

WELCOME TO



# LEICESTER STUDENTS' UNION

COURSE REP TRAINING MASTERCLASS 1:  
WHAT IS A REP?



# **Plan of the Session**

**The Students' Union**

**Your Role**

**What does it mean to be representative?**

**The Feedback Loop**

**Accreditation**



# Commonly Used Terms

## Student Terms:

UG - Undergraduate

PGT - Postgraduate Taught

PGR - Postgraduate Research

Cohort - a group of students working towards a common degree at the same time

## College Acronyms:

CSE - College of Science and Engineering

CLS - College of Life Sciences

CSSAH - College of Social Sciences

CB/ULSB - College of Business

## School Acronyms:

CMS - Computing and Mathematical Sciences

GGE - Geography, Geology and the Environment

AMC - School of Arts, Media and Communications

HYPiR - History, Politics and International Relations

SAAH - School of Archeology and Ancient History

ULSB - University of Leicester School of Business

UoL - University of Leicester

## Other Acronyms:

PTO - Part time officer

SSC - Student Staff Committee

SEC - School Education Committee

AMM - Annual Members Meeting

DL - Distance Learner/Learning

CB - Campus based

EDI - Equity Diversity and Inclusion

Never be scared to ask what an acronym means!

# **The Students' Union**

Who are we and what do we do?



The background features two teal-colored decorative shapes in the corners, each containing a repeating pattern of stylized human figures. The top-right shape is a quarter-circle, and the bottom-left shape is a larger quarter-circle. The central area is plain white.

# **What is a Students' Union?**

# The Students' Union

- The SU is an external organisation - completely separate from the University
- Every single student at UoL is automatically a member
  - Including: postgraduate researchers, distance learners, part time students and every other student type
- The SU is a registered charity



**We represent and empower students to achieve their full potential**

**We champion your interest and provide a home away from home**



175+ Societies  
40+ Sports  
Volunteering  
Sustainability



Democracy  
Representation  
Campaigning  
Policy



Advice Desk  
Signposting  
Peer Mentoring  
Academic Advice



Liberation Networks  
Curriculum Consultants  
LeicsDecolonise  
Prayer Room Support

# The SU Advice Service

The SU Advice Service support with:

- Appeals (Senate Reregulation 10)
- Plagiarism/Collusion (Senate Reregulation 11)
- Complaints
- Housing - Housemate Finder, Legal Aid
- Mitigating Circumstances
- Signposting - Wellbeing, Welfare, Visas, Fees and Income, Accessibility, Legal Clinic, Peer Mentoring
- C-Card, condom demonstrations and pregnancy testing

## Clinics:

- Ted (Therapy Dog) - every Tuesday during term time, book 15 min slots by emailing [advice@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:advice@leicester.ac.uk)
- Mind - Mondays and Thursdays in the Percy Gee Building, 3rd floor 12-2pm and Freeman's Common Reception 7-9pm
- Victim First - Monthly Drop Ins

**Advice  
Service**

Students' Union Advice Service

- Reception open 11-3pm
- 1st floor Percy Gee Building

Email:

[advice@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:advice@leicester.ac.uk)

or visit:

[www.leicesterunion.com/advice](http://www.leicesterunion.com/advice)







## **Voice**

**The Voice Team's work is focused on amplifying the Student Voice! We are here to support you and help you achieve all you want in the role!**

# Ideas System

<https://www.leicesterunion.com/voice/studentideas/rate/>

The Ideas System is simple way for students to submit ideas and vote on ideas from other students

- If it's something simple, we will look into it straight away and see if it can be achieved
- If it gets above a majority of 50 likes it will go forward to a Council for discussion,
- If it gets a majority of 100+ likes then the Council are required to either form an action plan to implement the idea or present a proposal to the Leicester 100.
  - The Council will help to develop the idea into a policy and voted on to be implemented as SU policy.
- Where an idea has a majority of 100+ likes a student can if it is a fully formed idea take it directly to Leicester 100.



# Leicester 100

## What is Leicester 100?

A representative panel of roughly 100 students that will sit at the heart of the decision making at the Students' Union

## What will it do?

Vote on student policies to determine whether they get passed and steer the direction of the union

