LTC14D224
Title: ***Student Representation Code of Practice***
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Issue

This papers covers the following:

- revised Student Representation Code of Practice
- a development overview to support implementation
- further recommendations relating to student representation

Recommendation

Recipients are invited:

- To receive an update from the Student Representation Working Group.
- To endorse the revised Code of Practice.
- To note the resource implications identified in the development plan.
- To consider and comment on the points highlighted in the discussion.
- To adopt the Groups further recommendations.

Resource Implications

The adoption and implementation of a new or revised Code of Practice will inevitably have associated resource implications. These mainly relate to:

- Academic, administrative and Students' Union staff time to support and facilitate student representation.
- Operational budget for short and long term enhancements.
- Student representatives' time as volunteers.

These are discussed in detail in the appended development overview.

Risk Implications

- A strengthening of current practice around student representation will improve student satisfaction with, and engagement in, their learning.
- A new Code of Practice and accompanying recommendations will enhance the university ability to meet the QAA expectations and indicators of sound practice in relation to student engagement in quality systems

There is therefore a risk in these areas if the recommendations are not adopted.

Equality and Diversity

The working group recognises the importance of equality and diversity in terms of student representation and discussions have considered how it can be ensured the student reps are truly representative of the student body given their diverse characteristics.
The Equality and Diversity Manager has been involved in the Code of Practice development as part of the consultation process.

Timing of decisions

Approval of the revised Code of Practice today will enable its adoption for September 2015.
It is recognised that amendments in response to comments from the committee may need to be approved by Chairs action to meet this timetable.

Further Information

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Background

The Student Representation Code of Practice has been revised on the basis of the findings of a review of the current Student Representation and Staff Student Liaison Code of Practice completed in March 2015. A working group, consisting of student representatives, the Students' Union and academic and administrative staff, has been established to write the revised code.

A draft of the Code has been circulated for comment on both its content and implementation. The document presented today reflects both the findings of the review and feedback received. Feedback was received from 12 staff and students, 2 Schools of Study and 1 Faculty LTQC:

- Comment was received generally on the relatively short turnaround time for the consultation which the group acknowledge was not ideal.
- Most respondents agreed that the document will help the University meet the QAA expectation, although more explicit references to the QAA within the draft document discouraged buy in so this was adjusted.
- Some feedback related to clarity and the document itself ranging from it being too long to a useful formalisation of existing best practice.
- Issues relating to the increased resource to implement the Code were raised, especially the time commitment from academic and administrative staff as well as students.
- Of concern were a couple of comments demonstrating a very negative view of student representation.

Discussion

The revised Code of Practice is appended, the aim of which is to embed good practice in relation to student representation. In some Schools the content of the Code represents little change to current practice, whereas for others this represents a significant shift in behaviour. These cultural shifts will not be brought about by implementation of the Code alone, and the appended development plan considers wider activities and changes that need to be considered.

It is also recognised that some Schools may operate highly effective practices not covered within the Code, and provision is included to enable Schools to continue these practices where students agree these are effective. Monitoring and evaluation will enable this to be assessed.

Points of particular note for LTC in this document:

- The change in title from SSLC Officer to Student Partnership Officer.
- Potential overlap between role descriptions for Student Partnership Officer, Teaching Director and Senior Adviser.
- The resource commitment required to implement the code consistently. This is both in terms of staff time (and the associated opportunity cost) as operational budget.

As part of the review process, and through the writing and associated consultation for this new Code of Practice (COP), a number of recommendations have been identified. These either support the revised code and/or will enhance student representation and wider engagement:

- The University must demonstrate a clear commitment to student representation at all levels to ensure the cultural shift required to make students true partners in their education. It is therefore recommended that the importance of this agenda and the implementation of the COP needs to be **driven by VCO** and cascaded via Deans and Heads of School.

- A recurring theme from all the focus groups and highlighted in the consultation was the opportunity for students to feed back as individuals to the University on issues that affected their student experience. This reflects both the option to give effectively instant or real time feed back as well prevent inefficient representation from creating a barrier. It is therefore recommended that LTC undertake a formal scoping exercise to fully understand the costs and benefits of establishing an **online feedback system** to facilitate this.

- The importance of feedback to students is clear, when students feel their opinions are valued and listened to it creates a positive cycle of further student engagement. It is therefore recommended that a clear '**We said, We did**' approach is adopted to illustrate the change that representation can achieve. The University should comment on the results of student surveys, identifying where plans are in place to address issues identified. This should also include responding more clearly to feedback on issues is not easily resolved. There is some suggestion in the sector that this approach can have a significant impact on student satisfaction.

- LTC should oversee the effectiveness of Student Representation. It is recommended that LTC create a **Student Representation Working Group** chaired by the PVC academic to take forward the Code of Practice implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The membership and purpose are outlined in the COP. It is also recommended that the committee has a standing item for December and June meetings monitoring the effectiveness of student representation with input from the Student Unions' undergraduate Education Officer. These timings align with both new student focus group outputs and the Student Experience Survey results which now include questions on Student Engagement.

- The focus groups, consultation feedback and working group discussions all indicated a lack of awareness amongst staff and students in relation to student representation. The development plan therefore highlights the important of an awareness campaign with both short and long term goals to raise awareness off student representation and the importance and value of student engagement. It is recommend that LTC explore the costs and benefits of such an **awareness raising campaign** further.

o In the short term it is recommended that the Students' Union work with the schools and Learning and Teaching Service to develop an awareness campaign in time for Welcome Week 2015

- The revised COP refers to a **Student Representation Handbook** developed for students and staff. This will be an accessible and jargon free guide which outlines how to implement and develop an effective system of student representation in every School. It is recommended that the Students' Union create a guide for Student Representatives ready for Welcome Week 2015.

- Communication and easy access to information is key to ensure SSLC's and student representation function effectively. The revised COP refers to a University wide **Student Representation Blackboard** site which all students and staff have access to. Each School will have a folder, with the School Representative, SSLC secretary and Student Partnership Officer having administrator rights to maintain content. The Students' Union will also feed into this with relevant documents. It is recommended that ownership for this site sits with LTS, as a single point of contact where any overarching changes need to be made, permissions agreed etc.

