



ACADEMIC REP HANDBOOK



Welcome to the Academic Rep family everyone!

Massive Congratulations on being successful being recruited as an Academic Rep for the coming academic year.

Being an Academic Rep is a hugely beneficial role for boosting you're experience, employability and networking. To be an Academic Rep is to be a champion of the student voice in your cohort. We will be here to support you to thrive, every step of the way. We deeply appreciate all of you deciding to represent your cohort, you are essential to ensuring students are listened to. I am eager to assist you in leading a fulfilling student experience and being the best you.

This handbook has been carefully crafted to assist you in your role of Academic Rep. The Student Voice team, the Officer Team and I are looking forward to watching you all grow as people and become important figures in the academic community.

Ready to make 2025-26 an unforgettable year for you and your classmates?

Esperanza Bizama Monnier
Academic Affairs Officer



Welcome

This handbook will provide you with everything you need to know and help you to be successful in your role. If you do need any help throughout the year, please contact the Students' Union.

You can find our contact details at the end of the handbook!

At Undeb Aber we are committed to ensuring materials are accessible - if you require this handbook in an alternative format please email suvoice@aber.ac.uk

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Your Role

As a representative you are someone who has been chosen to speak on behalf of other students. Your role as an Academic Representative is vital to ensure that students' views are represented and fed-back as part of decision-making processes within your department, and across the University.

By working with your department to raise issues and put actions into place, you can help to influence positive change that will improve the education and experience for both current and future students!

Your role is very much collaborative, through taking on the role, you will build positive relationships between staff, students, and other Academic Reps.

Remember to be reactive, as well as proactive! Not only are you acting as the voice of students to raise issues as and when they arise; but you also need to find solutions to problems and continually be aware and ready to improve things by talking with staff and students throughout the year.

The role of reps is taken seriously at Undeb Aberystwyth, and you can find out more by reading our [Student Representation Policy](#).



Expectations



What Academic Reps Are Expected to Do :

- Attend training sessions held by the Undeb Aberystwyth.
- Introduce yourself to students, lecturers, and other reps in your department.
- Gather balanced feedback (both positive and negative) about the student experience in your course/department.
- Present feedback at SSCC meetings and, if unable to attend, send apologies with written feedback to the convenor.
- Report back to students and the Students' Union on outcomes or actions taken.
- Signpost students to the right staff member or support service for personal or non-course-related issues.
- Attend Academic Rep Forums, the Rep Conference, and any additional training.

How Academic Reps Are Expected to Act :

- Work professionally and collaboratively, maintain regular communication with the Students' Union, be approachable and inclusive, represent feedback fairly, respect confidentiality, and show commitment through active engagement.

Academic Representatives are not to get involved with students' personal problems, academic difficulties or individual complaints including:

- Disputes between students and academic staff or individual students, including allegations of harassment, discrimination, or victimisation.
- Formal procedures including extensions, special circumstances, allegation of unacceptable academic practice, academic appeals, individual complaints, or disciplinary procedures etc.
- Financial and funding queries including student finance and debt etc.
- Personal problems including health issues, whether related to housing, employment, immigration, or wellbeing



In return, Undeb Aberystwyth will:

- Be a source of support and advice where needed.
- Set-up your Academic Rep email, add your role to 'Find my Rep' on the Students' Union Website and your Student Record
- Provide you with access to additional training and opportunities.
- Give you adequate notice of any meetings we would like you to attend.
- Keep you in the loop with regular updates during term-time.
- Ensure your contribution to the academic experience is recognised.

Top tips for being an Effective Academic Rep



Speak Up Early

Don't wait for the next SSCC.
Raise issues ASAP



Mix Feedback



Try social media polls, emails, quick chats before/after lectures



Share Dates

Let students know when they can give feedback/SSCCs are



Celebrate Wins

Share positive changes you've influenced.



Team Up

Share ideas, collab, compare notes with other Reps



Track Progress

Keep a record of issues raised and updates on them.



Stay Alert

Look out for issues all year round; be creative in keeping students engaged.



Get Support

Ask for help anytime during the year if unsure about anything

Undeb Aber - Your Students' Union

Undeb Aber operates as an **independent charity** with a mission to ensure all Aber students **love student life**. We envision Aber students who are happy, healthy and empowered, with lasting friendships and promising futures.

All students at Aberystwyth University are automatically members of Undeb Aber.

