






# COURSE REP—STAFF GUIDE

---

[theunionmmu.org](http://theunionmmu.org)

   @theunionmmu



THE UNION  
MANCHESTER  
METROPOLITAN  
UNIVERSITY

# CONTENTS

- 3 WELCOME
- 4 COURSE REP RESPONSIBILITIES
- 5 KEY MEETINGS
- 6 DIGITAL REP
- 7 THE SELECTION PROCESS
- 8 COURSE REP SUPPORT FROM THE UNION
- 9 COURSE REP SUPPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY
- 10 HOW WE CELEBRATE EXCELLENT COURSE REPS
- 11 COURSE REP SUCCESS CHECKLIST
- 12 CONTACT DETAILS



# WELCOME

The Union are very proud of the partnership with Manchester Met staff and our Course Rep project is an integral part of that partnership. In this handbook, you will find everything you need to know in order to support Course Reps within your faculty. The handbook is intended for Programme Leaders but may also be useful for other staff who have contact with Course Reps.

## WHAT IS A COURSE REP?

A Course Rep is a student volunteer who is elected by their peers to represent them. They act as the voice of their course mates and attend meetings with MMU faculty staff.

## WHY DO WE NEED COURSE REPS?

Course Reps provide feedback on student experiences within their course and faculty as well as offering insight with a new perspective. They work closely with university staff to bring about student-led change that will have an impact for their cohort and future students. By asking our students exactly what they want from their education, we are empowering them to take a leading role, resulting in a more rounded learning experience.

Lucy Follon,  
Education Officer

## WHAT DO COURSE REPS DO?

- + Attend training sessions run by The Union.
- + Gather student feedback regarding what works, what doesn't work, any new ideas, and then upload these onto the online feedback tool Digital Rep.
- + Present feedback at Student Staff Liaison Committee and Programme Committee meetings.
- + Contribute to discussions about issues identified by External Examiners in their annual report.
- + Work with faculty staff to find the best solution possible for students.
- + Attend Union events including workshops and Course Rep training.
- + Keep in regular contact with their Course Rep Support Staff to update them on progress and feedback issues to The Union.

# COURSE REP RESPONSIBILITIES

## COURSE REPS DEAL WITH:

- + Teaching and study resources
- + Teaching methods
- + Course content and structure
- + Transparent course costs
- + Access to facilities
- + Diversity of the curriculum
- + Teaching and learning environment
- + Assessment and feedback

## COURSE REPS DO NOT DEAL WITH:

- + Individual student needs
- + Communicating and promoting information/events on behalf of the faculty
- + Complaints regarding individual university staff members
- + Advice e.g. housing, money, visas
- + Welfare concerns
- + Peer mentoring
- + Discrimination

# KEY MEETINGS

COURSE REPS ATTEND OR SUBMIT INFORMATION FOR THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND FEED BACK TO THE UNION.

## STAFF STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE (OR EQUIVALENT) MEETINGS

There is a University expectation that all programme teams will arrange regular, informal Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings, or similar, throughout the academic year. This meeting is their first point of contact as a relatively informal, course-specific meeting. These meetings should take place in the weeks prior to a Programme Committee.

Course Reps can raise smaller issues that can be resolved

without having to go to Programme Committee or flag bigger concerns that need to be taken to a higher level. Course Reps should be made aware of the SSLC at least two weeks in advance. An SSLC is a forum for staff and students to discuss programme-related matters in an informal setting before the Programme Committee. All students, not only course reps, are entitled to attend.

Meetings should take place at least once per term. It is a place to discuss any issue that affects the quality of student experience on your programme.

## PROGRAMME COMMITTEES

Every course has a formal Programme Committee, which meets at least twice in the academic year and oversees all matters (academic and non-academic) relating to the delivery of the programme and the student experience. Only those course reps who have agreed to be members with their Programme Leader are entitled to attend. Course Rep members should be told about their Programme Committees and provided with the papers at least two weeks in advance.