Attachments
Student Representation Code of Practice 2015/16
Student Representation Development Overview

Student Representation Code of Practice

2015/16

Last updated June 2015

1   Introduction

Students are increasingly involved with not just studying at university, but also feeding into and driving quality assurance and enhancement, improving the academic experience for all. Student representation in learning and teaching is key to improving students' academic experience and outcomes with students making a valuable contribution to this process of enhancement.

The Higher Education Agency notes that the value of students working in partnership with academics to improve their learning and teaching include but are not limited to:

- increased student engagement with learning
- development of knowledge and skills to support employability
- greater sense of belonging and community
- transformed staff experience and thinking about practice
- deeper understanding of contributions to an academic community

This paper intends to provide staff and students with a clear framework on which to build a practical, useful and active student representation system, allowing students and staff to work together to improve their institution. Overall responsibility for ensuring UEA adheres to the spirit and principles of student representation within this document sits with the Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic. They will be supported by

the Students' Union, with the two Education officers leading student support in academic representation through training and development for Student Representatives.

In the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the Quality Assurance Agency outline the expectation that 'Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience'. This Code of Practice aligns with the QAA chapter on Student Engagement, the indicators of sound practice are appended in section 8.1.

This Code of Practice aims to provide a framework for collaboration and partnership working between students and the University. It balances consistency of practice, to enable efficient and effective representation, with flexibility to reflect the specific needs and characteristics of a cohort or School. The strength of diversity is recognised, and allows Schools to establish arrangements which best suit their needs and the needs of their students, whilst laying a clear framework to ensure consistency and accessibility.

Schools may already implement good practice which they, in consultation with their students, are confident enables effective representation but sits outside of this framework. In this instance Schools should still ensure they meet the principles outlined in section 1.2 and Student Partnership Officers should notify the Student Representation Working Group (via the chairs) as well as the Students' Union Educational Change Coordinator. This will ensure that Student Representatives are briefed and trained accordingly and monitoring and evaluation activity tailored.

This Code of Practice should be used in conjunction with the Student Representation Handbook developed for students and staff, which outlines how to implement and develop an effective system of student representation in every school. The implementation of the Code of Practice will be monitored and evaluated by the Student Representation Working Group. Both of these documents will be subject to annual review and revision, reflecting the changing nature of student engagement with academic issues at UEA.

1.1 Background

This Code of Practice (COP) has been developed in order to outline students' role in driving academic enhancement at UEA. It replaces the previous COP developed in 2000. This current document has been developed by the University and Students' Union in partnership and through consultation with staff and students engaged in student representation, including feedback from Student Representatives and workshops with staff and students.

This COP applies to undergraduate and taught post graduate students and courses. Whilst postgraduate research student representation is equally important, the specific cohort characteristics and study patterns require tailored proposals.

By following this COP, Schools will ensure that Student Representatives can add value to academic enhancement and the student experience. To achieve this, Schools should monitor student representation and engagement within their School and ensure they are developing best practice to allow students to become co-creators of their education.

1.2 Principles

The Code of Practice is based on the following principles which have emerged from discussions with students and staff involved in student representation:

Community awareness - all students are aware of their representatives, and the channels of communication they have with the University, as well as the value of taking part in these structures.

Student-centred - all students are trusted as valued decision-makers and meaningful partners in their education.

Transparent and accessible - decisions and processes are clearly explained, meetings are open and Representatives are held accountable by their peers.

Consistent and fair - every student will have access to the same "level" of representation, whatever the delivery method, and students are able to choose who act as their representatives.

Evidenced and accountable - partnership work is recorded and documented so that progress can be monitored and enhanced by all parties.

Appropriately resourced - staff and students are given adequate time, resources and influence to engage meaningfully in partnership work.

Responsive, adaptable and developing - we regularly look at, adapt and adopt good practice in the sector to ensure we are developing.

Representative of the student body - there is equality of access and efforts should be made to ensure engagement comes from all members of the student body.

This document refers only to academic student representation at undergraduate and postgraduate taught level. It covers student representation in learning and teaching at a School and Faculty level. The responsibility for overseeing compliance with this Code of Practice sits with the Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic, and the Students' Union Education Officers.

2   Communication, responsibilities and expectations

There are an array of stakeholders engaged in facilitating effective student representation. Key stakeholders involved include**:**

- **Student Representative**– umbrella term for any student engaged in representation e.g. Course Representatives, School Representatives and Faculty Convenors. They act as a link between students, the University and the Students' Union. They are responsible for collating and delivering student views to SSLCs and other committees.
- **Course Representative –** students who sit on Staff Student Liaison Committee's (SSLC) and represent students in their year and course.
- **School Representatives/Deputy School Representatives –** students elected from the SSLC to represent all students in that School, and co-chair SSLCs.
- **Faculty Convenors –** students appointed by the Students' Union to convene representation across the Faculty, supporting School Representatives and presenting their voices at Faculty-level committees.
- **Undergraduate/Postgraduate Education Officers –** students elected on a cross-campus ballot to represent all students on academic issues, sitting on University-level committees and leading the student representative scheme.
- **Students' Union staff**– responsible for delivering training and developmental support to Student Representatives.
- **Academic staff responsible for liaison (Student Partnership Officers, Teaching Directors and Senior Advisers)** – all play a role in delivering effective student representation within their School and acting as key contacts for Course and School Representatives. Teaching Directors have the formal responsibility for student representation within their School.
- **School local support staff** – responsible for providing administrative support for the functioning of SSLCs and the Student Representatives scheme within their School.
- **Wider student and staff body –** responsible for engaging with the student representation system.

