect feedback in class.

Programme Committee Meetings (PCMs)

PCMs are the main forum for reps to present feedback to staff. These take place twice a year and attendance contributes to their financial reward. Relevant academic and PSE staff, and a member of the SU Representation Team are invited, ensuring the whole student experience is represented.

What you can do:

- Check your reps know when their PCM is taking place.
- Read through the submitted feedback in advance and prepare any responses.

Expectations for Student Reps, University Staff, and the Students' Union.

THE STUDENTS' UNION WILL:

- Set key dates and provide information to students and staff
- Hold regular feedback opportunities for reps to discuss common issues and good practice
- Deliver training and any additional support required throughout the year
- Provide publicity materials for staff to use in class
- Provide continuing training opportunities online
- Gather and analyse online student feedback
- Provide regular communication for student reps
- Administer online elections.

ACADEMIC AND PSE STAFF SHOULD:

- Invite the Students' Union into a class in the first three weeks of the academic year to talk about standing to be elected as a Student Rep and obtain nominations.
- Communicate the opportunity to students in class using Students' Union materials and actively encourage participation
- Direct students to nomination forms **bucksstudentsunion.org/representation** or via email to **surepresentation@bnu.ac.uk**
- Familiarise themselves with information and guidance about the Student Rep system sent via email and available on the Union website
- Actively support the collection and discussion of feedback at Coffee Sessions and Programme Committee Meetings

STUDENT REPS SHOULD:

- Complete an online nominations form during the nominations period at **bucksstudentsunion.org/vote** or via email
- Campaign to get students to vote for them during the Student Rep election period
- Complete Rep training
- Partake in two Coffee Sessions a year with their Course Leader (Standard Reps only)
- Gather feedback from the students they represent before attending a Programme Committee Meeting (PCM) using the Your Voice form and submit online 2 weeks before the PCM
- Read regular Union e-newsletters to keep up-to-date with Students' Union campaigns
- Attend additional training where appropriate
- Communicate student feedback to committees and committee responses back to students, closing the feedback loop

The above demonstrates the relationship between University staff, students and the Students' Union.

Training and Development

The Students' Union is committed to supporting our student reps, ensuring they are full prepared for their role and throughout the year through a variety of initiatives.

The Students' Union's Additional Skills programme is designed to meet the needs of our student membership and to support them both within their student leader roles and further afield, bolstering their CVs to support their future employability.

In addition to our standard Additional Skills programme, the Students' Union can also support workshops for specific course groups; from Public Speaking , to Professionalism in the Workplace, the Union's Training and Development team covers most transferrable and professional skills. If you would like a particular workshop for your cohort, you can get in touch with the Training and Development team at sutrainig@bnu.ac.uk

Additional skills training programme

The Students' Union's **extensive additional skills training programme provides reps with an opportunity to enhance and develop their skills.** The exact content of the programme varies each year to reflect the current requirements of the student body. Past sessions have included **Public Speaking, Negotiation Skills, and CV Writing.** Sessions are delivered by a mixture of Students' Union staff, University staff, and external training providers.

Student reps are also encouraged to make the most of a range of opportunities to contribute to other University Committees and procedures for which further training and support is provided.

Leadership Academy

As one of the top Students' Unions in the country, Bucks Students' Union has hired many BNU graduates within its management and staff. One of our key strategic priorities is 'Employability and Life After University,' and to support this, we've created The Leadership Academy, a programme of one to one coaching and mentoring to support students in their personal and professional development. This bespoke development programme helps students gain new skills through personalised training courses and opportunities, all provided free via The Big Deal. We recruit students early in the academic year, with the programme starting in November. Course teams can nominate students, and students can also self-nominate by applying through the Students' Union website.

Programme Committee Meetings

Programme Committee Meetings (PCMs) are a key point where student feedback is formally considered. To ensure strong turnout and meaningful engagement, it is important that meetings are well-organised and that outcomes are clearly communicated back to students.

Meeting Notifications

PCMs are scheduled by the relevant College Business Manager and the Students' Union. Meeting details (time and location) should be confirmed and sent to programme.committees@bnu.ac.uk at least 10 working days before the meeting. Where possible, dates for the second meeting should be agreed during the first.

Student reps are required to submit their feedback via the Your Voice form on the **Students' Union website** before the meeting, so this can be circulated in advance. Please remind reps of this responsibility when sending out meeting details.

Any other meetings requiring the attendance of Student Reps, Senior Reps or College Officers should be shared with surepresentation@bnu.ac.uk at least 15 working days in advance (with papers circulated at least 10 days beforehand).

A senior staff member of the College and the subject cluster senior rep should co-chair the meeting.

