



A Practical Guide For Class Reps

Prepared by the Waikato Students' Union (WSU)

Haere mai!

Congratulations on your election as a class rep. We're glad you're taking up the role to be the voice of students in your class.

Class reps form the foundation of student representation at the University. Through your role as a class rep, you will learn the skills to effectively represent the students in your class. This may eventually lead you to a greater representation role in the University.

We are providing this guide to help you understand the role, equip you with skills to be an effective class rep, present you the benefit of being a class rep and provide you with useful contacts. We hope you will make use of this guide as you take on your role as a class rep.

Attending the class rep training and making use of this guide are just the beginning. We want to keep in touch with you and support you all throughout your role. So, you will be hearing from us a lot! Do check your email often and get in touch with us for any issues concerning your role.

We look forward to working with you and making the student voice heard in the University.

Ngā mihi
Student Voice Team @ the WSU

Support Linktree



WSU Linktree



Clubs Linktree



What Is A Class Rep?

A class rep is a student enrolled in a paper; who has been selected by their fellow students enrolled in the paper. The role of a class rep is to facilitate communication between staff and students.

Why Do We Need A Class Rep?

Representation

As a class rep, you represent your classmates in voicing the feedback and resolving concerns or issues regarding your learning experience in the class. Basically you are the link between the students and the University and academic staff, particularly when other students do not feel comfortable approaching academic staff themselves.

Consultation

Class reps provides constructive feedback regarding subject changes or general students' learning experiences to the academic staff. Your role as a class rep opens up the opportunity for you to be elected as a student rep in the division or academic board. In these roles, you will have the opportunity to provide feedback on academic or teaching and learning issues within the Division or University.

Learning Enhancement

You will contribute to the improvements of learning experience for you and your classmates when you provide constructive feedback to the University and academic staff with regards to teaching and learning.

How To Be An Effective Class Rep:

Publicity

Ask your lecturer for a short time at the end or beginning of lecture to introduce yourself to your classmates and provide them with a way to get in touch with you. We encourage you to use your student email.

Research

Gather opinions or feedback (both positive and negative) from your classmates regarding their learning experience and collate them.

A.B.C.D Feedback

Feedback to the University and academic staff should be:

Accurate
Balanced
Constructive
Depersonalised

You can do this by setting up periodic meetings with your lecturer.

Communicate

Always remember to communicate the outcome of the meeting or keep your classmates informed on the progress of the feedback or discussion. Remember to keep the communication positive and constructive.

**Students
Progression +
Achievement**

Are you able to evaluate your progress and use what you learn to help you in your future courses?

**Guidance
+ Support**

Do you have sufficient support (e.g. clear guidance and access to support services) for your academic work?

**Quality
Enhancement
+ Assurance**

Do you feel your feedback about the course was well-received? What improvements have been made based on previous feedback?

**Learning
Resources**

Are you provided with relevant and sufficient resources including academic and facility based learning resources for your course?

**Student
Learning
Experience**

**Learning +
Teaching Process**

Have the teaching methods used been helpful in your learning?

**Assessment
+ Feedback**

Are assessments and feedback given in an appropriate and timely manner for your improvement?

Paper Outline

Are the learning objectives and paper outline clearly stated, and do they match the information provided?

Adapted from 'Student Learning Experience' by Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland.

What's In It For Class Reps?

Wider Representation Roles

As a class rep, your representation does not stop at the class level. You will also have the opportunity to be elected as a student rep for the subject, faculty and University Academic Board.

Build Your CV

Being a class rep is a good way to build your CV and write about the leadership roles and skills you will gain.

Gain Valuable Skills

As a class rep, you will mediate, negotiate, gather and provide feedback constructively as well as maintain a positive relationship between the academic staff and your classmates. By actively engaging as a class rep, you gain and sharpen the valuable skills to be effective in your role, which are useful for employment.

This is how you can progress in your role as student representative:

Student

The student body forms the basis of the representation throughout the University.



Class Rep

Students of each paper elect a student member to be their class representative(s).



Divisional Board Reps

Class representatives of each school/faculty elect a student member to the divisional board.



Academic Board Reps

School/faculty representatives of each division elect 2 student members to the academic board.



Representatives To Uni Committees

Students are nominated with the Waikato Students' Union, Vice-chancellor and Divisional Board to a range of other University Committees.



Role And Responsibilities

As a class rep, your role and responsibilities are mainly within the scope of teaching and learning in the class you are representing (*refer to the 'Student Learning Experience' diagram for what you can provide feedback on*).