All stakeholders are responsible for developing a positive culture committed to receiving and responding and recognising the value of students' views, and to discussing current learning, teaching and research issues with students. Communication and information sharing is critical with students and staff engaging in evidence-based discussions based on the mutual sharing of information. Key modes of communication include:

- **Blackboard –** The blackboard site for student representation will hold all relevant policies. It will be the site where minutes and agendas of SSLCs are uploaded. It will also feature or signpost students to reports and data about the University, and define terms regularly used across the University.
- **Students' Union Website –** www.ueastudent.com/reps will be the holding point for election, training and development materials, as well as events relevant to Student Representatives.
- **Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) –** School Representatives will be briefed on developments at UEA and nationally, by the Students' Union and their School and this will be cascaded through the SSLCs.

Arrangements should exist for the effective representation of the collective student voice at all organisational levels, and these arrangements should provide opportunities for all students to be heard. Figure 1 identifies opportunities for students to be represented and feed into learning and teaching systems and processes within the University. Schools, faculties and the wider University should ensure that Student Representatives are engaged in these processes and that a breadth of student views are being gathered.
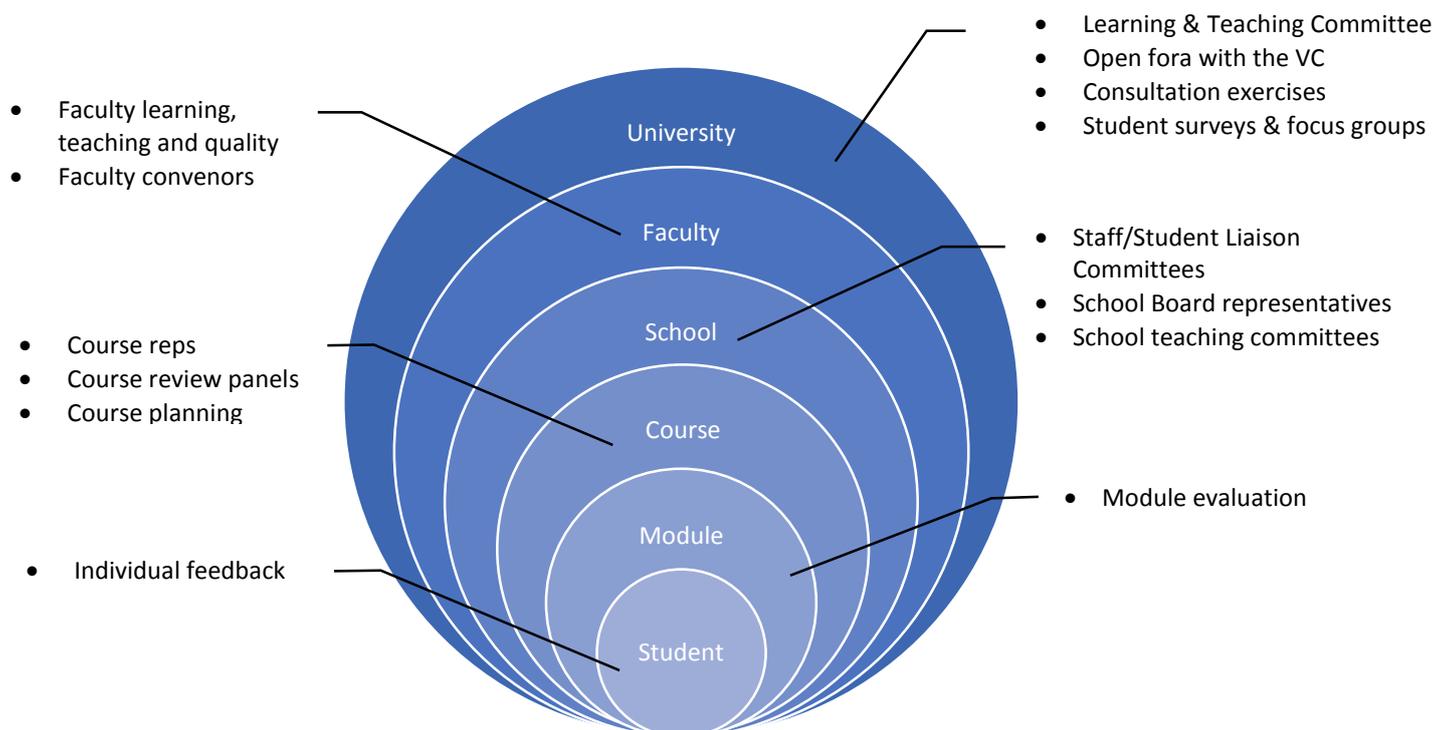
- Faculty learning, teaching and quality
- Faculty convenors

University

- Learning & Teaching Committee
- Open fora with the VC
- Consultation exercises
- Student surveys & focus groups

Faculty

School

- Staff/Student Liaison Committees
- School Board representatives
- School teaching committees

- Course reps
- Course review panels
- Course planning

Course

Module

- Module evaluation

- Individual feedback

Student

Figure 1: Opportunities for student representation.

Faculties are encouraged to have Student Representatives on other Faculty level committees, such as Employability Executives as well as involve them in working groups and project teams. The Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and other University bodies involved in academic quality should also ensure that all policy and procedure changes or reviews relating to students' academic experience are developed and conducted in consultation with students and/or their Student Representatives.

This policy does not extend to University level committees where Students' Union elected officers and staff are present on behalf of the student body, for example LTC. In these instances the Students' Union will report back issues highlighted by Student Representatives.

