



Student Representative Introductory Training Modules

For Academic Reps and Reps on Governance
and Decision Making Bodies

Module 1 – Introduction to being a Representative

Topic	Suggested Activities	Purpose
<p>Understanding the Rep Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus of the rep role on enhancement (improvement) rather than simply passing on complaints <p>Unpack the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of a rep. Tasks a rep might undertake. Skills a rep might need. The benefits of being rep. 	<p>Small group discussion and sharing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think the purpose of a rep is? What do you think some of the tasks will be? What skills do you think you will need and develop as a rep? How do you think being a rep will benefit you? <p>Provide a series of statements about the rep role and ask students to comment on their position regarding the statements.</p> <p>Is there agreement? What issues/ideas/ thoughts are raised?</p>	<p>For participants to understand what the student rep role is and why it is important.</p>
<p>Expectations & Responsibilities of Reps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide both positive and negative feedback to staff. Help seek solutions to problems where possible. Represent the needs and interests of a particular cohort. Seek out other student views and communicate these back to staff. Attend meetings (where necessary). 	<p>Discuss the difference between academic and non-academic issues.</p> <p>Use tools such as the Student Learning Experience developed by sparqs to demonstrate a focus on learning and teaching.</p> <p>It is not the responsibility of student reps to provide individual advocacy or counselling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share where student reps direct other students who need individual advocacy or advice. Discuss Health & Counselling services offered within the institution. 	<p>Provide clarity of expectations and responsibilities of student reps and what is outside of this scope.</p>
<p>Partnership Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repositioning away from viewing students as consumer/customers to seeing education as a shared endeavour to 	<p>Discuss the STEPUP Principles and how they facilitate and support student partnership.</p> <p>Also see the Toolkit for Embedding Partnership for more activities.</p>	<p>Introduce the concept & practice of Student- Staff Partnership and how it relates to being a student rep.</p>

<p>enhance L&T through active and genuine collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutually beneficial process of learning and working together. • Equal but different expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students provide expert views on their learning experience – Staff also bring their own expertise 	<p>Also see Student Voice Australia resources.</p>	
---	--	--

Module 2 – Getting to know your institution

Topic	Activity	Purpose
<p>Student Demographics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic student • International students • Indigenous students • Online students • Postgraduate students • Mature age students • Etc. <p>Different campuses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and international <p>Diversity and Inclusivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-represented student groups • Historically marginalised students 	<p>Display information about the institution and discuss particular characteristics.</p> <p>Discuss the implications for student representatives and what the particular needs and interests of the student population might be.</p> <p>Brainstorm how student reps may approach seeking out views and opinions of a broad student cohort.</p>	<p>Develop awareness of the student population and the responsibility of reps to engage a broad range of students</p>
<p>Institutional Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational structure • Governance structure • Academic calendar 	<p>Discuss how student reps fit into the wider governance structure and where and how decisions get made.</p>	<p>Understand how the institution is governed and where students are positioned.</p>
<p>Student Bodies on Campus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Union/Association • Academic clubs & societies 	<p>Invite members of the Student Union/ Association to speak with incoming reps to outline what the student body does and how they can help.</p> <p>Highlight relevant student organisations within the institution that can support student reps in their roles.</p>	<p>Get to know the student bodies on campus & how they can assist reps.</p>
<p>Institutional Strategy and Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional level Strategic Plan & other relevant strategies & policies 	<p>Share any key institutional policies or documents with reps relating to their particular roles.</p> <p>Discuss how being aware of institutional priorities can (where applicable) assist reps to shape their responses to reflect broader institutional priorities.</p> <p>For students sitting on boards and committees - ensure they are aware of the</p>	<p>Learn about the institutional priorities, strategy and direction.</p>

	Terms of Reference and board/ committee membership.	
Institutional Systems & Structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT support Online learning platforms, Email 	<p>Discuss how reps can communicate with each other & with students using the Online Learning Platform (e.g. Blackboard, Canvas etc.).</p> <p>Also unpack other technology/systems/ platforms open to student reps to assist in communication (such as generic rep email addresses, intranet features, or social media)</p>	Understand communication and learning platforms within the institution
Wellbeing supports for Reps & other Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support services (internal and external) Self-care 	<p>Provide information around self-care for reps in managing their responsibilities. Discuss how to access support services within and outside of the institution.</p> <p>Discuss how to assist other students in accessing health, wellbeing, counselling and advocacy services.</p> <p>Emphasise that reps should not take on individual student concerns or wellbeing issues but direct them to support services within the institution.</p>	Share supports on campus and online that reps and fellow students can access.
Reward & recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payment/honorarium/ stipend Certificate of recognition Second transcript (e.g. AHEGS) Thank you events Access to further PD or conferences 	<p>Discuss how student reps are recognised and rewarded within the institution.</p> <p>Be clear if there any steps reps need to take to participate in reward or recognition systems (e.g. enrolling in institution based award programs).</p>	Demonstrate how student representatives are valued within the institution.

