

# Class Reps

ADAM SMITH COLLEGE  
STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

# Welcome Pack



# Contents

- ◆ Welcome
- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ Your Role
- ◆ Learner Engagement Calendar
- ◆ Course Review
- ◆ Learner Forums
- ◆ Benefits and Awards

# Welcome

I am delighted to have the opportunity to provide the introduction to this year's Class Rep Welcome Pack. This provides me with the opportunity to welcome the publication of this document and, more importantly, to thank you for stepping up to the mark as a student representative. You will play a very important role in supporting the Students' Association and in ensuring that the student voice is heard loud and clear in Adam Smith College.



The views of students and your feedback on the college and its courses are vital parts of the information base on which we can assess our current activities and plan for the future. I would like to emphasise that these are taken very seriously by staff at all levels, by college managers and by the Board of Governors.

Thank you again for being willing to take on this role. I wish you every success with this work and with your studies in the current academic year.

Dr Craig Thomson  
Principal



I would like to welcome you into to the role, thank you for volunteering and I hope you have a great experience. If in doubt the Students' Association will always be here to help you.

My job is to represent the student body on the main committees and Board of Governors, but even working here as a fulltime officer I can never spot every area which can be improved to better the experience of student life. This is why your new/returning role is critical to the student body within the college community.

Ben Brown  
Student President

# Introduction

This pack has been designed to provide information for you as you embark on your role as a class representative at Adam Smith College.

The Students' Association and the College are fully committed to engagement with students. This means we want to involve learners in as many aspects of college life as possible. We want and need on going dialogue with students. Unless we know what is good and bad about your experience, we are unable to do anything about it. If we know something is good we can encourage good practice and if it's bad we will try to fix it, if we can. By choosing to become a class rep you are helping us achieve our commitment to learner engagement and improving the learner experience.

If you are new to this role you will be expected to attend class rep training. Training will equip you with the knowledge and skills to become an effective representative for your class, so we encourage you to attend.

There is a lot to take in when you first start out, so we suggest you keep this pack and refer to it as your role progresses. It contains information and dates about the meetings you will be expected to attend throughout the year.

Remember, as a class rep you play a vital representative role for your fellow classmates. You have a key role to encourage student input on what your classmates think about their student learning experience. Don't feel you're just someone who has to deal with problems or be moaned at by other students. Make sure your voice is heard - your contribution can lead to positive changes, improve academic standards and actively shape your learning environment.

We hope you have a good year as a representative and you are able to make the improvements to your course, as well as improving your own skills and gaining new experiences.

# Your Role

You are the spokesperson for your class, acting as a means of communication between your classmates and the college for the rest of the year. As class rep you are there to help improve your course and the student experience.

As well as voicing the opinions and views of your class to department staff, there are a three formal meetings you will be expected to attend.

1. Course Review Semester 1
2. Centre Learner Forum Semester 1
3. Course Review Semester 2

You will also have the opportunity to volunteer to represent your teaching centre at the College Learner Forum in semester 2.

To be an effective class rep you should talk regularly with your classmates about course related matters as well as more college wide issues. This will allow you to act on issues of concern. Some concerns might need addressed quickly so don't think you have to wait for the formal meetings to take place. Approach the member of staff you believe is the most appropriate person to deal with it. If you are unsure who to approach, you can always contact the Students' Association for advice.

Remember to report back to your classmates on the outcomes of any meetings you attend and pass on any other information you are asked to.

Keep in touch with the Students' Association for advice and support you may need throughout the year.

Sometimes issues you raise with department staff can not be resolved or are beyond their control. The Students' Association sits on a variety of committees in the college and has regular contact with college management, so let us know if there are issues you want us to raise for you. Our core aim is to facilitate the representation of students' views within Adam Smith College. It is important you build a strong link with us.

Developing effective student representation has to be seen as a partnership. We want to provide you with a clear understanding of our responsibility towards your support and development and your responsibility towards the students you help represent.

