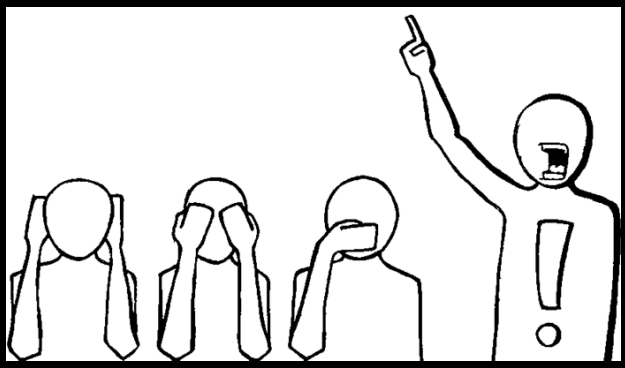
CHRIST CHURCH
STUDENTS' UNION

Student Rep Handbook 2013/14



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CHRIST CHURCH STUDENTS' UNION

Introductions

Silvia Rasca | Membership Services Manager

Hello! First things first a huge congratulations on being elected as a Student Rep! By becoming a Student Rep you have become part of the volunteering team within Christ Church Students' Union and through this you will make a huge difference to the lives of students by creating change to better their experience.

The team at the Students' Union is here to help you make that change, so if you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in contact. You will find all of the contact details to be able to do this later on in this handbook and here at the Students' Union we will always listen and will offer any support and advice we can, all you need to do is ask! The role of a Student Rep is a vital one at Christ Church as it allows the students to have an input into how their programmes are run. The University, Students' Union and the students you represent all value your input and appreciate the work you'll be doing throughout the academic year.

This handbook, along with the training you'll receive from the Students' Union, is intended to help you understand your role better. It will also show you what support you can expect and how your role fits into the bigger picture

***Phil Mooney* | Students' Union President**

Hi... There are about 500 Student Reps across Christ Church, so you should never feel like you are alone; in fact I'm sure you'll quite often have a lot in common with the other Reps. Being a Student Rep is an amazing experience, it helps you build strong relationships, gain the respect of both staff and students and is an asset to your CV. It also gives you an opportunity to 'see behind the scenes' and really make a difference in your programme, Department or the University as a whole; an opportunity that the average student doesn't get.

The University View *- Professor Sue Piotrowski (Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic))*

Students are at the heart of both Canterbury Christ Church University and the Students' Union and jointly we wish to ensure that students have a good experience whilst at university.

Student representation is central to ensuring that the student experience is maximised and is an important mechanism for communication between students, the University and the Students' Union. Student representatives act as a key link between staff and students, to make sure that the student perspective is considered when decisions are made.

We value the commitment from the Students' Union in ensuring that the University has effective arrangements in place for engaging with the student body and more specifically for the training of student representatives.

We recognise that expressing the views of fellow students in a clear, constructive and helpful way takes a great deal of skill, time and commitment and I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who undertake this role, alongside your own studies. Whilst recognising that the role of student representative can be demanding and challenging, I hope you will none the less find the role enjoyable and rewarding. It will provide you with a wealth of experience that will serve to enhance your own career development.

Professor Sue Piotrowski

Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)

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Student Staff Liaison Meetings – University Policy

1.1 The following guidance has been drawn up following consultation with Student Representatives, the Students' Union, Heads of Department and Programme Directors and discussion at the Student Services Group.

1.2 This guidance represents the minimum standard that is required from each Department. Departments may implement this guidance as appropriate to their needs and structure and are encouraged to develop the role of Student Representatives beyond this minimum standard.

1.3 Student-Staff Liaison Meetings are mechanisms for discussing matters relating to programmes and programme delivery. Student-staff liaison meetings should be used to discuss matters of general concern. Special matters relating to individual students are not to be discussed at Student-staff Liaison meetings.

1.4 It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the minimum standards are met.

2 Constitution of Student-Staff Liaison Meetings

2.1 There should be a student-staff liaison meeting for each programme (or groups of programmes).

2.2 Student-Staff Liaison meetings should be held a minimum of one per term, resulting in continuous consultation and feedback made through Annual Departmental Review.