3   Student representatives

The Students' Union will provide information about how to become a Student Representative and how the scheme works, and work with Schools to distribute these to all students. Figure 2 illustrates the general structure for Student Representatives and how this sits alongside the role of Student Partnership Officer.
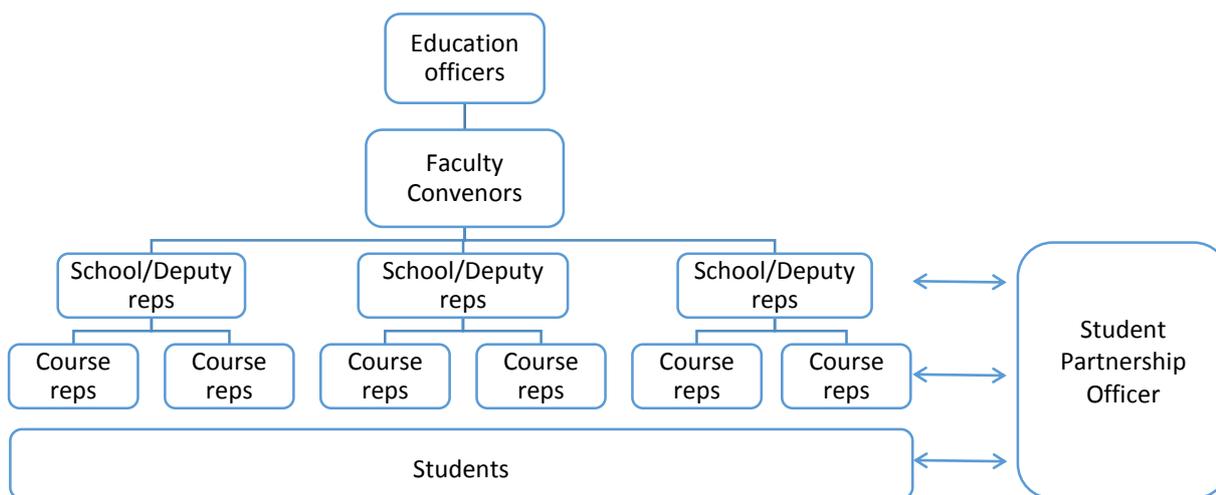
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Figure 2: Student representation illustrative structure

Principles for effective student representation are summarised below:

- All students should have the chance to act as a Course Representative.
- Schools should aim to have a minimum of at least one representative per course for every year group.
- Where Schools have a large or particularly diverse student body more representatives may be identified to ensure representation across the cohort, for example a mature student or international student representative, or one representative per 100 students.
- Course Representatives may be selected through an application or election process. The Students' Union will provide the opportunity for Schools to pilot online elections.
- The last SSLC of the year in the undergraduate calendar should elect Student Representatives to School committees for the following year.

It is recognised that in some Schools current levels of student engagement may make these principles challenging, but Schools should work towards these. Students working as partners benefits the whole academic community, ensuring the University can continuously develop. It also creates a sense of academic community in each school which will improve the learning and teaching environment for staff and students. This document is supported by a development plan which includes a focus on increasing student participation and raising awareness of the value and importance of student representation amongst staff and students.

Each Faculty will have a Faculty Convenor to support the School Representatives in tackling Faculty-wide issues, and sit on Faculty level committees. The positions are recruited through a selection and interview process organised by the Students' Union.

Postgraduate taught students are represented within this structure, with Schools deciding whether to run joint or separate postgraduate and undergraduate SSLCs. As noted previously, postgraduate research students are not included in this document.

Universities present a unique set of challenges to international students who are adapting to a new culture as well as a new university. Efforts should be made to recruit international students and to link them with the Students' Union International Officer to ensure they are tackling issues at an institutional as well as local level.

3.1   The Role of Student Representatives

Once elected, Course Representatives will be expected to:

- Attend appropriate training courses and meetings organised by the Students' Union.
- Represent their cohort on aspects such as course/degree content, methods of teaching and assessment, workloads, reading lists, resources, teaching space, course delivery methods and feedback.
- Make every effort to ensure that the feedback is substantiated through thorough consultation with their students, and to feed back following SSLCs to ensure students are aware of and understand how they are being represented.
- Make themselves known to fellow students, course Representatives and members of staff.
- Be available to attend SSLCs and, if necessary, other committees.
- Consult with students about specific and general issues, collate these and seek solutions to them.
- Represent the full diversity of their cohort, and act professionally and respectfully in line with the Students' Union Code of Conduct.
- Informing their School's Student Partnership Officer if they no longer wish to be a Representative.

School Representatives will have the additional responsibility of:

- Co-chairing their SSLC meetings and liaising with their School's Student Partnership Officer to deliver these.
- Meeting with the Students' Union Education Officers twice a semester to report on issues in their Schools.
- Meet with the Faculty Convenors as necessary to identify Faculty-wide issues.

3.1.1 Recognition for Student Representatives

Course and School Representatives are volunteer positions which provide a valuable contribution to the University as well as to an individual's personal development. Student Representatives will be trained and receive ongoing support and development opportunities and can feed their experience into the UEA Skills Award.

In addition the Students' Union will, with support from Schools, organise an annual award linking in with the Transforming Teaching awards where students can nominate their representatives. These awards will raise the profile of Student Representatives, as well as provide an opportunity for further recognition of the importance of their role.

3.2 Academic staff involvement in student representation

Academic staff have a number of responsibilities that link with student representation. The key role within Schools is that of the Student Partnership Officer (formerly SSLC Officers). They are appointed by the Head of School to champion and support student representation in their School. Officers co-chair and facilitate the smooth running of the SSLC liaising with the Teaching Director and Senior Adviser. A more detailed outline of the role is appended in section 8.1. Other academic roles within the School which support student representation include:

- **Module organisers** are responsible for arranging and convening a debriefing with other teachers on the module and should aim to include students in this process in order to identify potential future enhancements. They are also responsible for responding to student feedback arising from their evaluation of the module, where appropriate.
- **Course directors** are commonly responsible for identifying themselves to students early on in the course and ensure, thereafter, that they become a familiar face to students as the person responsible for the management of the course. They are also responsible for encouraging student representation on their programmes on School SSLCs and should attend if asked to do so by the Student Partnership Officer in the School.

- **Senior Advisers** have overall responsibility for matters related to student welfare within a School. They attend the School's SSLC and represent Advisees within the School. They report annually on the effectiveness of the Advising System in their School to the SSLC.
- **Teaching Directors** work alongside the Student Partnership Officer and Senior Advisor in ensuring that the SSLC meet and perform their functions effectively in accordance with this Code of Practice. They are also responsible for liaising with/being available for student representatives within the School, to keep them informed of developments (such as new course proposals) and to receive feedback often facilitated by SSLCs. Where appropriate they should facilitate the resolution of their concerns and bring forward to School meetings proposals and concerns on their behalf.

4 Training and support for students and staff

Student Representatives and staff should have access to training and ongoing support to equip them to fulfil their roles in educational enhancement and quality assurance effectively.