## How often will they meet?

Once per term so three times per academic year

## Who will sit on Leicester 100?

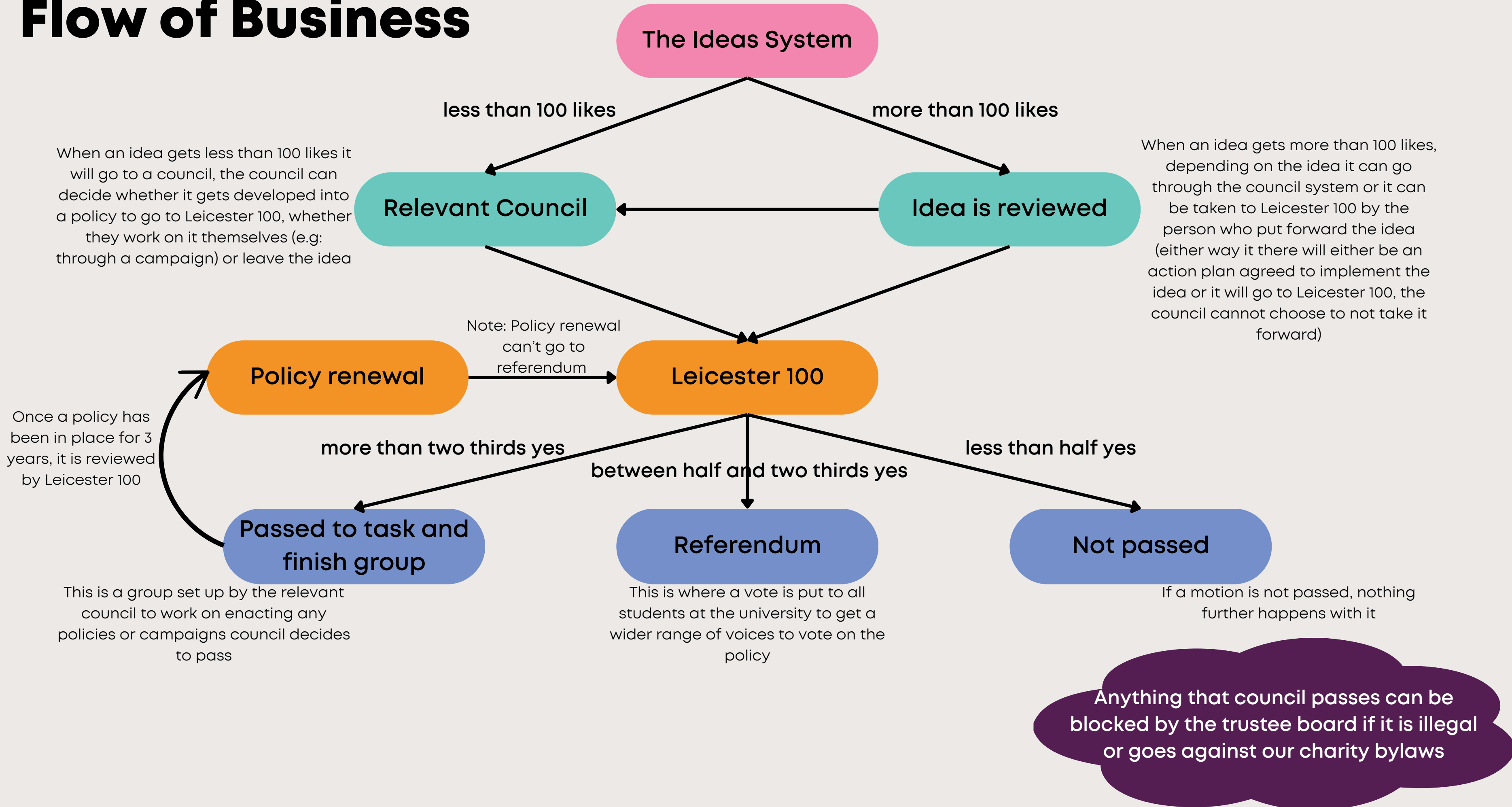
Any student can sign up to be a member of Leicester 100, but Leicester 100 members will be selected based on proportionally representing the wider student population of UoL

## What are the benefits of sitting on Leicester 100?

You shape the union and make decisions that will affect all students at the university. It is also a paid position!

To be a part of Leicester 100, you can express your interest via [this Microsoft form](#)

# Flow of Business



# Councils



Made up of student group members

Input into how societies will run and the processes of the union



Made up of performance, music and arts student group members

Advocates for creative and performers within student groups



Made up of Sports group members

Input into how sports are run at the university of Leicester



Made up of students who are interested in sustainability

Helps students get more involved in sustainability



Made up of students who identify as part of a liberation group and Part Time Officers

Work towards improving inclusivity within the union and wider university



Made up of Academic Reps and Part Time Officers

Work towards improving academic experience for students



# Cost of Living Project

We want to know how students spend their money and what impact the cost of living is having on you - this is why we're running a cost of living project

## What will you need to do?

- Fill in a monthly budget list covering where you are spending money and where your money is coming from from now till May
- Attend Termly meetings to discuss how you're finding the project and your finances

## What do you get out of it?

- Accreditation points (more on this later)
- A method of tracking your money which can help you budget in future
- Support from staff in the SU throughout for any questions or queries
- Feed into the work we do to support students

## How do you get involved

- Fill in our interest form to get involved
- Email [su-repteam](mailto:su-repteam) if you have any questions
- The deadline to get involved is: 18th October 10am
- Sign up here



# Academic Rep Newsletter

We have a monthly newsletter that goes out to all Academic Reps. There is a different edition for each rep type to make sure we are giving you the information that you need

## What goes into the newsletter?

Relevant information for your role, such as: Accreditation deadlines, Academic Rep events, updates from us and the College Reps as well as events and opportunities for all students.

## When does it get sent out and how can I access it?

The first Monday of every month - the first edition will go out beginning of November. It will be sent directly to your university email and we may also upload them to Blackboard.

## What should I do with the information in the newsletter?

Make sure to note down any dates and upcoming events. Make sure you share any opportunities, events and surveys for all students with your cohort so everyone gets the opportunity to get involved.