2.3 Heads of department should ensure that there is appropriate representation, at student-staff liaison meetings, and that all programmes and levels/stages of programmes are represented as far as it is possible.

2.4 Student-staff liaison meeting dates, agendas, minutes and action points should be made available to Student Representatives through programme Virtual Learning Environments.

2.5 Heads of department will ensure that appropriate departmental and University policies and procedures are made available to student representatives. These should include relevant details of University and departmental structures, details of the role of the programme director policies and procedures relating to student matters and quality processes, and examination procedures, although it should be noted that most or all of these should have been made available to all students through programme handbook

2.6 Staff and students representatives should be able to contribute to the agenda making sure there is plenty of time to discuss all issues.

2.7 The agenda should be pre-circulated at least one week before the meeting in order that time can be given to prepare for the meeting.

2.8 The Student-Staff Liaison meeting will, once constituted, determine who should act in the role of chair.

2.9 Student-Staff Liaison meetings will receive summary reports on programme and/or module evaluation data from Departments.

2.10 External Examiner reports should be shared with Student-Staff Liaison meetings subject to the University guidance.

2.11 Student Representatives and Staff should not discuss students or staff by name during the meeting, making sure confidentiality is kept at all times.

2.12 Notes of the meeting should be recorded and circulated to all parties to check the accuracy.

3 Provision of student-staff liaison meetings for work-based programmes

3.1 Where the pattern of programme delivery is such that it would be of considerable inconvenience for students to attend physical meetings, Student-Staff Liaison meetings should meet in a virtual forum.

3.2 Heads of Departments must ensure that the alternative mechanism enables the intentions of the University's Student-Staff Liaison policy to be delivered, and should be able to indentify how this is being achieved.

4 Other matters

4.1 Time should be set aside to enable feedback from Student-Staff Liaison meetings to be given to students such as the use of the Virtual Learning Environment or dissemination during the teaching week. Students should be informed how the feedback will be given.

4.2 Where a student must travel to another campus to attend a student-staff liaison meeting, travel expenses should be paid to those Student Representatives having to travel over and above their usual commute to University.

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5 Role of Student Representatives

5.1 Students Representatives will be elected by other students and remain the representative for the academic year, with the option to opt out if necessary, in which case a re-election shall be held. At the start of each new academic year, a re-election will be held; previous Student Representatives can re-run if they wish.

5.2 The role of student representatives is as follows:

(i) to attend, or to engage with a virtual forum under point 3, formal Student-Staff Liaison meetings and speak on behalf of the student body on any issue affecting the quality of the student experience on that programme and within that Department.

(ii) to encourage student input and feedback through email, surveys and questionnaires.

(iii) to provide information and evidence to inform the enhancement of the programme and the development of the Department.

(iv) to raise appropriate agenda items for the formal Student-Staff Liaison meetings, asking their peers beforehand for their items.

(v) to feedback information from formal Student-Staff Liaison meetings relating to discussions, decisions and progress made to the cohort that they represent, such as at the beginning or end of a lecture without the lecturer present.

(vi) to gain relevant information from the student cohort in order to progress quality issues.

(vii) to attend where possible, or to engage with, the University Student Forum.

5.3 Student representatives should be involved as an active partner in:

(i) informing and enhancing teaching, learning, assessment and content of programme modules, through both formal and informal channels.

(ii) providing advice from the student perspective with regards to programme planning and development.

(iii) providing a fair and equal University experience for the diverse members of the student population.

(iv) providing a written or verbal report on student views at all appropriate committees.

6 Role of University Staff

6.1 University staff should:

(i) be willing to engage with Student-Staff Liaison meetings as a significant mechanism for enhancing the student experience.

(ii) encourage students to take part and help them develop in the role to maximise personal development.

(iii) administer the election of a Student Representative sufficiently early in the term for the student to be effective in the role.

(iv) advertise the names of elected Student Representatives to the main student body via the virtual learning environment.

(v) be willing to engage with Student Representatives outside of the Student-Staff Liaison meetings to discuss special matters.

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The Staff View *- Martin Southam (Sports Science Lecturer)*

➔ **What is the point of this document?**

The aim of this document is to supplement the training given to you by the Union by putting a little 'meat on the bones' so to speak. Whilst many of you may have been involved in student representation before, many 'Reps' are new to the process (hence the training) and will be unfamiliar with the demands and rewards of the role; thus, this document is an effort to help prepare you for what I hope will be a challenging yet stimulating position.