Course and School Representatives are supported by Faculty Convenors as well as Students' Union staff, and the Student Partnership Officer in the School. The Students' Union, in partnership with the University, will provide training, induction and ongoing support for Course and School Representatives and Faculty Convenors. Student Representatives should be encouraged to meet informally both within and beyond their Schools. The Students' Union will hold formal and informal events for all Representatives throughout the Academic Year to facilitate this.

Student Partnership Officers have a significant responsibility to ensure effective representation and should also receive training and support. The Centre for Staff Education and Development will continue to run Student Representation workshops for Student Partnership Officers and Student Representatives, and the Union will support the continuing development of these to deliver practical training for staff. The Students' Union will also provide meet-ups for SSLC staff members each semester to share new ideas, sector developments and good practice. Training will include:

- Introduction to Code of Practice and understanding key roles.
- Understanding principles of effective representation.
- Sharing good practice and identifying opportunities for improvement.
- Key skills for Student Representatives, e.g. communication and negotiation.
- How the University works and makes decisions.
- Key contacts and information sources.
- Developments in higher education.

Student Representatives should know their staff contacts within the School and feel comfortable in approaching them even with difficult issues. Student Partnership Officers should facilitate this by organising pre-meetings with Student Representatives at the beginning of each semester, so that students are comfortable and can be briefed on how the School representative system works, as well as giving the Representatives a chance to meet each other. Student Partnership Officers and administrative staff involved in the running of SSLCs will also be invited to workshops to share best practice and undergo training.

5 Staff student liaison committee (SSLC)

Staff student liaison committees, create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience. Schools should ensure Student Partnership Officers have access to a small discretionary budget to facilitate the SSLC function and student representation generally within the School.

5.1   Membership

In terms of student members, all Course Representatives should attend. Any students (non-representatives) are able to attend their respective committee as an observer. Schools with a high number of postgraduate taught students, or a large number of courses may consider holding smaller, informal 'feeder' groups to ensure adequate representation, e.g. at course level.

Effective representation is supported where there is an equal balance between staff and students on the committee. Staff members should include those involved directly in the academic and administrative activities of the School including:

- Student Partnership Officer
- Senior Adviser
- Teaching Directors
- Students' Union Education Officer/staff

Additional School invitees are at the discretion of the chairs, and should reflect current issues. They may include: Head of School, Faculty Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching, Course Directors, School Manager, and the relevant Faculty Manager. In addition, representatives from services which support students' academic experience should also be invited and included on the circulation list for committees. For example, the relevant Hub, Careers, the Library and the Students' Union.

5.2   Governance

School Representatives should have the opportunity to act as co-chair alongside the Student Partnership Officer for the committee. Student chairs will receive additional training and support from the Students' Union.

Schools should facilitate representatives in having pre-meetings before SSLCs to organise and prioritise issues ahead of the Committee. This should also assist the chairs in writing the agenda with support from the committee secretary.

The main functions of SSLCs are to:

- Provide a clear channel of communication for students to raise issues for discussion with their Schools.
- Offer an opportunity for students to give feedback, both positive and negative, regarding their learning experiences.
- Discuss matters of relevance to students and staff in the School, including formal documents such as the outcomes from the National Student Survey, as well as, when appropriate, putting on record a summary of informal discussions which may have occurred via other fora (e.g. module discussion boards and email).
- Enable External Examiners' reports to be shared with students.
- Foster the development of close and constructive student/staff relationships.
- Allow (where possible) student contribution to future course developments.
- Report and make recommendations to the School Board.

It is recommended that a core statement of this nature be included in the membership and terms of reference of each SSLC.

5.3   Frequency and timing

SSLCs will take place twice per semester to ensure timely discussion and resolution of issues. Dates should be set in advance by the School, at least on a semester basis to ensure full attendance. Ideally dates should be considered in conjunction with those of the School Board, so that SSLCs meet before and feed back to the School Board in a timely manner.

5.4   Records and communication

Secretariat for the committee should always be provided by a member of the School's local support team. This ensures a professional level of support and also a degree of continuity. Local support staff who undertake this role report satisfaction from participating and engaging with students more directly. An outline of the tasks this may involve is appended in section 8.3.

Committee papers should include an agenda, minutes which record actions, and papers relating to specific agenda points. An action log should also be held for the academic year. Templates for committee papers will be available on the student representation blackboard site.

Materials relating to the functioning of the committee, e.g. agenda, minutes and papers should be circulated at least a week in advance by email to all members of the committee to ensure those unable to attend are fully briefed. They should also be saved to the student representation Blackboard site to ensure they are available to all staff and students. Apologies and attendance will be recorded.

Student Representatives should contact all students in their School to ensure awareness of committee schedules and ask for input. Schools will support representatives by providing a route through which emails can be sent to all students for this purpose. Representatives will also be encouraged to utilise one or more social media channels to ensure a regular information flow with their fellow students.

It is important that students are aware of and reminded of their representatives throughout the year. Schools should employ initiatives to raise the profile of Student Representatives such as School notice boards for representatives, and allowing representatives time at the start of lectures to convey developments throughout the semester. Clear communication and signposting will also benefit joint-honours students and enable them to approach representatives in the School most relevant to their issue. The Students' Union is also providing a joint-honours students' forum to identify University wide issues.

All committee papers should be stored on the student representation Blackboard site in the relevant School folder.

6   Action and feedback

A key aspect of effective student representation is ensuring that issues raised by students are both considered at the appropriate committee/level and that discussions and outcomes are clearly fed back. This feedback loop not only helps to ensure clear communication of concerns, but also demonstrates that student's views are valued and listened to, thus encouraging further engagement.

6.1   Flow of information

All feedback received by Student Representatives and by the School through other routes should be fed into the SSLC in the first instance. Student representatives can raise any issues which impact on their learning experience. If these are not resolvable in the SSLC or within the structures of the academic student representation system, the Student Partnership Officer may broker solutions through discussions with relevant colleagues or direct these issues to the appropriate forum. Unresolved issues should be reported to the Faculty Convenor. The Students' Union will facilitate regular Faculty Convenor forums to identify wider unresolved issues.