## Can I get stuff into the Newsletter?

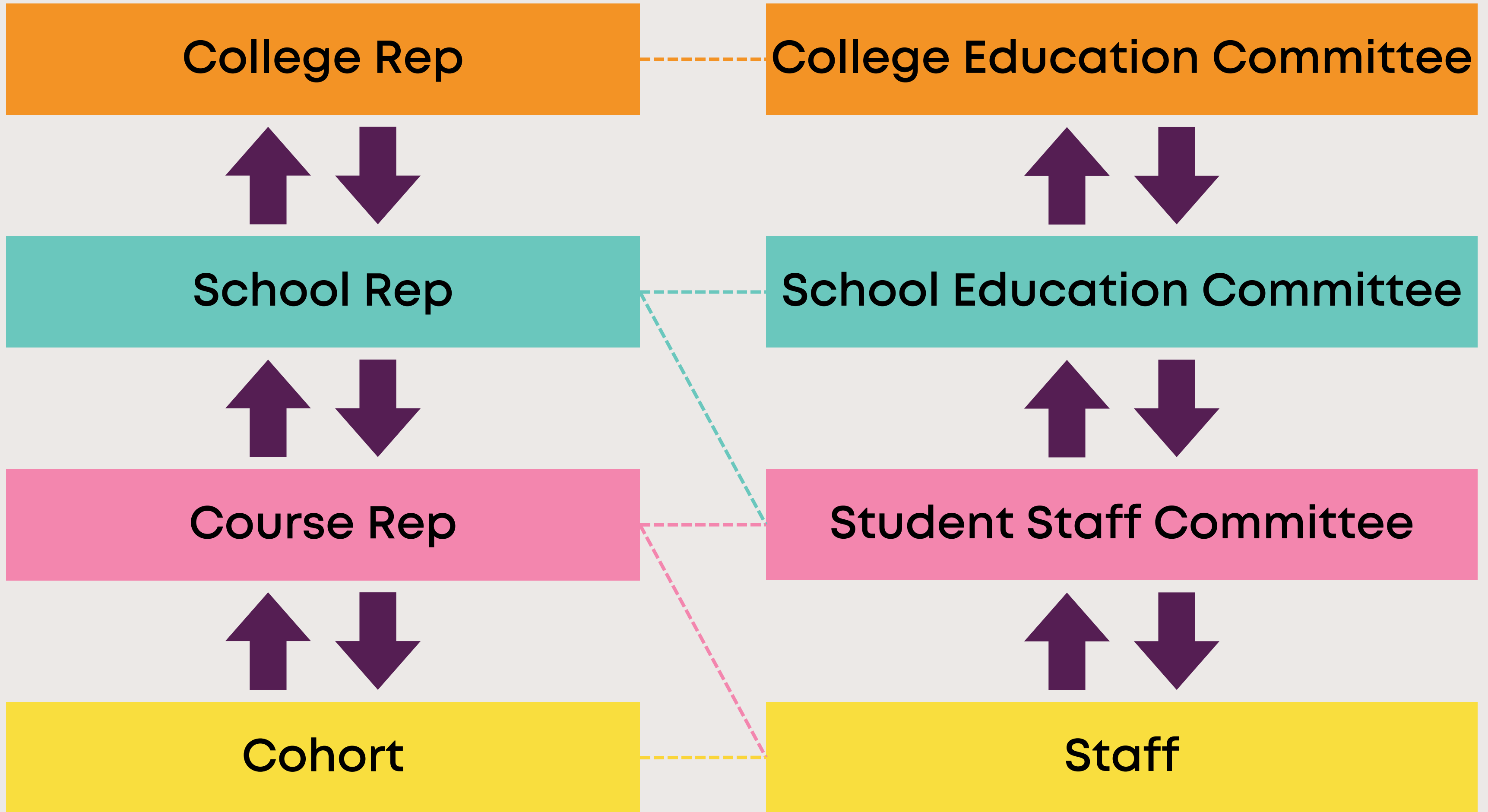
Yes, if you have an opportunity for students or Academic Reps, make sure you send it to su-repteam within the week before the newsletter will go out and we can see if there is space to include it.

# Your Role

What will you be expected to do as a Course Rep?







# Core Responsibilities

- Communicating with staff, students and us
- Attending SSC meetings
- Submitting Course Rep Checkpoints
- Completing your Training
- Attending Course Rep Briefings and Academic Rep Forums
- Working with School and College Reps to be part of the Academic Rep Network



# Representing students is the most important part of your role!

- As a Course Rep your main role is listening to students to learn about what challenges they are facing and what is going well - you must be representative
- Feedback can be both positive and negative (more on this later)
- The key thing here is to make sure you are listening to **all students** - not just your friends



# What feedback should you be collecting?

## Learning and Teaching Resources

The availability of lecture recordings and core text books

## Course Content and Structure

Modules moving around and content being covered at the right time

## Assessment and Feedback

Including delayed marks, lack of information and students feeling underprepared

## Teaching Methods

How interactive the teaching is, making sure that the content is covered and understood by students

## Campus Resources

Library opening times, computer access, outlet opening times, etc.