➔ **What do Reps do?**

This question is best answered by those taking the training; but essentially, from an academics point of view, the Reps provide a vital link between the staff and the students. This link is primarily a two way communication channel, allowing you to present the feelings, ideas and thoughts of your fellow students, and enabling you to feedback the thoughts, feelings and responses of the academic team responsible for teaching your programmes. The Reps act also as a kind of 'watchdog' to ensure that academic promises are kept and that staff do what they promise they will do in documents such as the student charter.

➔ **What do the staff want the Reps to do?**

In most Departments, the main arena for discussion and feedback are the Student Staff Liaison meetings (SSLs). These meetings are chaired by the Programme Director or Head of Year and usually include all relevant teaching staff and any other people who may be involved in the delivery of programmes (i.e. library staff). Therefore, the way in which you present the consensus of your year / programme group at these meetings is vital.

These meetings can often produce real change in the way programmes are delivered. Along with the end of year module or programme evaluations, staff members can get a feel for what the students respond to and find most academically useful. For example, in one programme, the end of year examination was moved to Christmas time and the programme delivered in its entirety in the first term as a result of feedback from Student Reps and students. This change took place for the following years students – whose feedback suggested that they would prefer it the way it was, and so one year after the original change, it was moved straight back! Thus, the Reps can produce real change for the better, when the Reps have taken the time to gather feedback from the programme students and delivered this information in a clear and concise way.

➔ **What do the staff NOT want the Reps to do?**

Student representation is a vital role in the running of every Department. Sometimes, however, too much can be expected of the role, and the role can be abused (or used as an opportunity to air ones personal gripes, as opposed to representing the student body). For example, student sports take place on a Wednesday afternoon and the post match party takes place on a Wednesday evening; this is not grounds

for 'not having classes on a Thursday morning'. The point is that the issues raised and discussed should be centred around the academic aspects of the degree (as us psychologists say – 'controlling the controllables'). The role of the Rep is not one to argue an individual mark on an assignment that one is unhappy with; rather the role is one that is about helping the staff to deliver their programmes in the most effective way. As such, here are some 'helpful' tips from a current academic, previous student representative and current student / staff liaison officer:

- Try to ensure that you are in fact representing the students by getting a general idea of what the students feel.
- Try to avoid personal comments e.g. 'his lectures are terrible, but hers are great!' It would be better to attempt to find out what makes some lectures seemingly more stimulating that others e.g. 'the general feeling on the programme is that lectures on PowerPoint are more easily followed than those delivered on whiteboard'.
- Consider the comments that you are making – are they realistic? A minibar at the back of the lecture theatre would be welcomed by everyone, but it's not going to happen; often, those kind of comments only serve to undermine your credibility in the eyes of the staff.
- Be honest – if your issues & concerns are delivered without a personal tone, then the staff will listen to your comments and will appreciate your candid nature.
- Make notes in the meetings in order to allow you to effectively report back to your student group.
- Follow up any action points decided upon in meetings – in this way, we can ensure that any loops are closed.
- In some departments, there is a student staff liaison officer who may be charged with supervising your role in the departmental context – if you have any queries, this person should be a valuable resource.
- Take it seriously but enjoy it! Being a student representative is an opportunity to represent your fellow students in the organisation and delivery of education. Thinking up one or two 'neat sounding' things to say the night before the meeting is not really doing justice to yourself, the staff or your fellow students. In addition, the minutes of these meetings are often requested by external bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) when they audit a Department / Institution – thus your role is indirectly important to the running of the entire institution!

Being a student representative is something that you should be proud of (and be proud to write on your CV). But like anything else at University, what you get out of it is directly proportional to the effort you put in; unlike your degree though, you are representing more than your own interests. This is one of the reasons why this training happens, and also the reason that there is a Student Representation Coordinator and student staff liaison officers in some Departments – so that you are supported in your role and can do a good job for all concerned.