In order to monitor issues raised and associated actions SSLCs will keep an annual action log. This should be dated and identifies the issue and associated actions, the lead for following up the action and whether the issue has been resolved. The action log is revisited at each SSLC for a progress update and can form the basis for report to the School Board or other committees. Completed/resolved issues should be kept listed to demonstrate progress over the course of the year.

Unresolved academic matters should be raised with the School Teaching Committee and/or School Board. Where issues cannot be resolved at School level and are a Faculty or University wide issue they should be taken by the School Teaching Director to the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality committee for a Faculty

wide resolution. Where necessary these may then be passed to the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) for further discussion and resolution. Figure 3 demonstrates how feedback can be escalated in this manner.

Unresolved non-academic matters should be raised by the Student Partnership Officer with the relevant Students' Union Education Officer. The Education Officer will take the matter to the Student Affairs Group and/or Student Experience Committee and then feed back to the Student Partnership Officer.
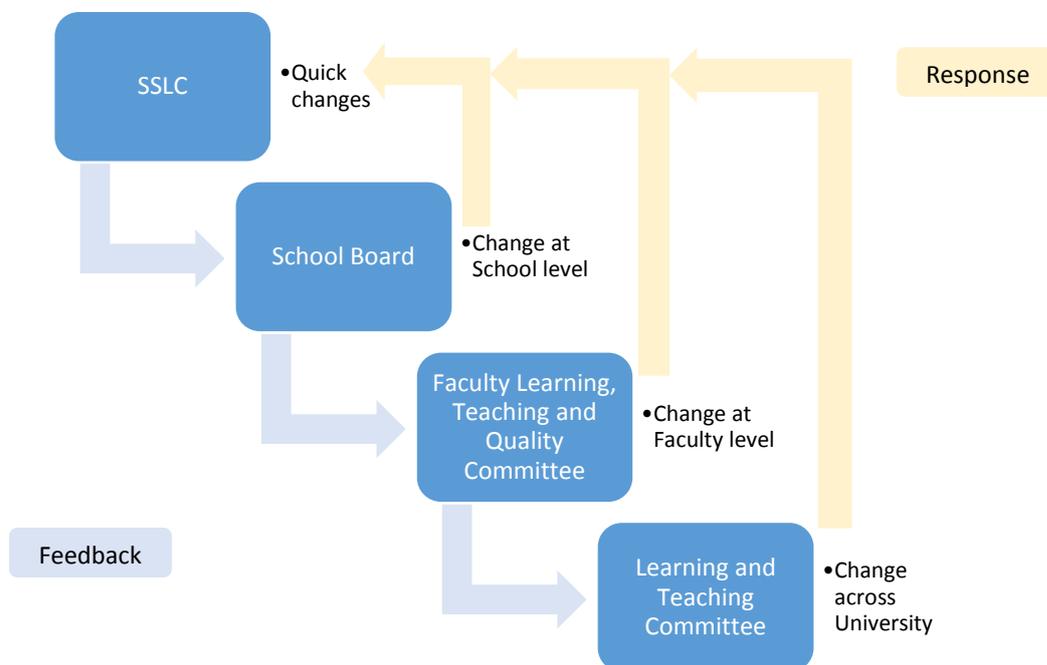

Figure 3: Flow of information from SSLC through to LTC

6.2 Responding to issues

As noted above, a key feature of effective student representation is ensuring that issues raised are responded to, even when the response is a clear rationale as to why further action is not possible.

Where an issue has been reported by SSLCs, committees should ensure the SSLC receive a response. It is the responsibility of the chair of the committees discussing the issue to ensure clear response on the point back to the SSLC chairs. This may be via the School Representative, Faculty convenor, Associate Dean (LTQ) or directly. The response may be in terms of resolution, or to notify the SSLC that the issue has been escalated. The SSLC chairs will circulate this information, either via email or at the next SSLC to members. Course Representatives are responsible for feeding information back down to their constituents.

On a wider scale, and to demonstrate the value of student representation, successful examples of student representation resulting in positive improvements for UEA will be shared across the University as part of a joint UEA/Students' Union 'We Said, We Did' campaign. Staff and students should jointly disseminate and recognise the enhancements made to the student educational experience, and the efforts of students in achieving these successes.

7 Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of student engagement should be monitored and reviewed at least annually, using pre-defined key performance indicators, and policies and processes enhanced where required. Responsibility for monitoring the effective implementation of this Code of Practice sits with the University's Learning and Teaching Committee. This responsibility has been delegated to the Student Representation Working Group.

7.1   Student Representation Working Group

The group will meet three times per year to monitor and feedback on Student Representation and adherence to this Code of Practice to LTC. An annual report will be on the agenda for the last LTC of the year. The group will include:

- Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic (Co -chair)
- Students' Union Education Officers (Co -chair)
- Students' Union staff members
- Academic Director of Taught Programmes
- Senior Faculty Manager representative
- Learning and Teaching Services representative
- 4 x Student Partnership Officers
- 4 x Faculty Convenors
- Course Representatives

The Course Representatives and Student Partnership Officers will be selected on rotation to ensure a diverse range of disciplines are represented. Support for monitoring and evaluation of student representation will be provided by the Business Intelligence Unit (BIU) who will be invited to attend the group as necessary.

7.2   Monitoring and evaluation

Existing institution-wide student surveys and focus groups will form the basis for establishing key performance indicators in relation to student representation. The University should look to demonstrate that we take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience. Evaluation should consider whether the University can demonstrate this expectation has been met through providing the opportunity, environment and support for effective student engagement. The QAA indicators of good practice (appended in section 8.1) and the expectations outlined in this Code of Practice will be used as a framework for assessment. SSLCs will also undertake annual self-evaluation supported by the Students' Union and BIU to assess effectiveness of the committee and student representation within their School. Areas reviewed should include both outputs and outcomes such as:

- Frequency of SSLC meetings and attendance of members at meetings
- Review of action logs and examples of issues raised and acted upon
- Awareness about, and effectiveness of, Student Representatives system
- Use of the Student representation blackboard site
- Communication channels and information flow

From these the Students' Union, under the steer of the Student Representation Working Group, will create an annual report tracking SSLCs and student representation across the institution and highlighting good practice and areas for improvement.