This can vary a lot depending on your department but overall topics are the same across the university

# What feedback should you be collecting?

## Accessibility

Including the lecture slides being dyslexia friendly, access to lecture theaters and learning resources

## Careers Matters

This can be feedback on a session run by the careers service or suggestions of a new one

## IT Matters

This ranges from the university WiFi to blackboard sites and remote desktop

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Matters

This is where you can raise matters relating to liberation groups as well as any discrimination concerns  
(more on this later)

## Positive Feedback

All of the above topics can involve both negative and positive feedback and areas of good practice

This can vary a lot depending on your department but overall topics are the same across the  
university

# As a Course Rep you will need to:

- **Communicate** with your cohort to gain their feedback – and make sure that the feedback you do receive is representative
- **Communicate** with University staff to pass that feedback on, and reach a good outcome
- **Communicate** with students on your course to let them know the outcomes of discussions – to keep them in the loop of what, if anything, is changing
- **Communicate** with us at the Union to make sure that if you are having issues we can help – and to make sure we celebrate the great things you achieve, too!

As you can see, good communication skills are key to being successful in your Course Rep Role

# What are good communication skills?

Approachability

Articulation

Friendliness

Confidence

Empathy

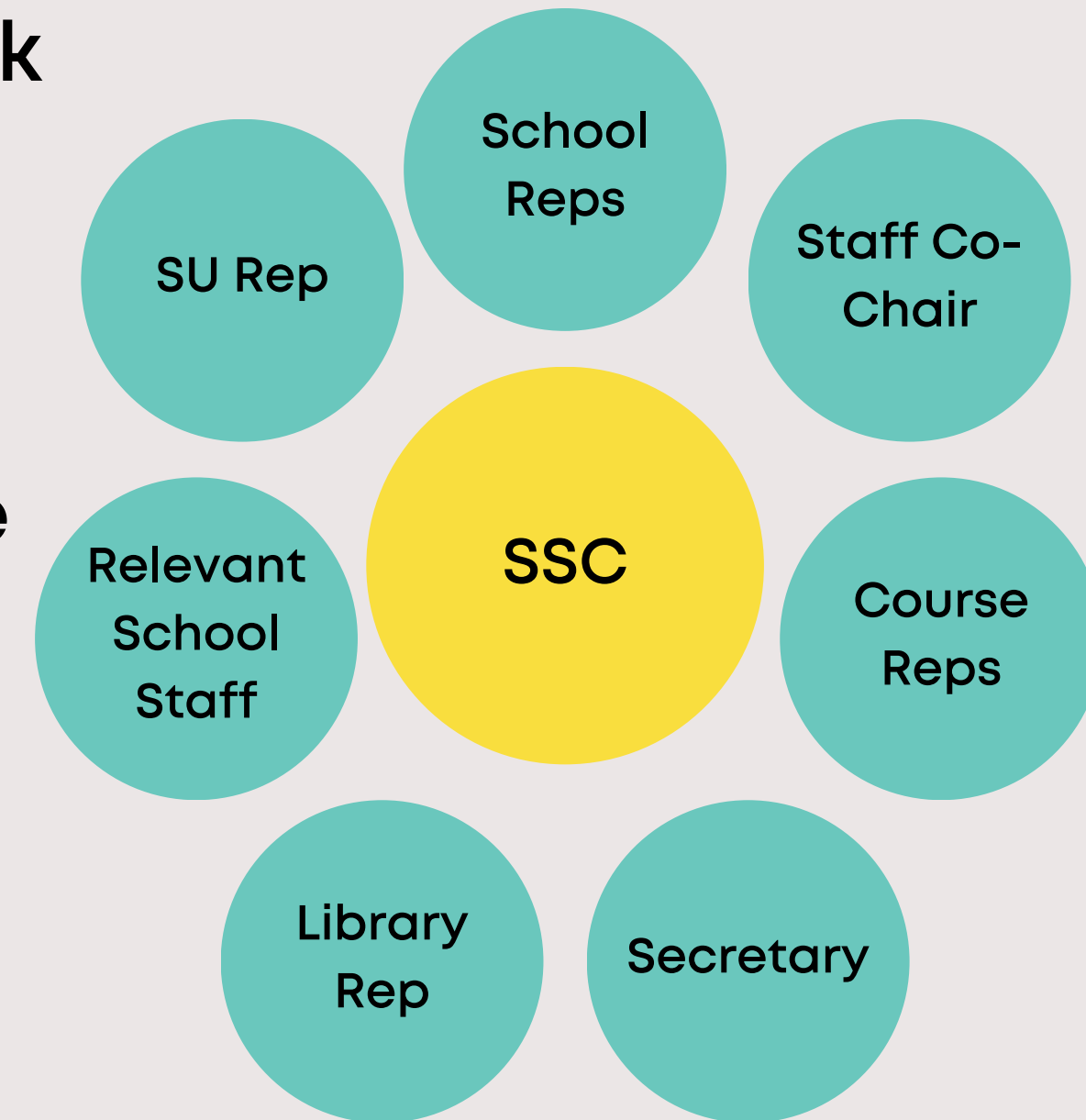
Respect

Active Listening

You will have lots of opportunities to develop these skills - don't worry if you don't feel confident now, it will improve with practice!