We shall:

- Provide a point of contact with the Students' Association who has class rep support responsibilities
- Develop an on-going class rep training programme
- Distribute important information which may be of relevance to students
- Tackle issues at college level that you are tackling at course level
- Develop accreditation programmes for class rep work

In return, we expect you to:

- Identify student issues and needs, and voice views you do not necessarily agree with
- Attend training and actively participate in course review and learner forum meetings
- Report back to your class on outcomes from meetings and pass on any information you are asked to
- Promote equality and diversity
- Work in partnership with other class reps and the Students' Association on issues of joint concern
- Refer major issues and individual personal issues to support services or the Students' Association
- Motivate students to get involved in quality assurance processes such as college questionnaires, focus groups and surveys

# Learner Engagement Calendar

**2011**

**Activity**

**3 - 14 Oct**

**Focus Groups - Round 1**

Teaching Department Managers and/or Curriculum Heads will hold a focus group meeting for each course group at which all students in the group will be expected to attend.

**1 - 10 Nov**

**Class Rep Training**

Training will be delivered by the Students' Association.

**21 - 28 Nov**

**Focus Groups - Round 2**

Teaching Department Managers and/or Curriculum Heads will hold a focus group meeting for each course group at which all students in the group will be expected to attend.

**19 - 23 Dec**

**Focus Groups - Round 1 (continued)**

Responses to the issues identified by learners at Round 1 Focus Groups will be published by the Quality Unit.

**2012**

**Activity**

**9 - 27 Jan**

**Centre Learner Forums**

The Research Team will hold four learner forums, one based on each teaching centre, attended by the centre's Executive Director and all of the Centre Class Reps.

**23 - 27 Jan**

**Semester 1 Course Reviews**

Curriculum Heads will chair a Course Review meeting for each course, ensuring the class reps for the course are encouraged to participate and providing them with guidance, support and feedback.

**2012 (cont)****Activity****13 - 17 Feb****Focus Groups - Round 2 (continued)**

Responses to the issues identified by learners at Round 2 Focus Groups will be published by the Quality Unit.

**21 Feb****Class Rep Training**

Training will be delivered by the Students' Association for class reps whose courses started in semester 2.

**27 Feb - 9 Mar****Centre Learner Forums (continued)**

Responses to the issues identified by learners at the four centre forums will be published by the Research Unit.

**5 - 30 Mar****College Learner Forum**

The Research Team will hold a single College Learner Forum attended by five Class Reps from each Centre nominated by their fellow Class Reps.

**16 Apr -  
11 May****Learner Evaluation Survey**

The Quality Unit will carry out an online learner evaluation survey. Incentives/prizes will be offered to encourage as many learners as possible to take part.

**14 - 25 May****College Learner Forum (continued)**

Responses to the issues identified by learners at the College Learner Forum will be published by the Research Unit.

**28 May -  
1 Jun****Semester 2 Course Reviews**

Curriculum Heads will chair a second Course Review meeting for each course, ensuring Class Reps for the course are encouraged to participate and providing them with guidance, support and feedback.

# Course Review

Towards the end of each Semester, the Review Team for each college course will meet together to hold a Course Review Meeting.

The purpose of Course Review is to assess how the course is going, to identify those things that have worked well and highlight those aspects which haven't been so successful. Based on this analysis, an Action Plan will be produced aimed at improving the course and the experience for learners in the future.

Course Review teams consist of the lecturers who teach on the course and the class reps from the course.

Prior to the meeting, you must speak to your fellow students to find out if there are issues they want raised at the meeting. Please remember to identify what is good about your course as well as making staff aware of any problem areas. Try to make sure the views and comments you bring to the meeting are representative of the class as a whole; your role is definitely not about just voicing your own personal opinions. A member of staff should not be present when you are meeting with classmates to discuss these issues. Liaise with your Curriculum Head to arrange a suitable time for this to take place.

The comments, concerns, suggestions and recommendations which are put forward by you should never in any way be filtered, edited or censored. No member of staff should ask you to change them in any way.