Module 3 – Rep Skills & Meetings

Topic	Activity	Purpose
How to be an effective and informed representative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reps need to make themselves visible and known Seeking the views of others Closing the feedback loop 	<p>Highlight the four stages of being an effective rep:</p> <p>Stage 1 –student reps make their fellow students aware of who they are and how they can get in contact with them.</p> <p>Stage 2 – At regular intervals a representative needs to speak to their fellow students and find out what's happening. They need to collect that feedback and feed that back to fellow reps and staff.</p> <p>Stage 3 – Student reps have the advantage of being students and have a good idea of what will improve things. A student rep is in a great position to advise staff on improvements.</p> <p>Stage 4 – Student reps are key in making</p>	Increasing the visibility & effectiveness of reps.

	<p>sure students know what has/is happening. Feeding back to the student body is vital. This can be done in collaboration with staff (where appropriate).</p>	
<p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting procedures (before, during after) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation - Punctuality - Apologies • Reading papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What to look out for when reading papers • Agendas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to approach putting an item on the agenda - Is this the appropriate forum for this discussion? • Confidentiality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expectations and responsibilities - Reporting - Keep records of relevant discussions and decisions 	<p>Ask students what they need to do before, during and after a meeting.</p> <p>Discuss why it's important that reps participate in the meetings and don't miss the opportunity to speak up.</p> <p>Share relevant processes and protocols for meetings.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <p>Need to know when and where a meeting will be held but more importantly why it's been arranged; what is its purpose.</p> <p>Meeting papers such as the agenda are very helpful to prepare for what is going to be discussed. It is always ok to ask for clarification regarding any agenda item.</p> <p>When reading papers a key question to ask is 'how will students be impacted' and go from there.</p> <p>Know what you want to get out of the meeting - especially if you are feeding back on several issues. Have a clear idea of what result you want and how you want to get there.</p> <p>If there a topic/issue you would like to raise then ask to have it added to the agenda. Sometimes there may be a way to resolve an issue outside of a formal meeting so it is good to discuss this in advance.</p>	<p>Understanding standard meeting procedure and the way it works within the institution</p>
<p>Providing feedback & sharing views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student reps should be constructive and wherever possible seek solutions in partnership with staff. • Feedback can be provided both formally and informally depending on the representative role. 	<p>Give examples of effective feedback and less effective feedback using the ABCD of Effective Feedback as a guide.</p> <p>Feedback should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate • Balanced • Constructive • Depersonalised <p>(see sparqs rep training for more details)</p> <p>Reps can also practice giving feedback using the ABCD method around an issue they have identified in their current study.</p>	<p>Supporting reps in providing effective feedback</p>
<p>Finding Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, it is important that reps work to develop solutions to problems or issues identified. 	<p>Use the following model to assist student reps to develop solutions (in collaboration with staff and students) to problems identified:</p> <p>Cause – think about the underlying</p>	<p>Assisting reps in developing solutions to issues identified</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student reps might not know what's best, so working with staff and other students is important. 	<p>factors which are creating these problems; knowing where they are coming from can help you come up with effective answers.</p> <p>Effect - understanding the negative or positive (or neutral) effect something is having (and who it effects) will help you communicate it to decision makers.</p> <p>Solution - now you better understand the issue can you work with staff and other students to come up with a solution?</p> <p>Impact - knowing what result your solution will have will help you sell your idea and measure its impact.</p>	
<p>Handover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass on relevant (non-confidential) information and records of discussions to incoming reps. Is reporting a requirement of the role? 	<p>Discuss what information may be useful to handover to incoming reps.</p> <p>Share why handover is important and useful by asking reps to reflect on what would be valuable for them to know at the beginning of their term.</p>	<p>Preparing and supporting incoming reps and building systemic knowledge</p>

Additional resources to assist in developing training:

- [Sparqs Introductory Course Rep Training](#)
- [TSEP Introductory Student Rep Training Sessions](#)
- [Sparqs Student Learning Experience](#)
- [Toolkit for Embedding Partnership](#)
- [Student Voice Australia](#)