# SSCs (Student Staff Committees)

- Primary space for you to take all of your feedback
- A formal meeting with relevant academic staff and the other reps in your school
- Should have an action tracker
- Issues won't be solved immediately but should be followed up
- After each of these meetings, you will need to work with your School Reps to make sure your cohorts receive an update
- If you ever have any issues with your SSCs, reach out to us



More details on SSCs  
will be in  
Masterclass 2

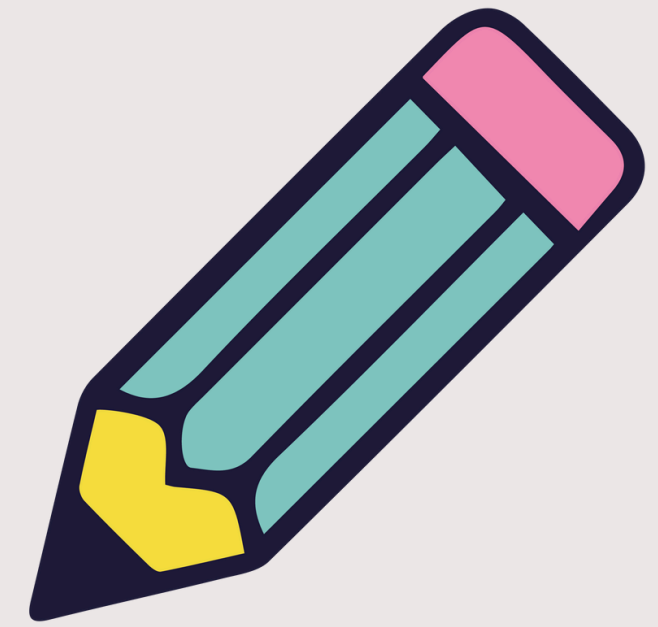


# Course Rep Checkpoints

- There are 4 checkpoint windows across the academic year for each of our intakes (September, January, April)
- It is a short, mostly multiple choice form which helps you reflect on how your role is going
- We use them to help look for areas which need further support and we may ask you to come in for a meeting after the window to see how things are going
- Completing your checkpoints is a mandatory part of your role (more on this later)
- To see when your checkpoints are, check your blackboard site

# Academic Rep Briefings

- A chance to meet with all the other Course and School Reps in your School (/subject area)
- The School Reps will chair the meeting and notes will need to be taken
- You'll hear updates from your College Rep and Education Officer
- Purpose of the meeting:
  - Go over last year's goals and achievements
  - Look out for things that didn't get solved
  - Plan the year ahead and discuss different things you want to improve



Refreshments  
will be  
available

# Academic Rep Forums

- You are invited along side the other Academic Reps to discuss big topics with members of university staff
- What will happen in the event?
  - You'll sit on one of 3 or 4 tables with other reps
  - Staff will rotate around the different tables with a topic
  - You'll be able to give feedback from your School on the given topics
- Topics will be circulated before the event so you will get a chance to gather feedback



Refreshments  
will be  
available

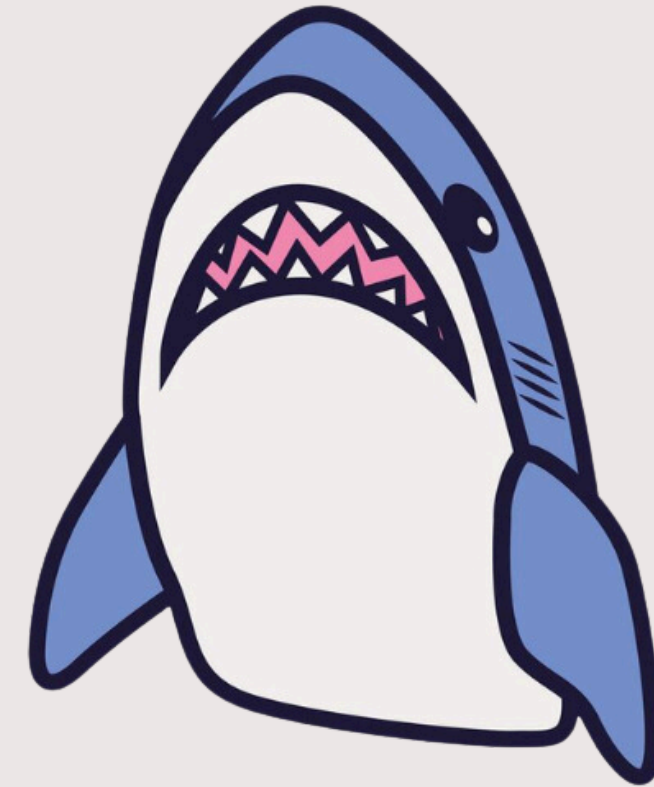
# The Academic Rep Network

- This will mostly be run by your College Rep but our Academic Rep Briefings will be the start
- This will involve:
  - Working with the College Rep to make sure your cohort is represented to the highest levels of this university
- You may be invited to meetings with the College Reps or School Reps to help with getting feedback around different projects they are working on



# Volunteer Agreements

- As a part of your role you will need to sign a volunteer agreement
- This covers the terms of your volunteer role
- This also means that it will count towards hours worked for international students' visa requirements



# What does it mean to be representative?

How do you make sure to represent everyone?