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The Role of a Student Rep

It's all in the name; Student Reps represent the students on their programme! Student Reps are the most important link between students, the Students' Union and the University. Student Reps let us know what students think what they want and they are pivotal in getting out there and delivering for students. Student Reps talk to the rest of the students on their programme, finding out what their educational wants and needs are and they then feed this information back to the Students' Union and the University. They are a vital component in the representation structure, ensuring that the student voice is heard. After all, it's your education and you deserve the best!

Student Reps are involved in all aspects of representation, from informal liaison with programme tutors and directors through to sitting on academic committees and working groups. There are around 500 Student Reps across the University and they have a real impact on the student experience. Without them, things just wouldn't get better!

Some of the key functions of the role include:

- Representing the views of the students within your programme and self publicising, making sure the students you represent know who you are;
- Consulting with students to find out their opinions on your department, your programme and the student experience at the University;
- Feeding back the outcomes of meetings to students and following up on any agreed action points;
- Feeding back to students, members of staff, other Student Reps, the Students' Union and appropriate committees where necessary;
- Attending meetings, sending apologies if you are not able to be present. Ensuring student needs are considered in all decisions;
- Attending Student Rep training;
- Referring issues, where necessary, to the Students' Union;
- Keeping in contact with the Students' Union;
- Having the power to influence and really make a difference!

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Benefits of Being a Student Rep

Transferable Skills:

There are countless skills to develop as a Student Rep. Negotiation, diplomacy, problem solving and communication skills are just a few of them. These are all skills that can benefit you in your studies, personal life and in your future career.

Employability:

Being a Student Rep can prove to be very impressive on your Curriculum Vitae (CV). Prospective employers want to see more these days than just a qualification. If you can show you've done something outside the parameters of your programme then this will prove you can juggle different responsibilities.

Make a Difference:

Being a Student Rep allows you to get actively involved in the decisions made about your education. It's a great way of increasing the quality and standards within the University and can benefit you, your peers and future students.

Make Friends:

There's no better way of making friends with other students than being a Student Rep. It gives you the opportunity to approach them for their opinions and help them with issues they are having difficulties with. It has the potential to dramatically improve your communication and people skills and at the end of the year, the chances are, you'll feel more confident talking to people you've never met before.

Access to Full Training and Fun, Interactive Development Days:

The Students' Union offers full training to all Student Reps to ensure that you are fully equipped to be able to carry out the role effectively. Additionally, throughout the year there are plans for fun, interactive development days for you to be able to reflect and build upon your skills.

Students' Union Incentives:

There are a whole host of Students' Union incentives that are being developed to make being a Student Rep a fantastic experience, including the chance to win different awards for your achievements throughout the year.

Knowing Your Boundaries

It is important that you are clear on the areas that you can deal with as a Student Rep, and those that you can't.

Issues Student Reps CAN deal with:

- *Teaching Resources:* availability of lecture rooms, lecture facilities, room facilities, disabled access etc.

- *Teaching Methods: d*o students have the opportunity to experience different learning environments such as small seminar groups as well as lectures? Do lecturers make use of a variety of teaching methods such as board-work, OHP, flipchart, PowerPoint, Video etc? Do the teaching methods used exclude students with specific learning difficulties?

- *Study Resources: a*vailability of books and other resources in the library, access to workstations, facilities etc.

- *Programme content & structure:* does the programme match the description in the programme handbook? Do lectures and seminars focus on the important topics? Have changes been made to the programme without warning or consultation? Is the workload distributed reasonably throughout the programme? Are the feedback mechanisms clear and appropriate?

- *Hidden programme costs:* have students been given adequate information about the costs of photocopying, attending field trips, extra materials that are needed as an essential part of completing the programme etc? Are the charges reasonable?

- *Access to facilities after hours:* does the University provide adequate services to part-time students and students who need to use facilities outside 9am-5pm (this includes access to food outlets etc)?

- *Communication of issues:* are students aware of what is happening in the University & Students' Union and are they happy about the way this information is disseminated?

- *Comparisons between Department and/or Faculties:* sometimes students hear of an area of good practice within another Department or Faculty and want their Student Rep to get it introduced in their own Department or Faculty.

