

University of Limerick Students' Union

Bye Law 7: Representatives

6. Purpose

This Bye Law outlines the role of representatives, the different types of representatives, and the various representation groups/forums. More information about the functions of the representation groups and forums can be found in Bye Law 1: Rights, Decision-making and Definitions, Bye Law 2: Student Council and Bye Law 3: Executive.

7. Definition of a Student Representative

- a. The role of a Student Representative is to ensure the student voice is heard by using democratic forums to gather feedback from the student body, and then in turn discuss this feedback with University staff and student committees.
- b. The purpose of representation to lobby and advocate for a better student experience in all areas, academic, social, welfare, equality, and diversity.

8. Types of Student Representatives

As a student representative body, we support the role and function of student governance. The primary bodies responsible are Council, Executive and the Board of Directors, and the following all emanate from the constitution and Council: student officer elections, Council and department representatives, interest-group councillors and class representatives.

- a. 4 full-time Student Officers - President; Deputy President Welfare; Vice President Academic; and Vice President Diversity & Inclusion.
- b. 13 Executive Officers - 4 Student Officers and 9 part-time student representatives: Clubs Officer; Societies Officer; Postgraduate Student Union (PSU) Officer; Student Council Chairperson; Student Events Chairperson; UL Experience Chairperson; Equality & Diversity Chairperson; and Faculties Officer; and Oifigeach na Gaeilge.
- c. 54 Student Council members: 12 Executive Officers; 25 Department Representatives; and 21 Interest Group Councillors. Each Department in the university has one Representative. The Interest Group Councillors include:
 - Sports Councillor; Activities Councillor; and Entertainments Councillor. These positions come under the remit of the Student Events Chair.

- Equal Opportunities Councillor; Mature Student Councillor; Disabilities Councillor; LGBTQI Councillor; Home International Councillor; Visiting International Councillor; Sanctuary Representative; Parent Representative; Mincéir/Traveller Representative; and Student Carer Representative. These positions come under the remit of the Equality & Diversity Chair.
- Volunteering Councillor; Professional Placement Councillor; Campus Facilities Councillor; Student Services Councillor; Community Councillor; Experience Councillor; Cooperative Education Councillor; and Sustainability Representative. These positions come under the remit of the UL Experience Chair.

In addition, Student Council Deputy Chairperson and 4 Faculty Representatives are elected from within Student Council.

d. Approximately 250 Class Representatives

9. Role of Representatives

- a. Every elected representative within the University of Limerick, part-time and full-time, is elected to their role to represent a cohort of students. The union recognises that it is impossible to determine why a candidate wins an election and therefore the union believes the mandate held by the office is the only mandate the elected representative is required to fulfil. Thus, all elected representatives will not assume that they were elected on the basis of their campaign promises or manifestos alone and will not necessarily be expected or authorised to fulfil these promises.
- b. Student Officers are appointed to represent student opinion and advocate for change by sitting on a variety of UL committees. They refer students to full-time staff for support, advice and assistance on all matters, from grants, examination fees, lectures, library and computer facilities, accommodation, childcare, study and health to finances and social welfare. They run campaigns to highlight key issues and lobby national elected representatives on the same
- c. Student Officers also inherit strategic goals from the UL Student Life strategic plan, that will inform a body of their work. These goals will have been co-created by staff and previous officers to ensure the student voice is at the heart of UL Student Life.
- d. More information on the Student Officer posts can be found on the UL Student Life website. These job descriptions are reviewed and updated annually by Student Officers and a HR Consultant. Any changes that are made are brought to Student Council.

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- e. More information about the part-time Executive Officer posts can be found in Appendix One of this Bye Law.
- f. A Clubs Officer is elected from the Clubs & Societies Council to sit on UL Student Life Executive. This person must be a club representative and their role is to be the voice for all Clubs.
- g. A Societies Officer is elected from the Clubs & Societies Council to sit on UL Student Life Executive. This person must be a society representative and their role is to be the voice for all Societies.
- h. The PSU executive shall nominate a representative to the executive. This normally is the PSU President but can be any nominee from the PSU executive. Their role is to be the voice for all postgraduate students.