**As a Course Rep, you represent more than just your own voice or that of your friends - you represent the voice of your entire cohort**

**This means you need to represent everyone**

**When bringing forward feedback, as a representative, you must consider the needs of everyone you represent - this includes marginalised and under-represented students**

**It is important to recognise and acknowledge your own privilege and why you might not have the same experience as others**

**Sometimes an easy fix can impact a group of students you might not have considered negatively - this is why it is vital you gather your feedback from a wide range of students**

**Just asking your friends for their feedback is a start – but it is not the end. It is vitally important that you try your best to reflect the views of, and consider the impact on, as many members of your cohort as possible.**

# Liberation Groups

The Liberation Groups are groups of students who face oppressions because of factors that are beyond their control. They are marginalised at university as well as wider society

The five major liberation groups are:

Ethnic Equity

Disability

LGBTQ+

Trans and Non-Binary

Women





# Under-Represented Groups

Universities have their own unique under-represented groups, who do not fall under the category of Liberation group but should still be acknowledged. This is because they are underrepresented at University level, but not at societal level.

These include:

International Students

Part-Time Students

Distance Learning Students

Commuter Students

Mature Students

Students from different Socio-Economic Backgrounds

Part-Time Students

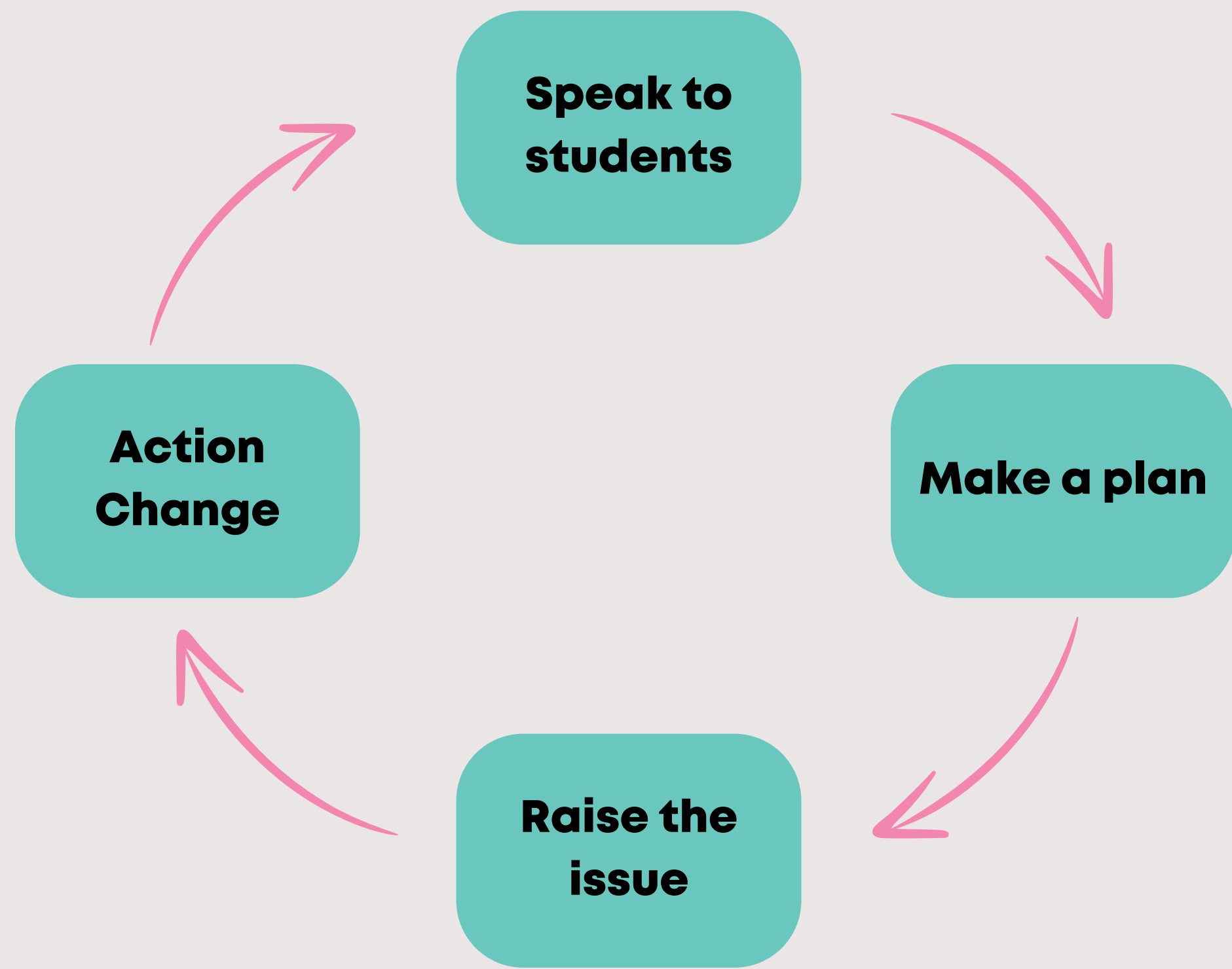
Students with Caring Responsibilities



# The Feedback Loop

How do you make sure students know about what you're doing?