# DIGITAL REP

**Digital Rep is an online system that allows any student to provide feedback about their course or sports club. Additionally, Course Reps can use the system to record feedback they have received whilst out talking to students. A report will be generated from the system, which details the feedback given in each faculty, department or programme, to be discussed at Programme Committees and Faculty-level meetings**

Digital Rep asks students to provide feedback about what works well and what doesn't at Manchester Met, and any ideas they have for changes. Course-related feedback is divided into the following categories:

- + Teaching on my course
- + Assessment and feedback
- + Academic support on my course
- + The organisation of my course
- + Resources
- + Equality, diversity and inclusion

During their training, Course Reps are inducted into the system and will be encouraged to use it as their primary tool for recording feedback (including responses they have received via emails and social media). We will also be running a

communication campaign to familiarise students with the system and encourage them to use it to contact their rep.

Digital Rep feedback will be actioned by Course Reps or the Course Rep Support Staff in the same way as other feedback they receive. Urgent matters will be brought to the relevant member of staff where necessary, whilst the report in full should be discussed at the next Programme Committee. The Union also includes key themes from Digital Rep in its termly Student Voice Reports, which are available on the website and discussed at Education Committee.

Course Reps can request their Digital Rep report by emailing [s.u.reps@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.reps@mmu.ac.uk), or asking their Course Rep Support Staff.

# THE SELECTION PROCESS

THE ROLE OF THE COURSE REP SHOULD BE INTRODUCED IN LECTURES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR. WE'LL BE HOSTING EVENTS IN FACULTIES THROUGHOUT THE FIRST THREE WEEKS OF TERM TO RAISE AWARENESS AND INFORM STUDENTS ABOUT THE COURSE REP ROLE.

**Course Reps are elected by their student cohort to represent their views for that academic year. You should aim for 1 Course Rep per 25 students in each year and this can be flexible to suit the structure of your programmes.**

- + In the situation that a student has nominated themselves and they are uncontested, or where the number of students nominating themselves is equal to the number of positions available, majority agreement should be taken from the cohort to ensure that they are happy for the students to become Course Reps.
- + We understand that not every programme will need to hold elections but it's important that every student has equal chance of putting themselves forward and the opportunity to say yes or no to every candidate.
- + This can be done by a show of hands in a lecture or you can use the online voting plugin on Moodle. Get in touch with us if you need to support to hold an election.

**After being elected, Course Reps will need to register online with The Union. Direct them to [theunionmmu.org](http://theunionmmu.org) > Your Voice > Course Reps > Register as a rep. Registration gives reps access to Digital Rep, and means we have their details to keep them informed about events, training and support.**

**Course Reps must register themselves** – we cannot do this for them. Only registered Course Reps are able to attend training and carry out their role properly. Once Course Reps have registered, they should attend the Course Rep training event within their faculty. Face to face training is the preferable option but we will have online training available for part-time students, distance learners or students with other commitments

# COURSE REP SUPPORT FROM THE UNION

## TRAINING

The Union provides full training and support for all registered Course Reps across every faculty. Training will take place in October and early November, during the day and with some evening and weekend sessions. Please note: The Union can only invite course reps to the training if they have registered on The Union website.

## WEBSITE

Online resources are available on the Course Rep section of The Union website, as well as dates for training, workshop and events.

## COURSE REP SUPPORT STAFF

Each faculty has a member of student staff who is available to provide guidance and encouragement for registration, opportunities to network, support and structure for gathering student feedback and much more.

The Course Rep Support Staff also sit on faculty-level meetings including Faculty Education Committee. As standard, we will be encouraging Course Reps to meet with their Course Rep Support Staff at least once a term at a faculty forum.

## SUPPORT FROM THE ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Course Reps can contact the Voice Team on [s.u.reps@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.reps@mmu.ac.uk) with any queries. They are also welcome to speak to us face to face at the Voice Office on the 1st floor of The Union, 10:00-16:00, Monday to Friday.

## THE ADVICE CENTRE

Course Reps can contact the Advice Centre, and direct fellow students to the Advice Centre, about any personal issues or complaints.

# COURSE REP SUPPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY

## COMMUNICATE WITH PROGRAMMES OFFICE

The Programme Leader ensures that the wider programme team know at the beginning of the academic year which students have agreed to be Course Reps, and which Course Reps have agreed to be members of the Programme Committee.

