

# ELECTION GUIDANCE

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A STUDENT REP ELECTION, FROM HOW MANY REPS TO ELECT TO WAYS OF RUNNING AN ELECTION.

## TELLING STUDENTS ABOUT ACADEMIC REPS

We know that lots of programmes are good at engaging students to become Academic Reps. With our small team, we are unable to reach all areas of the University, which is why academic staff are asked to promote the election process to encourage a diverse range of nominations from all sections of the student body.

Sometimes we find a bit of a push from an Officer can make all the difference in getting students to come forward. If you'd like to organise an officer to talk to your students contact us with dates and times that would be useful for you, and we will see what we can do!

## THE ELECTION PROCESS

Academic Reps should be elected by their cohort. At Bath, we conduct online elections which are done through the SU website. The benefit of doing this is to provide an easy way for all students to engage whether they are on-campus, at home, or in a lecture. Online elections also provide an anonymous way for students to vote which is not always possible with an in-person vote. Finally, all the work into producing the result is done by us, which means no physical counting for you!

The number of Reps for each role is based on the number of students in the cohort, equating to roughly one Academic Rep for every 50 to 70 students. If you wish to have more than this then please contact us to see how we can support, you.

Each nominee will be required to provide a preferred picture of themselves and a manifesto stating their reason for standing for the position. Within this 500-word manifesto, nominees should express why they would like to be an Academic Rep, including any previous experience in representing their peers. Additionally, they may wish to state any objectives they would like to achieve if they were to become an Academic Rep.

## HOW TO PROMOTE VOTING

Based on our feedback, some Reps do not feel fully representative of their cohort due to receiving low votes in the election. A way to promote engagement from students is to encourage them to vote during their lecture time as you will be allocating time for them to do this. Engagement is likely to be higher with the process if you do, you could also introduce the candidates and they could even say a few brief words.

Election best practices from other departments:

- Offering nominated students time to promote themselves at the end of lectures/seminars.
- Emails reminding students to vote with links and candidate names in them.
- Generally reminding students about elections in all engagement with them

## AFTER THE ELECTIONS

As much as try to fill all the roles in the election, inevitably there will be some roles that remain vacant. Once we have sent the results of the election and noted which role continues to have vacancies, we will send a link to the by-election form. This is called our co-option process by which a student is appointed to the position of Academic Rep upon the approval of one of our elected SU Officers. The form will require them to write a supporting statement of 500 words max which will be given to the SU Officer to consider. Students will not be unreasonably rejected from being co-opted into a position.

## ACADEMIC REP SPREADSHEETS

We provide a spreadsheet to each Faculty/School with the names of each of your Academic Reps, along with the cohort they represent and their Bath contact email. These spreadsheets are updated regularly during term time to ensure it is accurate. If you do not currently have access to this, please contact us.

## MY REPS ARE ELECTED, NOW WHAT?

Once Academic Reps have been successfully elected, they will receive an email informing them of their success. This will contain information about upcoming training dates which we run several times both on-campus and online by a member of the SU Voice team and an SU Officer. Students who are unable to attend these sessions will be offered an online version of the training which is also available for any distanced learners.

After they have completed their training, it is important to offer some support to Academic Reps to ensure they can do their role. For example, it may be helpful for them to have some time in front of their cohort to introduce themselves. This could be a regular 5-minute slot at the end of a lecture or a less frequent slot a few weeks before their SSLC meeting. By facilitating this, it will enable them to gather feedback and participate with their students.

You may also want to encourage others for your Reps to communicate with their cohorts. This may be through Moodle, creating groups on social media, or utilising Microsoft Teams. You can both work together to find the best ways to engage your students and may find it useful to ask your Reps to find out how they best wish to communicate with you.