What methods can you think of to get feedback from your cohort as a Course Rep?

What are the pros and cons of these methods?

Emails

Surveys/Polls

Lecture Shout  
Outs

In-person  
conversations

Temperature  
checks

# What do you need to know when receiving feedback?

Once you've received feedback, you need to make sure you have all the details. This applies for all feedback, whether it's unprompted or requested.

**What is the issue, exactly?**

It needs to be specific and actionable

**Who knows about it?**

Who has the student already spoken to?

**How long has it been happening?**

Is it an ongoing or a new issue?

**What evidence do they have?**

Are there any documents, emails, etc. that they can show you?

**What are they happy for you to share?**

This includes their name, course and other personal details

**What do they want to happen?**

While you cannot guarantee an outcome, knowing what someone wants to be the outcome can direct you in your problem solving.

# Positive Feedback

## Why is positive feedback important?

- If staff don't know something is working or going well, they may get rid of or change something that students like
- Furthermore, staff can sometimes apply good practice to other areas when they know about it
- This is why it is vital to bear in mind to bring positive as well as negative feedback along to meetings
- Note: all the same steps of the feedback loop are needed for positive feedback too

# Unexpected feedback

Students may come to you with Unexpected Feedback – all this means is that the feedback is not in response to anything you've done (for example, sending out an email, or circulating a survey)

It is important that you make sure any feedback you take forward is in your remit

Otherwise, it works like any other feedback! You just need to make sure you have all the information you need for the next steps.

## Your Remit:

**Reps collect feedback on all academic elements of the university experience, including assessments, module content learning resources, careers and community.**

Reps aren't trained to deal with personal issues, or casework. This means you won't be able to help students with these kinds of issues. Instead, you should signpost students to the experts who can fully support them.

This could be the SU's Advice Service, or a University service like Wellbeing or Accessibility. It could also be a staff member within your School who is trained to deal with concerns.

## What is Casework?

Working directly with the student on their individual wellbeing needs. This often involves listening to trauma and advocating for them.

### Important Services

The SU Advice Service – [advice@le.ac.uk](mailto:advice@le.ac.uk), [www.leicesterunion.com/advice](http://www.leicesterunion.com/advice)

Student Wellbeing Service – [wellbeing@le.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@le.ac.uk)

Student Welfare Service – [welfare@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@leicester.ac.uk)

Fees and Income - [feesandincome@le.ac.uk](mailto:feesandincome@le.ac.uk)

Visas – [visas@le.ac.uk](mailto:visas@le.ac.uk)

Student Support - <https://le.ac.uk/study/student-support>



# Where should you take your feedback?

To a relevant staff member

To the next SSC or SEC

To the Academic Rep Team

It depends on the type of feedback you have - some things can be easily sorted by talking to your key contact in your school or might have a time pressure so can't wait for a meeting - other things can wait for the next meeting

If you're ever unsure or if the issue is slightly bigger, bring it to us to go through it - it's our job to help you navigate feedback and find out where to go next with it:)

# Anonymity

Wherever you decide to take your feedback - it is important that you don't use names

## Students

- So you can make sure that students feel comfortable coming forwards with feedback
- Ensure that any other identifying factors are also left out when giving your feedback
- You must also ensure that students have consented for you to bring the feedback forwards

## Staff

- The staff member you are giving feedback about may be in the room when you are relaying your feedback
- Use module codes and names rather than naming specific staff members
- Sometimes you'll be asked for the name of the staff member and its okay to let staff know then

# Action change

## **WHO**

Who will be involved?  
Which tasks will be delegated?  
Make sure everyone knows their roles.

## **TIME SCALES**

How long is the plan supposed to take?  
Is there a limit on how long, or a deadline involved?

## **CATCH UPS**

How often will you meet?  
Who will be organising them?

## **HOW**

How are you going to keep check of your plan?  
How will it be monitored and progress ensured?