Minutes and Records

As agreed with the University, the PCM secretary (typically the College Business Administrator) will:

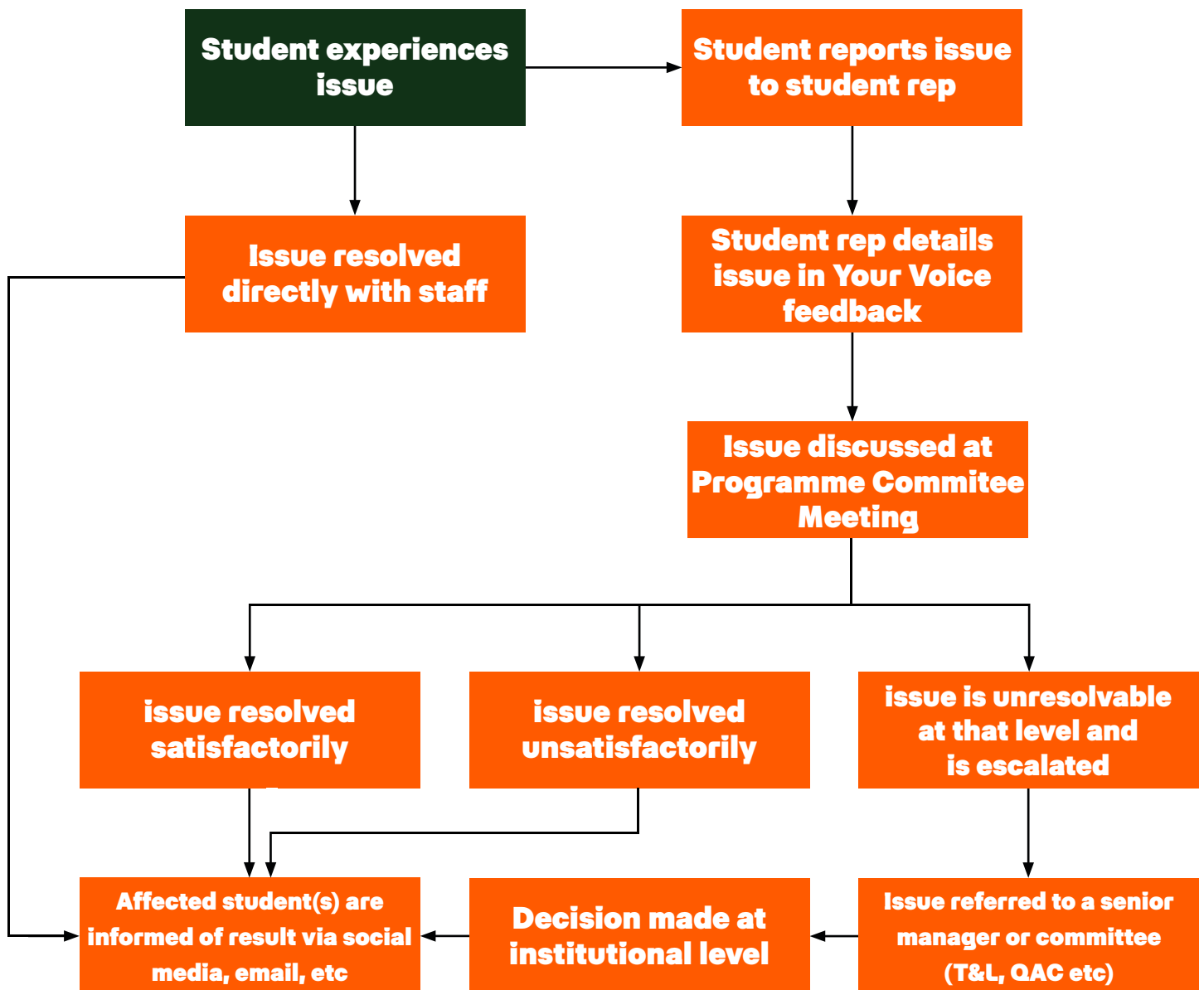
- Arrange and confirm the meeting date
- Circulate the invite and pre-submitted feedback
- Record attendance and apologies
- Produce the action sheet and record of good practice
- Seek Chair approval within a timely manner
- Upload documents to the relevant minute storage site and notify members, the SU, Associate Deans: Education (if absent), and any individuals with actions

Closing the Feedback Loop

After each PCM, student reps are expected to update their peers on how feedback is being acted upon. This ensures students see the impact of their input and encourages continued engagement.

Staff members with assigned actions should complete or progress them before the next meeting and update relevant colleagues. The Representation Team and College Officers track recurring themes, escalating them to higher committees where needed (e.g. Teaching and Learning Committee or Senate).