As a Students' Union, our promises to students are:

- We will provide opportunities to find your Aber **community**
- We will be a **positive influence** for students
- We will support you to be **happy and healthy**
- We will help to grow your **skills and experiences**

As a Students' Union, our organisational values are:

- We are **shaped by students** - Your voice matters most
- We are a **community** - We want you involved
- We are **transparent** - We are always honest and open
- We are **ambitious** - We develop for the future
- We **caru Cymraeg** - We champion Welsh language and culture

These commitments are fulfilled by providing students with a range of benefits and opportunities to get involved including:

- Helping students to meet new people, make friends and build communities.
- 130 student led Sport Clubs, Societies & Volunteering Projects– or a chance to start your own group.
- Supporting, training and working with over 250 Academic Reps to have a positive impact for students at course level.
- Free, confidential and impartial advice and information through our Advice Service
- A representative voice for all Aberystwyth University students.
- Opportunities for students to campaign on the issues they care about.
- Spaces to study, meet and socialise.

For more information visit:
<https://www.abersu.co.uk/aboutaber/>

Student Ideas & Decision Making

Undeb Aber is completely student led – from the officers who are elected to shape our work, to the feedback and ideas from students that grow to form our core policies, campaigns, and commitments. Whilst you can just email or talk to Officers, there are other structured ways you provide feedback to your Faculty Officers and Full Time Officers.



Forums: These are discussion forums that give you a chance to share ideas and feedback, and feed into the work of the Full Time Officers.

Please read more here :

<https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/forums/>

Senedd: is the regular decision making body at Undeb Aberystwyth, it is designed to represent all students, and sets what Undeb Aberystwyth believes in and works on. Whilst you are unable to vote as an Academic Rep, you and any student can attend and put forward ideas to be debated. Please read more here :

<https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/senedd/>

Advisory Boards : Undeb Aberystwyth has 3 active Advisory Boards run by students to develop key areas of the Students' Union and student life. We have:

- International Advisory Board
- Disabled Students Advisory Board
- Club, Society, and Volunteering Advisory Board

Please read more here : <https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/advisoryboards/>

Submitting an Idea:

Any student can submit an idea to the SU to suggest changes and help improve the student experience.

Submitting an idea is easy! Go to - <https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/yourideas/>

The Feedback Loop



Collecting Feedback

A key skill to being an effective Academic Rep is your ability to collect and communicate feedback and information to variety of audiences, often in varying levels of detail.

Below are just some ways in which you can collect feedback and communicate who you are and what your role entails, but remember, don't be afraid to use your own ideas.

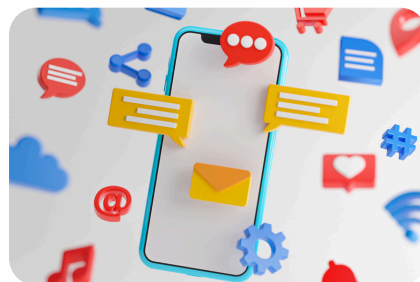


Lecture shout-outs

Simply asking your lecturer for 5 minutes at the start or end of your lecture is a simple way to speak with those you represent. You could also circulate post-it notes prior to the start or place a ballot box near the front for anonymous written feedback.

Social media

Most students already use these spaces as a source to find information and communicate with other people. It's possible that your course/department already utilise a page, if not, create one with your fellow reps.



Online surveys and polls

These are useful ways to gather evidence and statistics about a specific issue and demonstrate what students think.

Emails

We can set up an Academic Rep email for you to directly contact the students you represent; you just need to sign the email agreement.



Traffic light System

You can use any of the above to implement this method, and by using the traffic light system and asking students what they want to see stop, start, or continue; you can help yourself to gain a range of positive and negative feedback, as well as ideas and solutions.



Types of Feedback

We know gathering feedback can be tricky so to help we've provided some useful prompts.

These are not considered a checklist to be ticked off one by one, but instead they are to help you have better understanding of the key areas the University collect feedback on.

Teaching on my course:

- *What do you think of teaching quality on your course?*
- *How do expectations of students, the learning outcomes and course content match up?*
- *Are teaching and learning methods appropriate, challenging, and inspiring?*

Learning Resources

- *Are your reading lists clear?*
- *Are course texts and related resources readily available to use?*
- *Are IT facilities and available resources suitable for your course?*
- *Are teaching and practice spaces suitable for your needs?*

Learning Opportunities/Community

- *Do course activities enhance your knowledge and skills?*
- *Are there any opportunities for professional accreditation?*
- *Are there opportunities for group work?*
- *Are options available for practical or vocational experience?*
- *Are placements well organised with proper notice, mentoring and guidance?*