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Knowing Your Boundaries

Issues Student Reps CANNOT deal with:

Individual student needs: it is not a Student Rep's role to represent students in relation to their marks or individual needs. Students who have concerns about their grades should speak in the first instance to their subject leader, if unsatisfied with the response; they can be referred to the Students' Union. Students may also turn to you in relation to personal emotional problems, financial problems, accommodation problems or Visa/Immigration problems. No matter how prepared you may feel to deal with such issues, DON'T! It is not in the best interests of yourself or the student for you to do this.

As a Student Rep you don't have to take work on single-handed. There's a huge network of University and Students' Union staff to help you deal with issues or take cases on for you, so make sure you utilise them!

Other people are paid to give specialist advice so don't be tempted to do this yourself! And don't take on every minor issue that is thrown your way – students should be encouraged to tackle problems on their own wherever possible and appropriate!

Later in this handbook you will find a list of departments that you may want to refer students to, in order for them to deal with their individual needs.

The Structure of the Student Rep System

1. A student has an issue with their programme or a suggestion that they think would make it better.
2. They make contact with their elected Student Rep.
3. The elected Student Rep, who has been trained by the Students' Union, then uses their relevant knowledge and skills to resolve the issue or put forward the suggestion through various routes.
4. These routes could include SSL Meetings, building cases with other student complaints, carrying out research, lobbying Heads of Department and campaigning on campus amongst others.
5. Throughout this whole process, the Student Rep has access to full support from the Students' Union to deliver the best results for students.
6. As a result of all of this, problems should be resolved, students are happier and able to focus on what matters. The Students' Union is also able to share this experience with others to help more students.

Communicating Effectively

The most important skill you will need as a Student Rep is communication. Without it things can quickly grind to a halt. Additionally, making sure students know who you are is vital in being able to communicate with them effectively.

So, here are some hints on how to make sure you communicate effectively.

- Ask your lecturer to give you a few minutes either at the beginning or at the end of a lecture so you can explain what your role is and talk about current issues. Do this regularly and you will become a well known face in your department and your peers will know who to come to.

- Most departments have notice board space; ask the administrator if you can use this to advertise the issues that you have been raising and any outcomes from action that you have taken.

- Most departments are happy to send out emails on behalf of Student Reps and this is a great way of reaching all of the students on your programme. Speak to the department administrator and s/he should be able to arrange this for you. Alternatively you can make use of the CLIC Learn for your programme, and send an email to all students, although use of this tool should be in a professional manner.

- You could hold 'surgeries' where students can drop by somewhere convenient to speak with you about issues that they believe need to be raised; just make sure you publicise your surgery widely!

- Set up groups on Facebook or other social networking sites and keep updating members with outcomes of meetings and campaigns. Although we strongly advise that these social networking sites are used responsibly and with a professional attitude.

- Ask staff in the department if you can have a folder on your CLIC Learn advertising Student Reps. Most departments now have a virtual Learning Forum so get creative on how you can use it!

- Produce a brief newsletter once a term to keep peers informed of what you and other Student Reps are achieving. The more students see how active you are, the more they will want to use you!

- If you do not have one already ask for a pigeon hole somewhere in the department in order to allow students the ability to leave you notes in cases where they are unable to speak to you in person.

- Do not under-estimate the nature of informal chats either on coffee breaks or when you are waiting for a lecture to start. It is only natural that issues about your programme will crop up.

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Dealing with Meetings

All Student Reps have a common goal, representation. They attend SSL meetings with their academic tutors and voice the opinions of students studying on their programme. This doesn't take up much of your time but is extremely beneficial for development and ensuring your views are heard.

What do I need to know about the meeting?

The exact composition and remit of SSLs varies across Departments and Faculties, with some meetings being more formal than others. It is therefore important to do some research before your first meeting; this may involve talking to other Student Reps, the Students' Union or the Staff who sit on the meeting.

Find out from your Department what the practice is regarding some of these issues:

- Who attends the meeting
- Who chairs the meeting
- Who takes the minutes of the meeting
- How many meetings there are each year
- How will you find out about the date, time and place of the meeting
- Is there a set agenda for the meeting or will you be invited to add agenda items
- Will a senior member of staff in the department speak to students before the meeting informally
- Is it appropriate that relevant staff and students may be invited to give information about a particular issue

What do I need to do before a meeting?