10. Class Representatives

- a. Each Class Representative (Class Rep) shall represent the interests and views of his or her Class on the Class Representative Forum.
 - b. Class Reps shall keep their Class in touch with the business of the Union through their respective Departmental Representative.
 - c. Where a large class has more than one Class Rep, the Class Reps shall co-operate with one another in acting for their class.
 - d. A detailed job description of a Class Rep can be found on the election page of the UL Student Life website.
- e. Each year the Union oversees the election of more than 250 class representatives. There is no definitive number of class reps. While the student body grows so does the need for representatives. The following is a guideline of the number of Class Reps for each class, however the Union recognises the importance of the student voice and responds to the needs of faculty staff and students, therefore where there is justified cause or reasoning, we facilitate more representation.
- 1-25 students 1 class representative

- 26-50 students 2 class representatives
 - 51-100 students 3 class representatives
 - 101+ students 4 class representatives
- f. Class Reps shall be elected by and from the members of each Class. Every student is eligible to stand as a Class Rep for their class. All elections take place online through the UL Student Life website. A candidate shall be voted in, if they collect 10 digital signatures from that class or a majority of the class. If the candidate has less than 10 members in their class, they are advised to contact the Leadership and Representation Office for guidance.
- g. The nomination period for the Class Reps annual elections opens in Week 1 of Semester 1 and will run for 3 weeks. During this time, the Leadership & Representation Office will run a recruitment campaign, promoting the benefits and importance of the student voice.
- h. Election results will be announced in Week 4 and the close of nominations for the unfilled positions of Class Representative shall be Wednesdays at 5pm in weeks 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 for each semester. If more than one candidate is elected for a role, an election is necessary. The election is organised by the Leadership & Representation Office and consists of a hust in the classroom between the candidates. This ideally should take place within 5 days of the results.
- i. The term of office of a Class Rep shall cease at the end of the spring semester except in the instances where the Class Rep is on external placement. Class Representatives on external placement where possible still fulfil their duty by highlighting any issues that may arise whilst on placement.
- j. Any complaint received regarding a Class Rep (in their role as class rep only), will be investigated by the LRO. If a decision needs to be made to remove the class rep from their role, this will be brought by the Faculties and Academic Officer to Student Council. UL Student Union does not deal with complaints about students and will refer the student to the University of Limerick Complaints policy.
- k. All Class Reps are obliged to attend The National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP). This program was launched in April 2016 by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI). NStEP aims to strengthen student engagement in decision-making across Irish higher education. The Programme seeks to champion a strong culture of partnership between students and staff through practice-based projects, training, and capacity building, as well as informing policy developments.

In addition to NStEP, the Leadership & Representation Office coordinates the delivery of Leadership Modules.

11. Class Representatives Forum

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- a. The purpose of the Class Representatives (Class Reps) Forum is to open the channel of communication between Department Representatives and the Class Representatives within their respective departments.
5. Class Reps Forum consists of: Vice President Academic; Faculties Officer; all Department Representatives; and all Class Representatives.
- b. Class Representatives shall be directly elected by the students in their constituency as outlined in section 6 above.
- c. All students shall have Participant Status at Class Reps Forum but can be asked to leave at the request of the Chairperson. Class Reps Forum may grant Participant Status or Observer Status on any other person as deemed appropriate.
- d. There will be two Class Reps Forums per Semester.

Appendix One

Part-time Executive Officer Role Descriptions

1. Student Council Chair

The role of Student Council Chair shall include:

- 1° Chairing Students' Council
- 2° Chairing monthly meetings of Council Chairs
- 3° Responsible for approval of agenda for Council Chairs meetings
- 4° Responsible, with Faculty Reps for the development of Student Council
- 5° Attending scheduled Executive meetings
- 6° Attending Board of Directors' meetings
- 7° Liaising with the Democracy Development Officer on all matters relating to Council
- 8° Maintaining a close working relationship with the other Council Chairs
- 9° Working as part of the Student Life team to ensure effective democracy and engagement
- 10° Sitting as a Director for the Union on the Board of Directors and therefore on submission of their nomination form and subsequent election to the position will be accepting to be a Director of University of Limerick Students Union CLG.