Organisation & Management

- *Is your timetable clear?*
- *Is there clear communication between students and staff in your department?*
- *Are any additional course costs clearly advertised and explained?*
- *Does the department make students aware of the role of Academic Reps?*
- *Do you receive information about how your department responds to student feedback?*

Assessment and Feedback

- *Are criteria for assessment and the methods used understood?*
- *Is feedback timely and comprehensive enough to be helpful?*
- *Do assessment methods reflect skills used in common career paths for the subject?*
- *Is information given on how to avoid unacceptable academic practice? How useful is it?*

Academic Support

- *How effective is your Personal Tutor support?*
- *Are you comfortable and able to contact staff when needed?*
- *Do students know how to access advice and support on personal issues?*
- *Is information relating to extensions and special circumstances easy to find?*

Student Staff Consultative Committees

Staff Student Consultative Committees (SSCC) are the formal mechanism for Academic Reps to raise feedback with staff, find solutions to problems and tell your department what is working well.

All meetings will have a Convenor, Chair (which in some cases is a student) and minute taker. Some departments have separate meetings for undergraduate and postgraduate groups.

It's your responsibility to attend your SSCC on behalf of your cohort. If you can't attend, make sure you submit in advance of the meeting your apologies and feedback to the Chair or Convenor.

After the meeting, you will usually receive draft minutes within two weeks, if not don't be afraid to contact the Convenor or Chair. Once you've received them, read over to make sure they're accurate, and feedback if you believe changes need to be made.

Making the Most of Staff Student Consultative Committees

- **Speak to Students:** Gather essential feedback to support your points.
- **Prepare:** Know when and where the meeting is, review any paperwork, and share feedback beforehand if possible.
- **Stay Positive:** Give constructive feedback using the “start, stop, continue” approach.
- **Ask Questions:** Clarify anything unclear—no one expects you to have all the answers.
- **Be Professional:** Keep feedback clear, objective, and respectful. Accept differing opinions without taking them personally.
- **Represent All Students:** Reflect the views of the entire course, not just your own.
- **Keep Your Faculty Officer Updated:** Share the feedback you're raising so they can support you at higher levels.



Student Chairing

Every SSCC will have a person who Chairs discussion; in some cases, an Academic Rep may be invited to take on this role.

Undeb Aber encourages student chairing of SSCC's, although recognises it's a role best fulfilled by someone who can remain impartial, moderate the debate, and facilitate clear decision making.

This can sometimes lead to a tricky balancing act for those taking on the role of representing their course and moderating debate; this is something we will be evaluating during the year ahead in order to address the matter in subsequent years.

In the year ahead we will also be introducing additional training which focuses specifically on Student Chairing – we'll keep you informed of these sessions via our regular newsletter



Top tips for effective Chairing of Meetings

Top Tips for Effective Chairing of Meetings

- **Prepare:** Agree the agenda with the convenor/secretary and consult other reps to prioritise issues.
- **Be Assertive and Confident:** Manage the meeting so no one dominates and everyone gets a chance to speak.
- **Balance the Conversation:** Encourage all reps to contribute, making it easier for those who find speaking daunting.
- **Stay on Topic:** Redirect off-topic feedback to other channels like Tell Us Now.
- **Clarify Actions:** Summarise key points during the meeting and assign clear, specific actions with deadlines.

Faculty Officers

The University is organised into two Academic Faculties - Faculty of Humanities and Faculty of Science, each headed by a Pro-Vice Chancellor.

Each Faculty has one Faculty Officer. These are students elected by fellow students within their Faculty to represent their views to the Faculty, the University, and Undeb Aberystwyth.

Faculty Officers work closely with the Academic Affairs Officer to represent students by:

- Sitting alongside them on various University and Faculty committees
- Attending the Academic Rep Forum
- Meeting regularly with Academic Reps and Faculty leadership to raise and respond to student feedback

Faculty Officers are the first point of contact for raising feedback and finding solutions at Faculty level.

Elections for Faculty Officers are held in March for the following academic year, with any vacant positions filled in an October by-election.

The role of a Faculty Rep includes:



Faculty Officers



Faculty Of Sciences

Spencer Tinklin
sufbps@aber.ac.uk



Faculty Of Humanities

Varsha Raj
sufels@aber.ac.uk

Further Volunteering

Additional Training – We want all our volunteers to feel confident in the role which is why we provide opportunities to develop valuable skills throughout the year, from campaign planning to student chairing. We'll keep you updated as sessions arise using our term-time newsletter.