## ENCOURAGE COURSE REPS TO REGISTER ON THE UNION WEBSITE

This can be done at an initial meeting with faculty staff and the Course Rep Support Staff, or online in their own time: <https://www.theunionmmu.org/your-voice/course-reps/register/>

## DIRECT COURSE REPS TO THE COURSE REP AREA OF THE UNION WEBSITE

<https://www.theunionmmu.org/your-voice/course-reps/>

## ENSURE COURSE REPS ARE PREPARED FOR PROGRAMME MEETINGS

Make sure they know which meetings to attend. For example, Student Staff Liaison Committees (or equivalent) for all students including course reps, and Programme Committees for course reps who have agreed to be members – and when they are scheduled to take place.

## PROGRAMME COMMITTEE CHAIR

Give student members of the Committee the opportunity to meet with the Chair in advance of meetings to learn how the Committee works.

## SUPPORT YOUR COURSE REPS IN GATHERING FEEDBACK

For example giving them time in class to introduce themselves and talk to

students; you can also build Moodle profiles for your Course Reps to help each student know who their Course Reps are.

## HELP RAISE THE PROFILE OF THE COURSE REPS

Encourage students to contact their Course Rep via Digital Rep and support the Course Rep using emails, social media, posters or Moodle to raise their profile.

## KEEP IN CONTACT WITH THE COURSE REP SUPPORT STAFF

Catch up with your Course Rep Support Staff (details below) regularly to keep communication channels open and work collaboratively to find solutions to problems that may arise, and to celebrate your Course Reps and the changes they make on behalf of their students.



# HOW WE CELEBRATE EXCELLENT COURSE REPS

## VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The Union hosts an awards ceremony to thank our fantastic volunteers each year, and this includes Course Reps. In the second term, The Union will be in touch with staff to encourage them to nominate across all the award categories.

## CERTIFICATES

Course Reps who meet the criteria will receive a certificate, and all Course Reps who have volunteered for us will receive a thank you email.

In order to receive their certificate, Course Reps should register on our website, attend training, attend Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings each term, attend all Programme Committee meetings, attend at least one faculty forum and engage with Digital Rep at least once per term.

# COURSE REP SUCCESS CHECKLIST

- COURSE REPS HAVE BEEN ELECTED IN EVERY YEAR FOR MY COURSE(S).
- ALL RELEVANT STAFF KNOW WHO THE COURSE REPS ARE.
- ALL COURSE REPS ARE REGISTERED WITH THE UNION.
- COURSE REPS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO THE RELEVANT SECTION OF THE UNION WEBSITE.
- I HAVE MET WITH THE COURSE REP SUPPORT STAFF FOR MY FACULTY.
- ALL COURSE REPS HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS FOR MEETINGS THEY ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND.
- THE UNION COURSE REP SUPPORT STAFF FOR MY FACULTY HAS ALSO BEEN INFORMED.
- STUDENTS ARE INFORMED ABOUT ACTIONS ARISING FROM MEETINGS IN A RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER.
- COURSE REPS ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THEIR DIGITAL REP REPORT IN ALL PROGRAMME COMMITTEES.

# CONTACT DETAILS

## LUCY FOLLON

**Education  
Officer**

[s.u.education@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.education@mmu.ac.uk)

## SAM COOKE

**Academic  
Representation  
Coordinator**

[s.u.reps@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.reps@mmu.ac.uk)

## Faculty Course Rep Support Staff

**Arts and Humanities**

[crs-arts-humanities@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:crs-arts-humanities@mmu.ac.uk)

**Business and Law**

[crs-business-law@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:crs-business-law@mmu.ac.uk)

**Education**

[crs-education@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:crs-education@mmu.ac.uk)

**Health, Psychology and Social Care**

[crs-hpsc@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:crs-hpsc@mmu.ac.uk)

**Science and Engineering**

[crs-science-engineering@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:crs-science-engineering@mmu.ac.uk)

**theunionmmu.org**

   @theunionmmu

  
YOUR VOICE



THE UNION  
MANCHESTER  
METROPOLITAN  
UNIVERSITY