

Course Reps Election Process and Guidance

Course Leaders are responsible for facilitating Course Rep Elections for their course. Elections will be conducted by first past the post, and every election will be run with the option to re-open nominations (RON). If some positions remain vacant, or should RON be elected, there will be a by-election for that position one week after the original election.

The Students' Union will provide resources to help you run successful elections. These will include a Course Rep recruitment video, an alternative presentation and an e-flyer. All are available at <https://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/reps/staff/>.

Remember if you have any issues or complaints regarding the elections you should contact Academic Representation Oversight Group (AROG) in its role as Returning Officer by emailing arog@worc.ac.uk.

Elections can be completed in three easy steps

We know that this year inductions will be different and the opportunity for face to face interaction will be reduced. However, we also believe that having an effective Rep system will be all the more important as we navigate the "new normal". We recommend that you hold the vote in a structured three step process.

1. Explaining the role and calling for candidates

To ensure that students put themselves forward, the role of Course Rep must be explained early and clearly. This should be done at least 1 week before you plan to hold your vote. Make sure you use the materials provided to maximise students understanding. Using examples of the impact Reps have had on your course works well and remember if students believe you think it is important then they will too

Make sure you have a simple process for students to let you know they want to stand. If you know students who would be good in the role, it is okay to approach them and encourage them to stand. However, you must make sure you give all students equal opportunity to put themselves forward and are not seen to favour any one candidate. We recommend that each candidate submit a short paragraph on why they want to run so that you can share with their course mates at least 2 days before the vote.

2. Hold the vote

To ensure this process is transparent, free and fair, elections by raising of hands is not appropriate. Instead, voting should be by way of secret ballot even if you only have 1 candidate because RON could still win. We do not recommend that you use paper ballots if delivering a face to face session during the current situation. You can run votes online through the Blackboard survey module or in an anonymous poll within a Collaborate session:

- Help on Polls: https://help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/Ultra/Moderator/Moderate_Sessions/Polling
- Help on Surveys: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys

If you are holding the vote using a live poll in a session, we recommend that you give every candidate up to 2 minutes to speak and then hold the vote. If possible, count the votes during the same session.

If you are running an online Blackboard Election over an extended period of time using a survey, make sure you send clear times for votes opening and closing and when and how the results will be released. You may still want to have a hustings event in the classroom. We would also recommend a dedicated few minutes of class time to allow students to log in and vote.

3. Support your new Reps

Once you have elected your Reps, make sure you enter their details on SOLE. Instructions can be found at <https://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/reps/staff/>. Ensure that you meet with your new Reps and ensure that they know when and how to access their training and that they have a copy of the Course Rep Handbook. You should also discuss with them how they want to communicate with students and help them set up any new Facebook groups or Blackboard forums and plan in when they will do lecture shout outs etc.

When should elections take place?

All Course Reps should be elected by **the end of week 4 of their academic calendar** (undergraduate/postgraduate) regardless of course e.g. courses beginning on 14th September 2020 should have Course Reps elected and uploaded to SOLE by 9th October 2020.

Course Reps for levels 5 and 6 can be elected for the following year in the final weeks of teaching before the final assessment week of the academic year. If a new Rep is elected, they do not take up their role until the first teaching week of the following academic year and the current Rep remains in position until the end of the academic year.

Courses with large numbers of top-up students, for example, may wish to be more flexible to ensure students can be included.

How many Reps per Course should be elected?

The allocation of the number of course Rep positions available should follow the guidance below:

- a) A Course with 40 students or less at a level should be represented by 1 Course Rep per level
- b) A Course with between 41-80 students at a level should be represented by 2 Course Reps per level
- c) A Course with over 81 students at a level should be represented by 3 Course Reps per level

*Where there are a number of small similar courses these may grouped together as one course for the purpose of the representation system. Very small courses with multiple pathways should be grouped together, where possible. **Should a course require further student representation the Course Leader should make an application in writing to their Head of School. If the Head of School approves they should then forward to the Academic Representation Oversight Group for final approval by emailing arog@worc.ac.uk.***

Joint Honours

Courses that allow for single and joint honours pathways do not require a Rep for each level. Course Reps represent all students' joint and single honours on that level.

Subjects that can only be studied as part of a joint honours course require a representative for that subject at each level. This representative will represent all joint honours combinations that include that subject (at their level).

Students that are on a joint honours pathway and would like to submit subject specific feedback should seek to report this to the Course Rep specific to that subject.

- i. If the feedback is not specific to a subject the student has the option to feedback to any (or all) of the Course Reps that represent them.
- ii. Joint Honours students that wish to stand as a Course Rep will represent the subject that they were elected in.
E.g. A student who is studying Joint History and Geography and is elected to represent Geography would only be a Course Rep for Geography and would not represent their peers studying History.

Examples

Student A studying Joint Geography and History. As both have single honours representation at all levels, no further Course Reps are required on top of the single honours representation at that level.

Student B studying Joint History and Politics History has single honours representation at each level and therefore no further representation is required. Politics is only available as a joint honours course and therefore has no single honour representation at that level. A joint honours politics representative is therefore required to represent all joint honours politics students at that level.

For any question relating to the interpretation or guidance of elections please contact the Students' Union.