Conferences and Events – There are a variety of conferences and events held each year that allow reps to network as well as develop their skills and knowledge. You will have the opportunity to attend although be warned places are often limited.

Undeb Aber Celebrates – We organise the Staff and Students awards annually to recognise individually who go above and beyond to have positive impact on your time at Aber. You will have the opportunity to both nominate and assist in the judging of winners in term two. More info : <https://www.abersu.co.uk/aboutaber/celebrates>

Creating Change – We support numerous student-led campaigns each year designed to create positive change whether its improving library access or highlighting the need for additional sports funding. Therefore, if you have an idea come and speak to us or get in touch! For more information visit: <https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/>

Student Volunteering

There are further opportunities to get involved with AberSU through student volunteering. The type of volunteering and the amount of time you give up outside of your studies is completely up to you. We have on-going and one-off (Action Day) volunteering opportunities.

To find our more go to www.abersu.co.uk/volunteering
www.abersu.co.uk/teamaber/volunteering/currentopportunities/



Recognition

As part of completing the role you will:

- Receive a certificate of recognition
- Be in the chance to be nominated at our end of year awards.
- Offered the chance to attend an end of term social event

You can also work towards the one of our **Aber Award certificates** which celebrate all student volunteers by recording your volunteering hours and skills.



Bronze Award
30-59 hours



Silver Award
60-119 hours



Gold Award
120+ hours

To find out more or register as a volunteer, go to www.abersu.co.uk/teamaber/volunteering

Almost anything you do as a Academic Rep counts as volunteering hours, e.g. collecting feedback, attending training, contacting students and attending SSCCs.

Only social events and travel do not count towards your hours.



LLONGYFARCHIADAU CONGRATULATIONS

Cyflwynir y dystysgrif hon i
It is hereby certified that



Sydd wedi ei gwobrwyo gyda
GWOBR ABER AUR
Has been awarded with a
GOLD ABER AWARD



Rep Recruitment

Recruitment for Academic Reps takes place during March and October.

Your department will notify you of the roles that are up for recruitment, and the ones you are eligible to stand for.

Recruitment for vacant positions can take place throughout the year.

Applying for Rep Roles :

If you're interested in becoming a Rep and meet the eligibility criteria, you can fill out the Rep Recruitment Form during our recruitment periods.

You're also encouraged to express your interest directly to your lecturers or department if there's a specific Rep role you'd like to take on.

Everyone who is interested and eligible is welcome to put themselves forward!

Please read more here : <https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/elections/academicreps/>

Academic Societies

Academic Representatives are encouraged to work closely with the academic societies related to their subject area. This collaboration can help create a stronger sense of community, increase student engagement, and provide more opportunities for events, discussions, and networking within the discipline.

For example, Psychology Representatives could connect with the Psychology Society to co-host events, share academic opportunities, and gather feedback from members.

Similar links can be made across all subject areas, ensuring representatives and societies work hand-in-hand to support and enhance the student experience

More information on societies can be found here : <https://www.abersu.co.uk/teamaber/societies/>



Key Contacts



Full-Time officers:

Academic Affairs Officer - Esperanza Bizama Monnier | suacademic@aber.ac.uk
President - Millie Hackett | supresident@aber.ac.uk
Opportunities Officer - Ffion Johns | suopportunities@aber.ac.uk
UMCA President & Welsh Culture Officer - Nanw Maelor | suwelsh@aber.ac.uk
Wellbeing Officer - Tanaka Chikomo | suwellbeing@aber.ac.uk

Student Voice Team: suvoice@aber.ac.uk

Head of Student Voice - Jacob Webb
Academic Representation Coordinator - Arwa Zakir Ali
Campaigns & Democracy Coordinator - Ash Sturrock

All SU staff :

<https://www.abersu.co.uk/aboutaber/abersustaff/>



<https://www.abersu.co.uk/changeaber/studentrepresentatives/>

We provide free, confidential and impartial advice and information for all Aberystwyth University students. This includes advice, information and representation on a range of matters including: University matters, housing and accommodation, money and student finance & health and wellbeing.

Telephone: 01970 621700

Email: union.advice@aber.ac.uk

www.abersu.co.uk/advice

University Student Services

The university also provide advice and support on various aspects of student life including money, personal issues (including stress, anxiety and mental health issues) and queries related to disability. They are divided into 3 teams:

Wellbeing Service

Telephone: 01970 621761

Email: studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk

Advice, Information and Money Service

Telephone: 01970 621761

Email: student-advisor@aber.ac.uk

Accessibility Service

Telephone: 01970 621761

Email: accessibility@aber.ac.uk