It will also be necessary to do some preparation for the meeting, as a Student Rep you should:

- Ask students what their problems and comments are. Get as much feedback as possible and attempt, where possible, to get a balance of positive and negative comments.
- Prepare for meetings by reading and understanding the minutes of previous meetings.
- Read the agenda – are there any items you need more information on either from the Students' Union, the University or your fellow classmates?
- Meet with other Student Reps on the committee and let them know in advance what issues you wish to discuss. If necessary, have items placed on the agenda, as this tactic is better than simply raising issues under any other business.

- Make sure you have sent your apologies and explain your absence if you are unable to go.

When reading the papers write down any initial questions you may have; always highlight important sections; and identify what you want to do or say on each item.

What do I need to do during the meeting?

- *Be punctual:* it is important to arrive to a meeting on time, if not a little early. This will not only help you come across more professional, it will give you the chance to informally chat to members of the committee beforehand, which will allow you to get to know them better.

- *Know who is who:* you'll find members of the committee more responsive to you when you address them by name. It's much more effective to say *"I agree with what John said…"* rather than *"I agree with what the man sitting opposite in the red shirt said".* The Chair should ask all members of the committee to introduce themselves at the start of your first meeting, if this does not happen you can always ask the Chair to do this.

- *Time your contributions:* be aware of the flow of a meeting to gauge when it will be the most appropriate time to raise your point. If you miss the time, or it never arises, you can try again during the "Any Other Business (AOB)" section at the end of the meeting.

- *Listen:* actively listen to what people are saying, either make mental notes of the key things they say or jot them down. Encourage others with the body language you use – for example use verbal nods to agree with someone.

- *Report back:* make sure you make the members of the committee aware of any work you have done or progress you have made on any action you have taken since the last meeting.

- *Participate:* as a Student Rep you have the right be at the meeting, a right to vote and a right to be heard. Remember that your view is important and you will often be putting forward a viewpoint that may not otherwise be considered.

- *Never be afraid to ask:* there's little worse than not being able to follow the discussion because you've not understood the use of jargon or an acronym. Ask straight away for an explanation, it's likely to be an oversight from a group of people familiar with having used the terminology for a long time. You'll probably find that other newer members (and sometimes established group members as well) are relieved that you were bold enough to ask something of which they were also unsure.

- *Make your own notes at meetings:* even where minutes are taken, it is still a good idea to make a few notes as the meeting goes along. You may need to take action before the minutes are circulated, and it's a way of checking your understanding of the meeting against the minutes when they arrive. They will also help you remember action that you need to take action that others have agreed to which you can chase after the meeting. Your own notes will also be an aide-memoir to complete your feedback forms.

- *Do not be scared to put the opposing view:* have your say, be clear and rational. Avoid getting angry, irritated or loud, as this will undermine the point you are trying to make.

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- *Have a positive attitude:* you are more likely to be listened to if you present solutions to problems than if you are just seen as complaining about everything.

- *Only speak when you need to:* when you feel passionate about a particular issue there's a danger that you'll jump in on the discussion at times. This can alienate people, especially when they don't share the same passion as you. Take your turn to speak in sensible "chunks", so as to let others contribute as well.

- *Let issues go:* there are times when you need to be fairly persistent, but try to steer clear of being the person that goes on about the same issue at every meeting; it will dilute your effectiveness at future meetings.

- *Cultivate allies:* the nature of group dynamics is that various alliances will form between individual members of larger groups. Make this work for you: cultivate allies with those who appear similarly minded to you (you'll notice them expressing verbal or non-verbal agreement with your contributions). Talk to them outside of meetings, informal chats can often be one of the most effective ways to help things progress.

What do I need to do after the meeting?

- Always feedback to the students in your Programme and/or Department with what happened at the meeting.

- If necessary, meet with the other Student Reps who attended to discuss any group action you need to take.

- Carry out any action you have agreed to.

- File away your committee papers carefully for next time.

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Referring Students

As mentioned previously there's a huge network of University and Students' Union staff to help you deal with issues or take cases on for you. Below there is a list of these and what they are there to do.