7.3   Development

This Code of Practice will be revised annually by the Student Representation Working Group. Revisions will reflect both good practice developments within UEA and nationally as well as findings from monitoring and evaluation.

8 Appendices

8.1 Indicators of sound practice

Indicator
Indicator 1: Higher education providers, in partnership with their student body, define and promote the range of opportunities for any student to engage in educational enhancement and quality assurance.
Indicator 2: Higher education providers create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience.
Indicator 3: Arrangements exist for the effective representation of the collective student voice at all organisational levels, and these arrangements provide opportunities for all students to be heard.
Indicator 4: Higher education providers ensure that student representatives and staff have access to training and ongoing support to equip them to fulfil their roles in educational enhancement and quality assurance effectively.
Indicator 5: Students and staff engage in evidence-based discussions based on the mutual sharing of information.
Indicator 6: Staff and students to disseminate and jointly recognise the enhancements made to the student educational experience, and the efforts of students in achieving these successes.
Indicator 7: The effectiveness of student engagement is monitored and reviewed at least annually, using pre-defined key performance indicators, and policies and processes enhanced where required.

Table 1 QAA indicators of sound practice mapped against this student representation Code of Practice.

8.2 Student Partnership Officer role overview

The Student Partnership Officer should provide School-level leadership to promote, enable and facilitate student representation via partnership between students and staff. The role will be delegated by the Head of School, with the Head of School maintaining overall responsibility for student representation and partnership. On appointment they should make contact with the Students' Union Educational Change Co-ordinator.

They should act as a key point-of-contact for staff/student liaison, and maintain a high visibility within Schools (e.g. advertising their office hours, maintaining a student feedback notice board, holding regular surgeries, etc.).

They should communicate regularly with the School's Student Representatives, working closely with the School's Teaching Director and Senior Adviser to ensure the student body is kept up-to-date with issues arising in the School which may impact academic provision and student experience.

Communicate SSLC discussions and relevant issues raised by Student Representatives to appropriate members of academic and support staff, and feedback any responses/actions made or taken by the School as a result.

Key responsibilities:

- Co-chair SSLCs alongside School Representatives and ensure that any chair's action is agreed by both chairs.
- Work in partnership with School Representatives and Local Support staff to ensure the requirements of the SSLC are met (e.g. Secretary appointed, rooms booked, relevant staff invited, etc.).
- Be a named and known co-contact with the student chair for SSLC members and directly for the wider student body for comments about their teaching and learning experience.
- Broker solutions between SSLC meetings that might involve discussions with module organizers, referrals to Course Directors, the Teaching Director, Head of School, Local Support, other Schools, and other University departments (e.g. the Library, Careers Services, LTS, etc.).
- Ensure that student Representatives are made aware of, and invited to, all School meetings pertaining to teaching provision and/or student experience (e.g. Teaching Committees, School Boards, etc.).
- Receive module evaluation data from LTS and support the SSLC to organize a working group comprised of the Teaching Director, Course Directors and Course/School Representatives (chaired by a s/elected Student Reprsentative and able to invite input from Module Convenors) to scrutinize this (e.g. compare this year's feedback with previous years, identify areas which require development or issues which should be addressed by the School). Further, to ensure that the outcomes of scrutiny are referred to the School's Teaching Committee, or equivalent, and are published so they are accessible to all students.
- Ensure that SSLC meeting documents are available to all students via a student representation Blackboard or equivalent open channel of communication (e.g. School-wide email), and advertise their availability prominently.
- Ensure that SSLC meeting documents are available to all staff via a suitable channel of communication (e.g. School-wide email), and ensure these receive appropriate attention (e.g. at Teaching Executive or equivalent, other staff meetings, etc.).
- Take part in university wide initiatives, training or reviews of student representation and partnership.

Time-sensitive responsibilities across the year:

- Communicate when needed with the Faculty Convenor.
- Initiate the s/election of first year student Representatives and advertise any vacancies for other year groups that remain after s/election at the end of the previous academic year.

- Send the Students Union a list of School Representatives so that the Union can invite Representatives for training.
- Convene soon after the beginning of the academic year, a welcome event for Representatives including Representatives on the School's Teaching Committee, School Board or equivalent groups and including the SSLC secretary.
- Issue calls for agenda items two weeks before the first SSLC meeting of the year, draft a formal UEA meeting agenda for this and ensure that it is circulated one week before the meeting and copied to the Faculty Convenor, the appropriate Students' Union Academic Officer, UEA Library, Head of School and any other relevant parties (e.g. Careers Service, LTS, etc.).
- Convene and chair the first meeting.
- Convene subsequent meetings and co-chair meetings as agreed between chairs.
- Support the student co-chair in drafting subsequent agendas and ensure approval by both chairs before circulation.
- Check and approve meeting minutes in partnership with the student co-chair.
- Convene student working groups or review panels for specific issues that might range from issues with particular modules to responding to UEA-level calls for consultation e.g. on changes in regulations.
- Support working groups or student panels in feeding back their outcomes at School or wider University level.

8.3   SSLC secretary role overview

The main focus of the SSLC secretary is to support the co-chairs in ensuring the smooth functioning of the SSLC. In addition they may be asked to support the Student Partnership Officer with the Schools Student Representative scheme.

Key responsibilities will vary by School but are likely to include the following:

SSLC secretarial support

- Liaise with the co-chairs to plan meetings.
- Identify with the co-chairs standing items that may be included on a yearly/semester basis such as review of the induction process, review of module evaluations and review of the NSS results in areas that require improvement.
- Make arrangements for meetings (room bookings, calendar invites, refreshments etc.)
- Receive agenda items from committee members.
- Circulate agendas and papers by email to all members approximately one week before the meeting date.
- Where requested provide hard copies of meeting papers and minutes for students.
- Take minutes to record decisions and action points, and agree the minutes with the chairs.
- Maintain an action log for the SSLC, reminding members several weeks before a meeting they will need to feedback on any outstanding action points.
- Upload all SSLC papers to the Student Representation Blackboard site.