2. Student Events Chair

The role of Student Events Chair shall include:

- 1° Representing the recreation agenda
- 2° Seeking the views of students relating to their experience of recreational activity within the Union and University
- 3° Keeping informed of recreation developments internally, nationally, and internationally
- 4° Establishing and communicating the views of students to the relevant stakeholders within the Union and University
- 5° Arranging monthly meetings with the Councillors in your interest group
- 6° Acting as chair at monthly group meetings
- 7° Addressing issues that arise with the Head of relevant services such the Director of Sport and Recreation and any department heads for whom there is no corresponding Councillor as required or at least twice per semester
- 8° Maintaining a close working relationship with the other Council Chairs
- 9° Coordinating events aimed at promoting recreational activity with the Working assistance of the Union's Events and Promotion Manager

- 10° Liaising with the Chair of Council to ensure information passes to all students
- 11° Promoting Union campaigns and engagement amongst students
- 12° Maintaining a log of all issues arising relating to recreation, their status and date of resolution to be sent to the President in weeks 4, 8 and 12 of each semester, or more frequently as necessary
- 13° Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum meetings and relevant Council sub-committee meetings
- 14° as part of the Student Life team to ensure effective democracy and engagement

3. Equality and Diversity Chair

The role of Equality and Diversity Chair shall include:

- 1. Representing the equal opportunities agenda
- 2. Seeking the views of students relating to their experience of equality of opportunity within the Union and University
- 3. Keeping yourself informed of equal opportunities developments internally, nationally, and internationally
- 4. Offering and providing support to the councillors in your interest group, encouraging and supporting them in organising and running initiatives and/or events of their own.
- 5. Maintaining a close working relationship with the other Council Chairs
- 6. Supporting events aimed at promoting equal opportunities with the assistance of the Union's Events and Engagement Team and the VP Diversity and Inclusion
- 7. Liaising with the Chair of Council to ensure information passes to all students
- 8. Promoting Union campaigns and engagement amongst students
- 9. Maintaining a log of all issues arising relating to equal opportunities, their status and date of resolution, and keeping the VP Diversity and Inclusion informed on these issues throughout the semester.
- 10. Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum Meetings, and relevant Council sub-committee meetings
- 11. Working as part of the Student Life team to ensure effective democracy and engagement

4. UL Experience Chair

The role of UL Experience Chair shall include:

- 1° Representing the UL experience agenda
- 2° Seeking the views of students relating to their overall experience of the Union and University

- 3° Keeping yourself informed of student experience developments internally, nationally, and internationally
- 4° Establishing and communicating the views of students to the relevant stakeholders within the Union and University
- 5° Arranging monthly meetings with the Councillors in your interest group
- 6° Acting as chair at monthly group meetings
- 7° Addressing issues that arise with the Head of relevant services such the Director of Student Affairs and any department heads for whom there is no corresponding Councillor as required or at least twice per semester
- 8° Maintaining a close working relationship with the other Council Chairs
- 9° Coordinating events aimed at developing an insight into what students' ideal UL experience would be with the assistance of the Union's Events and Promotion Manager
- 10° Liaising with the Chair of Council to ensure information passes to all students
- 11° Promoting Union campaigns and engagement amongst students
- 12° Maintaining a log of all issues arising relating to the UL experience, their status and date of resolution to be sent to the relevant Student Officer in weeks 4, 8 and 12 of each semester, or more frequently as necessary
- 13° Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum Meetings, and relevant Council sub-committee meetings
- 14° Working as part of the Student Life team to ensure effective democracy and engagement

5. Faculties Officer

The role of Faculties Officer shall include:

- 1° Chairing the Academic Working Group
- 2° Sharing some of the responsibility for Department Rep Recruitment
- 3° Ensuring the Faculty Reps make contact with the respective Dean of their Faculty and facilitate meetings between Department Reps and the Dean & ADsAA
- 4° Attending Board of Directors meetings
- 5° Attending Education WG
- 6° Being responsible, with Faculty Reps, for the development of Class Representatives
- 7° Being responsible for signing Student Council Reps in at Council and when unavailable shall delegate that responsibility
- 8° Representing Department Reps on Faculty issue/issues that affect more than one course
- 9° Being answerable to the Academic Officer and Student Council
- 10° Where applicable, attending Faculty Board in place of an absentee Faculty Reps
- 11° Acting as the first point of contact for advising Department Reps
- 12° Keeping in regular contact with Department Reps and Faculty Reps

- 13° Sitting as a Director for the Union on the Board of Directors and therefore on submission of their nomination form and subsequent election to the position will be accepting to be a Director of University of Limerick Students Union CLG.

