

2016 - 2017

# HE Course Rep Guide



## INTRODUCTION

At Bury College University Centre we know that course reps play a very important part in putting forward students' views and helping to keep standards high.

As a course rep you will have the chance not just to voice your own views, but to act as a spokesperson for everyone else on your course. This gives you the opportunity to make a real impact and help make the experience for all university students even better.

### What's involved?

The role of a course rep is an important one as you are representing the views of everyone on your course. In particular, your responsibilities will include:

- Representing the students on your course when relevant issues arise and, in the first instance at least, raising these issues with the HE coordinator.
- Attending course rep meetings (chaired by the Director of HE or deputy) in order to discuss matters of concern to the student body (as agenda items). "Improving the student experience" will always be an agenda item.
- Reporting back to the students on your course as part of the Course Team Meeting with students.\*
- Working, from time to time, with reps from other universities.
- Preparing, or helping to prepare, reports for external bodies from time to time.

\*Two student will be elected as Lead Reps (see separate role description: note 1).

## YOUR ROLE IN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

It is crucial to Bury College, as it is to you, that our students are properly represented in discussions with tutors and other members of staff. We need course reps to make sure that this communication takes place in a well organised way and that decisions and opinions are properly recorded and acted upon as necessary. In fact the government body known as QAA is explicit in requiring this. Its expectation is as follows:

*Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.*

Source: QAA Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B5: Student Engagement

In other words, we need your insights as users of the system at every stage of your experience of studying here.

These stages are:

- Application and admission
- Induction and transition into higher education
- Programme and curriculum design, delivery and organisation
- Curriculum content
- Teaching delivery

- Learning opportunities
- Learning resources
- Student support and guidance
- Assessment

We currently capture your views in a number of ways, such as module and course surveys and questionnaires, but we also want to talk to you as course reps individually and in groups about your views and about what we can do to improve our courses. This process is referred to as quality enhancement and assurance. To use QAA's terms, all universities and university centres must make sure that they:

- Foster active student participation in their quality systems, including using individual and collective feedback from students
- Implement transparent mechanisms, agreed with students, for the nomination and election of student representatives
- Provide induction and ongoing support for students and staff appropriate to their quality assurance roles
- Monitor, review and enhance the effectiveness of their policies and processes for engaging students in their quality processes

We believe that we comply with these requirements, but we need your help to be sure that we do.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication is the fundamental part of being a course rep. You will be communicating to your peers that you represent, other course reps and University Centre staff by attending the HE Course Rep Meetings.

So it's important that you remember the 7 Cs of communication:

<b>Clear</b>	Speak clearly
<b>Concise</b>	Focus on the message
<b>Correct</b>	Be accurate to avoid misinterpretation
<b>Complete</b>	Disclose all information
<b>Courteous</b>	Be polite and non-threatening and avoid conflict
<b>Constructive</b>	Provide positive solutions
<b>Confident</b>	Don't be afraid to ask for help

## REWARDS

You will develop important skills such as:

- The ability to problem-solve, communicate clearly and work as a member of a team
- Recognising and presenting the views of others
- Clearly putting across your views
- Building on your self-confidence
- Taking the opportunity to make friends

You will also enhance your CV by undertaking this role.

## MEET THE TEAM



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## JOB DESCRIPTION

### **HE Course Rep Job Description**

This volunteer role description is designed to give you an idea of what volunteering in this role involves. It highlights the commitments, skills and benefits you can expect from taking up the role.

<b>Role Title:</b>	HE Course Rep
<b>When:</b>	Term time only
<b>Duration:</b>	For the period of one academic year in the first instance.
<b>Time Commitment:</b>	Flexible: approximately 1 hr per week on average
<b>Purpose or Objectives:</b>	To create a sense of community that helps to develop the student skills and promote wellbeing.
<b>Responsibilities/Requirements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be the voice of students studying on your course</li> <li>• To take active engagement with how decisions are made</li> <li>• To liaise with the HE team and the course tutors on a regular basis</li> <li>• To represent your peers' opinions and interests and address issues that impact the quality of the educational experience at The University Centre by attending meetings and activities</li> <li>• To work with The University Centre staff to develop policies and educate students about important issues within their education</li> <li>• To keep abreast of student issues within your course, through actively engaging the opinion of your peers</li> <li>• To feedback information to the University Centre staff as appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>What's In It For You:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will increase your employability</li> <li>• You will gain transferable skills; inclusive of, but not exclusive to, communication, negotiation, problem solving, time management and team work</li> <li>• You will receive full training and support</li> <li>• You will help to drive change within the University Centre and on your course</li> </ul>
<b>Why We Want You:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By taking on a university course you have already shown that you have a high degree of commitment to your future and are prepared to devote time and energy to making the very best of the experience</li> <li>• As a course rep you are going one stage further: you will be an essential part of the quality</li> </ul>

	assurance process, ensuring that all students are equally represented and that quality is consistent throughout all courses.
<b>The Roles of the Lead Rep and Deputy Lead Rep:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bury College has Higher Education Strategic Management and Quality Group. This is a committee chaired by the Principal that oversees the quality of practice and of the student experience at Bury College. Two students will be asked to join this committee as lead reps and will be elected from the course team reps annually.</li> <li>• Students can seek nomination for either post or can be nominated by another person.</li> </ul>

## HE COURSE REP MEETING SCHEDULE

Half termly, (dates to be advised). Enterprise Centre

## THE ROLE OF THE LEAD REP (LR) AND DEPUTY LEAD REP (DLR) FURTHER EXPLANATION

### \*Note 1

They will:

- Currently be a serving student rep.
- Undertake all of the duties of a student rep.
- Attend meetings of the Higher Education Strategic Management and Quality Group' representing as fully as possible the range of views of the undergraduate student body and reporting back to the rep meeting on the outcomes of meetings with college management.
- Make sure that other reps are aware of meetings and encourage attendance
- Raise issues of concern with University Centre admin