Additional support for the Student Partnership Officer/Student Representative Scheme

- Support the Student Partnership Officer to recruit Student Representatives for the School.
- Send group emails to students within the School on behalf of the Student Representatives.
- Help organize and attend the School welcome meeting for Student Representatives.
- Upload reports and documents to the Student Representation Blackboard site where requested.

Student Representation Code of Practice

Development overview

This year, UEA has reviewed and revived its approach to student representation, to bring it up to date and create a system that is accessible, useful and dynamic for all involved. This document is intended to bring to the attention of LTC and others within the institution the current state of the representation system at UEA, the ideal situation as set out in the new Code of Practice and the steps and resource needed to move from the current state of play to be compliant with the new Code. The key considerations for implementing the revised system are:

- **Direct funding for SSLC's**

  School discretionary budgets- budgets will need to be in place to support direct costs associated with meetings such as the printing of papers and provide refreshments.

  Student led project fund – a small, centrally funded, amount of money should be available to representatives in SSLCs to enable them to bring about positive, local change.

- **Student Representation handbook**
  A handbook "user guide" will be produced by the Students' Union and distributed to key members of staff within the institution including the Student Partnership Officer and the SSLC secretary. It is intended to put into simple terms the responsibility and key participants expected from all of those involved in implementing the new Code.

- **Individual feedback**
  A recurring theme from all the focus groups and highlighted in the consultation was the opportunity for students to feed back as individuals to the University on issues that affected their student experience. Whilst a system of individual feedback is useful in bringing about issues in "real time" it must not be seen as a replacement for the collective voice of students provided by the representative system. Whilst the channel through which students might undertake this is unclear, e.g. via email or online, it would require resource both to set up a system as well as manage and filter feedback. It is imperative that information collected in this way is share with representatives to allow for a well-rounded view to be developed.

- **Central promotion of representation**
  Awareness of student representation is key, and this will involve an ongoing campaign incorporating web and social media as well as internal communications to raise awareness and support a cultural change in attitude. This includes the introduction of a 'We said, We did' branding of responses and enhanced training for staff and students. This should sit alongside activity in Schools with a commitment from the Executive Team to support all aspects of the system and those within it. The presence of the Executive Team at key social events, and a clear commitment in their communication with staff and students at UEA, will have an impact on the status and reputation of student representation.

- **SSLC promotion in Schools**
  A fundamental problem, as identified in Union surveys and BIU-led focus groups, is the lack of knowledge of SSLCs and student representation at a School level amongst students.
  Schools will need to:
  - Display representative pictures and contact details in a public place within the school
  - Embed information about representation in the induction period
  - Generate a culture of student representation by referring students to their representatives.

- **Student time**
  There will be occasions where meetings could clash with other student commitments which will need to be taken into account. This could be something which could be as simple as granting leave from placements or teaching periods. Another area for consideration is as to whether Schools cover travel expenses for students travelling to enable them to attend.

- **Local support staff time**
  There will be a clearly be a staff time cost for SSLC secretarial support. This is estimated to be 6 days per School assuming four SSLCs per year. This includes 33 hour per school to facilitate, administer and support meetings and 12 additional hours to work with Representatives and the Student Partnership Officer to facilitate change. Given variable practice, which will no longer comply with the updated code, some Schools will have to facilitate additional activity, and there may be an opportunity costs associated with this.

- **Academic staff time**
  Overall the increased frequency of meetings will require more academic time committed by the School. In addition specific roles will require time allocated in their workload. Clearly the amount of time will be related to the role the academic staff member holds in relation to the system. These roles are laid out below:
  - Student Partnership Officer
  - School Teaching Director
  - Senior Advisor

  Teaching Directors and Senior Advisers already have elements incorporated into their job description and therefore workload. However, for the Student Partnership Officer these roles are now more clearly articulated.

  It is anticipated that this role may be on a par with the Course Director role in terms of time, recognising that both roles will vary to reflect the complexity and size of cohort. Note that many Schools have already allocated their workload for 2015/16 so this allocation may not become embedded across the University until 2016/17. As with administrative staff time there may be there may be unidentified opportunity costs associated with the activity.

- **LTS Support**
  Learning and Teaching Service will need to provide central resourcing in terms of overseeing the Blackboard site. They may need to occasionally administer access and permissions to the site although staff and students in Schools will manage local folders and keep materials up-to-date on a day to day basis. Staff from the Hubs should also work to stay up to date with developments from students which are presented in SSLCs or through Student Representatives.

- **Training and support for staff and students**
  As noted above, increased awareness and a change in culture will need to be supported by enhanced training and development activities.
  - o **Centre for Staff education and Development**
    With Student Representation at UEA becoming more cohesive, staff involved need to ensure they are up to date with current developments and trained on best practice, as well as building relationships across schools. CSED currently deliver sessions on student representation in liaison with the Academic Director for Taught programmes and it is anticipated that these will continue and be developed future. Existing training for new staff may need to be modified and additional training needs may be identified.
  - o **Students Union**
    The Students' Union will work with CSED to develop useful training sessions and networking events for all staff involved in Student Representation. In addition students will need support and training to quickly adapt to how the University works, and to develop their own skills and act as effective representatives. The Students' Union will work with the University to develop on-going training for Representatives throughout the year.

- **Monitoring and evaluation: BIU**
  Schools will be asked to self-evaluate themselves annually against the Code of Practice, and the Students' Union will work with the BIU to create an annual report on the state of Representation at UEA. New student focus groups and the student experience survey will have questions relating to student representation built into them. However repeats of the analysis carried out to support the review would require the costs of incentives and catering to be covered.

Conclusion

This Code of Practice has a range of resource implications, and for the Code to function well all members of the University need to take seriously their responsibility to develop a culture of representation and student engagement. By following the areas for development identified in this document, we will be prepared to develop a dynamic and engaging system for everyone on campus.