6. Clubs Officer

The role of Clubs Officer shall include:

- 1° Advising and aiding in the development and organisation of all Clubs.
- 2° Being familiar with the affairs of all clubs on campus and also being responsible for the development of new clubs on campus.
- 3° Sitting on the Club and Societies Executive.
- 4° Being a member of the SU Executive, and shall have specific responsibilities pertaining to their role and responsibilities to Clubs and Societies Executive, the below responsibilities are pertaining to the Clubs Officer's role and responsibilities as a member of the Executive which will include:
- 5° Representing the clubs and Societies agenda to the Executive and Council
- 6° Reporting to the Executive on issues relating to Clubs & Societies Executive and Council and relaying information back to the Clubs and Societies Executive
- 7° Ensuring Section 1.b in Bye Law 5: Clubs and Societies is adhered to by the executive and council.
- 8° Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum Meetings and relevant Council sub-committee meetings and working as part of the Students' Union team to ensure effective democracy and engagement.

7. Societies Officer

The role of Societies Officer shall include:

- 1° Advising and aiding in the development and organisation of all societies.
- 2° Being familiar with the affairs of all societies on campus and shall also be responsible for the development of new societies on campus.
- 3° Sitting on the Club and Societies Executive.
- 4° Being a member of the SU Executive, and shall have specific responsibilities pertaining to their role and responsibilities to Clubs and Societies Executive, the below responsibilities are pertaining to the Societies Officer's role and responsibilities as a member of the Executive which will include:
- 5° Representing the clubs and Societies agenda to the Executive and Council.
- 6° Reporting to the Executive on issues relating to Clubs & Societies Executive and Council and relaying information back to the Clubs and Societies Executive.
- 7° Ensuring Section 1.b of Bye Law 5: Clubs and Societies is adhered to by the executive and council.

- 8° Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum Meetings and relevant Council sub-committee meetings Working as part of the Students' Union team to ensure effective democracy and engagement.

12. Postgraduate Students' Union Executive Nominee

The role of Postgraduate Students' Union Executive Nominee shall include:

- 1° Being a member of the SU Executive, and shall have specific responsibilities pertaining to their role and responsibilities to PSU Executive, the below responsibilities are pertaining to the PSU Executive Nominee's role and responsibilities as a member of the Executive which will include:
- 2° Representing the Postgrad students' agenda to the Executive and Council.
- 3° Reporting to the Executive on issues relating to PSU Executive and Council and relaying information back to the PSU Executive.
- 4° Ensuring Article 22 of the Constitution and the Memorandum of Understanding is adhered to by the executive and council.
- 5° Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum Meetings, and relevant Council sub-committee meetings.
- 6° Working as part of the Student Life team to ensure effective democracy and engagement.

13. Oifigeach na Gaeilge

The role of Oifigeach na Gaeilge shall include:

- 1° Representing the aims and interests of the gaeilgeoir/gaeilgeoirí agenda.
- 2° Promoting the use of the Irish language within the Union.
- 3° Fostering the development of a bilingual culture within the University.
- 4° Affording Irish speakers the opportunity to communicate with Oifigeach na Gaeilge through Irish.
- 5° Establishing and communicating the views of gaeilgeoirí to the relevant stakeholders within the Union and University.
- 6° Maintaining good relations with groups promoting the Irish language within the University.
- 7° Keeping informed of Irish language and cultural developments internally, nationally, and internationally.
- 8° In conjunction with the Events Chair and the Union's Events and Engagement team, organising and coordinating cultural activities including, but not limited to, Seachtain na Gaeilge.
- 9° Chairing the 'Coiste na Gaeilge' Working Group.
- 10° Promoting the presence and development of bilingual signage across campus
- 11° Promoting Union campaigns and engagement amongst students through the medium of Irish where appropriate.

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- 12° Attending all scheduled Council Meetings, Student Forum Meetings, and relevant Council sub-committee meetings as required.
- 13° Reporting to the VP Diversity and Inclusion Officer/
- 14° Working as part of the Student Life team to ensure effective democracy and engagement.