# Resetting



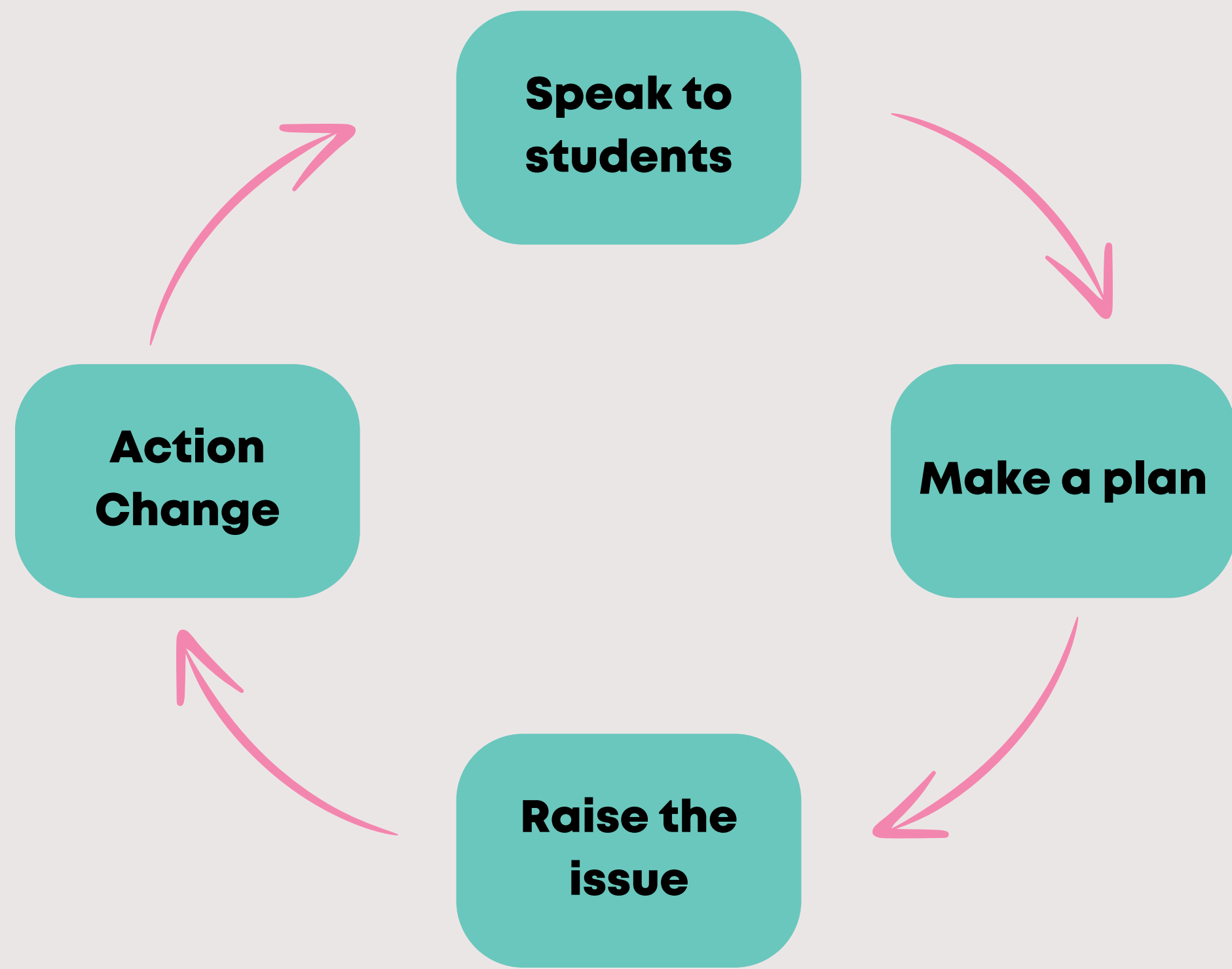
Once you know the next steps, take this back to the student(s) you were representing – and see what they think of the outcome!

This can start the cycle all over again - or bring this issue to a close

You will also need to let students know on a wider level – you can use a lot of the same methods used to gather feedback for this, the Academic Rep Newsletter or the SU website

This last step is important because if students can see change is happening, they might be more likely to come forward with their own feedback





# Accreditation

What is it and how does it work?



# What is Accreditation?


Accreditation is how we keep track of your progress in your role and our way of rewarding you for your hard work across the year

On achieving your accreditation, you earn:

- A certificate with your accreditation grade (more on this later)
- A **£50 gift voucher!**

In order to gain your accreditation, you need to:

- Attend or send apologies to 75% of your SSCs
- Complete 75% of your Checkpoints
- Complete your training
- Sign your volunteer agreement



If you ever have any questions about accreditation, you can pop into the office or drop us an email

# Accreditation Grades

Outside of the achieving criteria, you will be awarded accreditation points for all of the extra events you attend and other activities you get involved in, such as:

- Chairing SSCs
- Attending Academic Rep events
- Taking part in certain surveys

For each of these activities you will receive 1 accreditation point for completing it/taking part, these add up across the year to earn you: Pass, Merit or Distinction, see below for the points required 2023/24

Pass: 0-2 points  
(62% of Achieving Reps)

Merit: 3-5 points  
(16% of Achieving Reps)

Distinction: 6-10 points  
(9% of Achieving Reps)

Please note: both the percentage of Reps and the amount of points needed will change each year, this is just to give you an idea of what last year's reps needed



# Other Rewards

Outside of accreditation, there are other rewards you can receive in your time as Course Rep, see below for the criteria and reward

Just for being a rep

A Course Rep Lanyard

For completing your training

A Course Rep Hoodie

By being nominated by your peers, university staff or us

Academic Rep of the Month:

- Selected monthly
- Nominated through a form on the SU website
- Earn a badge and certificate from the Education Officer as well as a social media shout out

SU Awards:

- At the end of the academic year
- Nominated through a form on the SU website
- Earn a certificate, a social media shout out and an invite to our awards ceremony for being nominated

ANY QUESTIONS?