Templates to help you focus your contributions to the Course Reviews are available on our website. You might want to complete these in consultation with your class prior to your Course Review. However, this template is intended for guidance only and is not meant to restrict the range or scope of your feedback or comment. Your Curriculum Head may ask for a copy of your Report after the meeting to help him/her write his/her report; it's up to you whether or not you agree to this.

Curriculum Heads have been requested to schedule Course Review meetings mindful of other demands on both the student and staff members and to

consult with everyone to find a mutually convenient time to hold meetings. If meetings are scheduled when you are normally in class, your Curriculum Head will arrange for you to be released with an approved absence to attend the meeting.

If your Course Review can only take place when you are not usually in College, arrangements have been made for you to be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses incurred while attending, i.e. travel costs, child care, loss of earnings. These must be submitted on a petty cash claim form (available from your Curriculum Head) accompanied by appropriate receipts.

You can be present for the entire meeting and will be encouraged to participate in the discussion of all agenda items. Only if there are any sensitive issues regarding individual learners should there be a private discussion amongst members of staff at the end of the main meeting.

Meetings should be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration. As participants in the learning process, you have the right to voice the points of view of your class, to have them listened to politely and taken into consideration in an open-minded attitude. However, this is a two-way process and members of staff must be treated with equal courtesy. You should also realise that it will not always be possible or even appropriate to agree with all of the comments and suggestions put forward but, at the very least, you should be given a reasonable explanation as to why they cannot be acted on.

After the meetings, you should expect to receive copies of the Report and Action Plan from your Curriculum Head. You should share these with your classmates.

If you encounter any difficulties or obstacles trying to carry out your role as a Class Representative in relation to Course Reviews, please get in touch with the Quality Manager, Gordon Scrimgeour.

email [gordonscrimgeour@adamsmith.ac.uk](mailto:gordonscrimgeour@adamsmith.ac.uk)

telephone 01592 223843

# Learner Forums

## Centre Learner Forums

Each of the four teaching centres has a Learner Forum. The four teaching centres are:

- ☆ Business
- ☆ Care and Society
- ☆ Creatives and Wellbeing
- ☆ Technologies

Each Learner Forum is made up of all of the class reps within the centre plus any other interested students. These Forums meet in January and provide an opportunity for full discussion of all aspects of the learning experience.

The meetings are independently facilitated by staff from the College Research Unit and the Centre Executive Director attends as an observer.

Feedback and responses to the issues raised at the four forums are usually published by the end of February/early March.

## College Learner Forum

The College Learner Forum consists of five class representatives nominated from each Centre Learner Forum.

This Forum meets in March, with a remit to consider any wider College level issues which impact on the experience of learners. Once again, the meetings are independently facilitated by staff from the College Research Unit; the Students' Association President and Coordinator, and the College Quality Manager also attend.

Feedback and responses to the issues raised are published by the Research Unit in May.

# Benefits and Awards

The benefits you will gain will depend on how you've undertaken your role as a class rep and the support you have been given to carry out your role.

Some of the benefits you will experience include:

- ☆ Chance to improve your course
- ☆ Taking on the responsibility to represent other people's opinions
- ☆ The opportunity to make a lasting difference
- ☆ Improve relationships you have with staff in your department
- ☆ Gain useful experience and skills that you can add to your CV
- ☆ Meet new people and have opportunities to network
- ☆ Receive a certificate for attending training
- ☆ Invitation to the Students' Association's Annual Student Rep Awards

Since class reps are considered student volunteers, you will be eligible to apply for a Millennium Award if aged 16 to 25, and a Students' Association Volunteer Award if you're aged over 25.

You will also be eligible for:

- ☆ an Outstanding Achievement Award for your Teaching Centre
- ☆ Student Volunteer of the Year Award
- ☆ Student Volunteering Scotland Gold Award

For more information about awards visit the class rep pages on the Students' Association's website.

# Class Reps

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