The Students' Union

The Students' Union President represents students at all levels of University Management Teams. All elected Sabbaticals need to know that what they are saying is what students want, and so they're keen to support you in your role as a Student Rep. We also employ full time staff to help and advise Student Reps, most notably the Students' Union Membership Services Manager.

Additionally, the Students' Union offers a completely impartial and confidential Advice Service. It's important that you let your students know that there are people within the Students' Union who they can see about individual problems. In the Students' Union Building on the St Georges Rd, Canterbury we have a full time member of staff, Ellie Martin, who is our Advice Centre Coordinator who can help with academic appeals www.ccsu.co.uk/appeals, plagiarism panels www.ccsu.co.uk/plagiarism, student disciplinary and complaints procedures. Check out www.ccsu.co.uk/advice If Ellie Martin can't help then she will be able to put students in touch with members of the Student Health and Wellbeing team who can.

Student Health and Wellbeing

It's also really important that you know what is on offer within the University. Student Health and Wellbeing offers support to all students at the University across all Departments within the following main areas:

- Disability and Equal Opportunities Advice
- Financial Advice
- International Advice
- Dyslexia and Neruodiversity Advice
- Mental Health Advice
- Counselling Services
- Study Skills Support – including ICT Support
- Careers and Employability (including Volunteering opportunities)

Student Health and Wellbeing are based in the Augustine House Building which can be found as part of the Canterbury Campus, but there are also services available at Broadstairs, Medway and Salmons where needed. There are also web pages that offer extensive advice and help at http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/student-support-and-guidance/ Please take time to find out what is on offer and feel free to refer a student to Student Health and Wellbeing when it's appropriate. The best way to contact them and other departments such as Finance, Registry or Accommodation is through the i-zone. They have a main reception at Augustine House and also at Medway and Broadstairs but can also be contacted on: 01227 782222 or i-zone@canterbury.ac.uk

Other Students' Union Support Available To Reps

Training Opportunities
The Students' Union will provide you with training so you are fully prepared for how to be an effective Student Rep.

You will be able to find out more details about times, dates and locations for Student Rep training on the website, CLIC Learn and via email.

Students' Union Website
The Student Reps section of the Students' Union website contains information for Student Reps, resources from training sessions and information on future training sessions - just visit www.ccsu.co.uk/studentreps

Full Time Staff Support

As mentioned earlier on in this handbook, the Students' Union employs a full time member of staff who has responsibility for overseeing the Student Rep System, this is the Students' Union Membership Services Manager. If you have any emergency issues and you need advice from the Students' Union this is the first point of call. Also, if you feel that the Student Rep System isn't working or you think you know of a way to improve it let the Students' Union Membership Services Manager know and she'll see what she can do to change it for the better.

Main Contacts

Silvia Rasca – the Students' Union Membership Services Manager

Silvia should be your first point of contact for all Student Rep queries. She is a staff member in the Students' Union and is responsible for directing and managing the Student Representation System, planning, writing and coordinating the training and development of Student Reps and services the scheme from the Students' Union point of view.
student.reps@canterbury.ac.uk

Phil Mooney – Students' Union President

Phil is an elected student officer and currently holds the post of Students' Union President for this academic year. He is the main spokesperson for the Students' Union, representing the views of Christ Church students to the University and external organisations. He heads up and supports all of the democratic structures of the Students' Union including the Student Rep System and Students' Union Council. He is also the lead representative contact for Christ Church students this year, working with the University and building relationships with senior staff.
su.president@canterbury.ac.uk

Jargon Buster

Agenda
This is a list of topics that are going to be discussed at a meeting, in the order that they are going to be brought up. You should receive this around a week before the meeting is due to take place.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)
The biggest of all meetings held by the Students' Union, the AGM is your opportunity to question the student officers on their work and to discuss and pass policy for the Students' Union.

Apologies
Apologies are sent to the committee secretary before a meeting takes place, at the beginning of the meeting the apologies that have been sent in should be read out to the rest of the committee. If you cannot attend a meeting for any reason you must always send your apologies.

Chair of the Meeting
The chair of a meeting is responsible for ensuring that it runs smoothly, to time and as effectively as possible. In summary, the chair forms the agenda and makes sure it is stuck to, ensures that everyone has the chance to speak, keeps the group focused on the agenda so as not to go off on a tangent and summarises discussions to key action points.