Progression of Student Feedback



*Informal student feedback is captured and reported through various forums and committees between the representation team, elected officers, and advice centre

Bucks Students' Union Elections

Each March, Bucks Students' Union holds its annual elections — a key democratic event where students can nominate themselves for leadership roles within the Union. Candidates share their vision through a manifesto and campaign to secure votes from their peers.

These elections decide who will take on the four full-time Elected Officer roles for the following academic year, giving students the power to shape who leads their Union. Alongside these high-profile positions, other important roles are also elected, including four Student Trustees and club and society committee members.

Standing for election is a great way for students to get involved, develop leadership skills, and make a real contribution to improving student life at Bucks.

For more details about the elections or if you like to recommend a student for a role, please contact surepresentation@bnu.ac.uk



Leadership Roles at Bucks Students' Union

Full-time Elected Officer

Appointment method:

Cross-campus election

Elected Officers form the Union's leadership team. These are full-time, paid positions held either by BNU graduates or by students taking a year out of study. There are four roles: President, Vice President Achievement and Belonging, and two Vice Presidents Education and Welfare (one based at High Wycombe, and one covering Uxbridge and Aylesbury).

Elected Officers represent students at the highest decision-making levels of the University. They influence both academic and social life at BNU and, as elected representatives, are directly accountable to the student body. Staff will often encounter them as key representatives of the student voice in formal committees and working groups.

Student Trustee

Appointment method:

Cross-campus election

Student Trustees are part of the team driving the strategic direction of the Union by sitting on our Trustee Board. As a registered charity aiming to improve the education of students at BNU, the Trustee Board has final sign-off on the Union's biggest plans. Working alongside our four Elected Officers and External (Lay) Trustees, you will ensure that we meet our objectives and continue to operate responsibly in the best interest of our members.

As well as sitting on the Trustee Board, there is also the opportunity to get involved with other committees and update students regularly on your work. Up to four students are elected each year, with one of these positions reserved for a student who studies at the Uxbridge campus.

Student Voice Officer

Appointment: Interview

Student Voice Officers support the Union's work by leading campaigns, representing different groups of students, and helping to ensure the Union meets its objectives. They sit on Union and University committees, contribute to reports, and promote events, with a particular focus on enhancing the experience of the communities they represent. Staff may meet Student Voice Officers through campaign work, committee discussions, or student engagement initiatives.

These roles are open to students from all backgrounds to represent different ethnicities, ages, genders, levels and modes of study, and academic colleges. Student Voice Officers are paid an hourly rate for their work.

College Officer

Appointment: Interview

College Officers are part-time paid roles supporting the Representation Team within each College. Alongside regular contact with student reps, they take on wider responsibilities such as attending committee meetings, working with the College leadership team, and contributing to projects across the Union. College Officers receive tailored training and a financial award of up to £350. Academic staff will likely encounter College Officers when engaging with student feedback at a College level.

Management of Student Reps

For the representation system to remain effective, the Students' Union ensures that all student reps are active in their roles. To do this, elements of their financial reward are linked to specific responsibilities, such as training, feedback, and attendance at PCMs.

As student reps are elected by their peers, they are accountable to them. On rare occasions where reps are not meeting expectations, there are clear processes in place to provide support or, if necessary, to remove them from their role.

Remedial Phase

If a rep misses two key responsibilities in a row (e.g. not attending training and then missing their first PCM), a member of the Representation Team will contact them. The focus at this stage is supportive: offering guidance, one-to-one conversations, or additional training to help the rep re-engage with the role.

Students also have the right to raise concerns if they feel their rep is not representing them effectively. This begins with a student rep removal form, signed by one proposer and four seconders. If submitted, a meeting is arranged within 10 working days with the signatories, the relevant College Officer, and the Student Engagement Coordinators to review the concerns. If the students do not wish to meet, the complaint may not be progressed without further evidence.

Initial Review

If a formal complaint is made, Student Engagement Coordinators and two College Officers (unconnected to the case) will review the evidence. They may dismiss the case, recommend additional training and support, or refer the matter to a Formal Review.

Formal Review

The Student Experience and Advocacy Manager and the Vice Presidents Education and Welfare conduct the Formal Review. The rep may attend with a supporter (not a legal representative). Outcomes may include dismissal of the case, recommendations for further training and support, or removal from the role.

Appeal

If removed, the rep has the right to appeal. Appeals are considered by two members of the Students' Union's Senior Management Team (CEO, Deputy CEO, Head of People and Development, Head of Communications and Marketing, President, or Vice President Achievement and Belonging).

Contact Information

Instagram: **@BucksRep**

Facebook: **Bucks Rep**



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