

Postgraduate Academic Department Representatives “Dep Reps”

Role and Responsibilities

This document outlines typical duties expected of the role, and may be subject to change.

Summary of role

Dep Reps are elected members who are responsible receiving and collating student feedback from Year Reps in their department and raising it to departmental staff and GSU Academic & Welfare Officers as appropriate. They are expected to proactively pursue improvements to their course on their students’ behalf and to provide updates on their progress to their cohorts.

Relationships with: GSU Academic & Welfare Officers, Year Reps, Education & Welfare team, Departmental Staff (Course Leaders, Directors of Postgraduate Studies (DPS), admin staff etc.)

Responsible for: PG Year Reps

Responsible to: GSU Academic & Welfare Officers, Deputy President (Education)

Key responsibilities and duties

It is expected that all Academic Representatives attend the induction training to provide them with the knowledge and awareness required in order to fulfil their role.

- Receive**
 - Ensure they are known to their Year Reps and students in their department and provide mechanisms for students to voice their feedback
- Research**
 - Carry out appropriate research and gather necessary data to ensure that any case made/representation action taken is backed up by evidence
 - Contact Department Reps from other departments to share best practice
- Represent**
 - Ensure that students’ views are fairly and inclusively represented
 - Attend and submit items for discussion to Staff-Student Committees, Education and Representation Board and other meetings deemed necessary
 - Establish and maintain good relationships with relevant staff members
- Record**
 - Keep a careful record of any actions, developments or evidence gathered to enable accurate and fair reporting and to enable a high-quality handover
- Report**
 - Keep the students within department up to date with any changes, developments or progress made
 - Be in regular communication with their GSU Academic & Welfare Officers and with the Education & Representation Coordinator at the Union
- Leadership**
 - Lead Year Rep team, meet with them regularly to discuss feedback from students, and help them to address issues that they receive
- Safety and Confidentiality**
 - Refer urgent issues directly to a relevant member of College or Union staff, especially if you are concerned about a student’s safety
 - Ensure student confidentiality is maintained at all times unless agreed otherwise or you believe the student to be a danger to themselves or others
 - Make it clear to students that you cannot provide counselling, support or advice, however you can signpost to relevant services

All representatives are expected to provide a handover to their successor.

Skills and knowledge required

- Thorough knowledge of the Academic Representation Network structure
- Good understanding of College's workings as a whole and knowledge of available support services both internally and externally
- Attend relevant training courses as required in order to fulfil the role
- Have an understanding of the Union and its structures
- Know who to contact in emergencies and if you have concerns regarding a student's safety
- Being aware of and adhering to personal limitations and limitations of the role, seeking support for oneself regarding pressures of the role from Union staff

Training and support

- Academic Rep Induction
- Ongoing support from the Education & Representation Coordinator
- Rep Development Day
- Supplementary Training
- Imperial Plus workshops

Time commitment and availability

- Departmental Reps should expect to attend in the region of fifteen meetings per academic year. These are usually held at the campus where the bulk of their course is administered so should require no more travel than would be expected on a day to day basis. Meetings typically last 1-1.5 hours.
- Departmental Reps would be expected to catch-up with Year Reps in advance of Staff-Student Committees and Education and Representation Board meetings to establish what discussion points are being raised by students. This can be informal and last about an hour.
- Representatives should be available by email and expect to be approached to meet for a short time with students when requested. Email correspondence should be answered within a reasonable time frame.
- Work relating to the position should take on average no more than a 3-5 hours per week. The work volume will vary during the course of the academic year and term by term.

It is recognised that students are first and foremost at Imperial to study or research and that this must be prioritised. Students who feel their studies are being compromised, are struggling or feel they are spending too much time filling the role should speak to the Education & Representation Coordinator (icu.representation@imperial.ac.uk)