Matters Arising
This refers to any items that were discussed at the last meeting that has an action point or follow on that do not appear elsewhere on the agenda. Matters arising should be used for updates and progress chasing.

Minutes
This is an important check to make sure that the issues that were discussed at the previous meeting were recorded accurately. This part of the meeting can be used to correct any errors or omissions, but should not be used to discuss items again.

Sabbatical
A Sabbatical Officer is a full time elected officer who either takes time out of their studies, or who works for a year after their degree. The four officers are elected in the March elections and serve one full year of office. They can choose to stand for re-election for any position if they wish, but can only complete two full terms in total. Any registered Canterbury Christ Church University student can run for Sabbatical.

Canterbury Christ Church STUDENTS' UNION

Acronym Buster

AOB – Any Other Business
Any Other Business is the section where items can be brought up that has not appeared on the agenda and is often abbreviated to AOB. This could be a general query, an important issue that has arisen since the agenda has been published or information about a forthcoming event. It is important to note that it is not good practice to bring up a controversial item in AOB; these should be put on the agenda as a specific item.

CCCU – Canterbury Christ Church University
This is the abbreviation for Canterbury Christ Church University.

CCSU – Christ Church Students' Union
This is an abbreviation for Christ Church Students' Union.

FE – Further Education
You will often hear the Union refer to some courses as FE courses and the FE stands for Further Education. Further education is post-compulsory education (in addition to that received at secondary school). It may be at the same level, at a higher level, or at a lower level than secondary education, anything from basic training to Higher National Diploma or Foundation Degree.

HE – Higher Education
You will also often hear the Union refer to HE and this stands for Higher Education. Higher education is education that is provided by universities, vocational universities, community colleges, liberal arts colleges, technical colleges, and other collegial institutions that award academic degrees, such as career colleges.

HEFCE – Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEFCE is a non-departmental public body of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (previously the Department for Education and Skills) in the United Kingdom, which has been responsible for the distribution of funding to Universities and Colleges of Higher and Further Education in England since 1992. It was created by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

NUS – National Union of Students
NUS are a national voluntary membership organisation that is made up of a confederation of local Student Unions throughout the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland which have chosen to affiliate and which pay a membership fee. They campaign on issues that affect students nationally, such as tuition fees or council tax.

Canterbury Christ Church STUDENTS' UNION

Additional Information

The University has a whole host of official policies for the way things should be conducted at this institution ranging from how your feedback should be conducted right through to how to make an academic appeal. You should be able to find this in your handbooks that you are given at the start of your programme. But if you don't, or you can't find your handbook and you would like to know more please feel free to come and ask!

Do you have a Facebook account? Do use it as a networking tool to communicate with others on your programme or in your department but please do be professional. We do not wish our students to be openly critical or mocking in a public forum where they may be liable to legal action. Beware but do enjoy and communicate!

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to gain University recognition for the work that you do. All Student Reps are entitled to claim volunteering hours for Rep related activities; which could lead to a University recognised award which looks good on the CV and helps you to articulate the extend of your extracurricular participation. For further details please contact volunteer@canterbury.ac.uk You can register online as a volunteer at www.canterbury.ac.uk/volunteering you can then log all the hours that you spend as a Rep, once you reach 10 hours you can claim a free prize. The University then offers an awards ceremony at the end of the year with a BBQ party and the Lord Mayor of Canterbury presents students with University accredited certificates for the hours that they have spent volunteering.

Student Health and Wellbeing offers support to all students at the University across all Departments within the following main areas:

- Disability and Equal Opportunities Advice
- Financial Advice
- International Advice
- Dyslexia and Neruodiversity Advice
- Mental Health Advice
- Counselling Services
- Study Skills Support – including ICT Support
- Careers and Employability (including Volunteering opportunities)

http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/student-support-and-guidance/

The best way to contact them and other departments such as Finance, Registry or Accommodation is through the i-zone. They have a main reception at Augustine House and also at Medway and Broadstairs but can also be contacted on: 01227 782222 or i-zone@canterbury.ac.uk

CHRIST CHURCH
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Please join the Student Reps facebook group 'Christ Church Students' Union Student Reps'

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www.ccsu.co.uk/studentreps