To be effective in your role as a class rep, it is important that you:

- Make yourself known to your classmates and they know how to get in touch with you
- Are available to listen to and assist students who approach you with the concerns about teaching and learning in the class you represent
- Liaise with lecturers and key University staff to deliver feedback regarding teaching and learning issues or questions raised by students in the class you are representing
- Update your classmates on the issue(s) that have been raised with the lecturer or tutor
- Familiarise yourselves with some of the rules and regulations relevant to students and the class and refer your classmates to support services where needed



As a class rep, it is important that you know it is not your responsibility to:

- Handle personal grievances or issues of your classmates whether it be related to personal grievances with the lecturer/tutor or their own personal life
- Tutor or help students with their assignment/test/exam
- Deal with intense advocacy issues such as University wide policy-related issues or personal grievances of groups of students
- Tolerate harassment (report to the WSU and to the University's security in serious cases)



Deciding On Your Action Plan

Deciding on your action plan can start with managing your and your classmates' expectations about the scope and responsibilities of a class rep. Therefore, it is key to first familiarise yourself with what are and what are not your responsibilities as a class rep. While some issues are clearly not within your

scope as a class rep, some might be a little vague. If you receive feedback and are unsure if it is within your scope of responsibilities, we encourage you to use the decision flowchart to guide you on deciding how best to address the feedback. If you are unsure, contact us at voice@wsu.org.nz.

Decision Flowchart

Students in your class may approach you with various feedback and it can be difficult deciding on what to do with the feedback. The flowchart below provides a simple guide on what to do with the feedback you receive from the students in your class.

Feedback can be positive or negative. If you have something good to say, say

it to your lecturer so they know what works for you and to encourage them as well. If the concern/issue you raised to your lecturer was not resolved, consider bringing it up during your department/programme class reps meeting. If it remains unresolved, speak to the Student Voice Team so we can work with you to decide on your next course of action.

Feedback



Does It Affect More Than One Person?



Support the person in raising the issue with the lecturer or refer the person to other support services if needed.



Yes

Is It Course-Related?



If the feedback is related to your programme or within your faculty, raise the issue with your programme rep. If the feedback is related to the University, raise the issue with your faculty rep or the WSU President/Vice-President.



Yes

Find out the details of the feedback and how it affects your classmates. This is a good time to do a survey or collect verbal/written opinions from all your classmates and raise it with your lecturer using ABCD feedback.

Flowchart Diagram

What Can You Expect From The Faculty Members And The WSU?

As you carry on your duty as, class rep, you can expect the divisional staff to:



- Provide a safe environment for you to share your feedback, issue or concern on teaching and learning
- Facilitate communication between you and your classmates
- Have regular meetings with you to discuss feedback, issues or concerns on teaching and learning
- Provide the opportunity of representation in the division and University level

The WSU will:



- Provide introductory training on your responsibilities as a class rep, effective communication and information on the support services available at the University and the WSU
- Support your role through consultation and discussion of your experience as class rep throughout the trimester
- Provide resources to facilitate your role as class rep
- Ensure you are given the opportunity to represent and be involved in relevant consultation processes in the University

Useful Contacts

Student Voice Team @ WSU

The Student Voice Team offers support through training and consultation to facilitate full engagement of your role as a class rep. If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything about your role as a class rep, email us at voice@wsu.org.nz.

Advocacy Team @ WSU

The Advocacy Team offers support for students who experience personal or academic issues that affect their studies such as budgeting, tenancy, student disciplinary, enrolment and legal issues. Email the advocacy team at support@wsu.org.nz for an appointment.

Student Learning

Student Learning offers learning support in academic study skills such as: using time effectively, referencing, reading, and writing; mathematics and statistics; and English Language development. Consultations are available for all University of Waikato students (in any location) face-to-face, via Zoom or as a written comment on draft. They can be requested by calling (07) 838 4657, emailing s/admin@waikato.ac.nz or using the consultation request form on their website at: <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/student-learning>

Library Services

The Library provides resources and services to help you with your studies, including workshops on how to find information, referencing, referencing software, research support and Microsoft programmes. There are computers and a range of study spaces available. For more information, visit a *Library help desk on Level 2*

of the Student Centre in Hamilton or in the 24-hour computer lab on Level 1 (TCBD 1.03) in Tauranga, chat with a librarian or email library@waikato.ac.nz.

Mental Health Support

The University offers mental health support through the Student Health Service. *For students in Hamilton, you can make an appointment via Student Health reception either in person or by phone (07 838 4037). For students in Tauranga, you can call 022 0139 003 or email alana.johnson@waikato.ac.nz for an appointment. In an emergency, please call 111.*

Student Representation

The President and two Vice-Presidents of the WSU represent University students in the University Academic Board along with student representatives from each division, where they discuss university wide academic-related issues. Email: WSU President at president@wsu.org.nz, WSU Vice-President at vp@wsu.org.nz or WSU Vice-President Maori at vpmaori@wsu.org.nz to discuss issue(s) that require representation in the University. If your issue(s) are specific to your division, you can also raise it to the student rep in your division. Please get in touch with us at voice@wsu.org.nz for the email addresses of the student reps in your division.

**To facilitate communication on divisional and University academic issues, the WSU keeps a record of class reps information (e.g. name, email address, course represented). This information will be provided to student reps in each division and will be used for the purpose of facilitating communication between class rep and student reps in the division. Email us at voice@wsu.org.nz to let us know if you have any concerns about how your information is used.*

WSU
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