



WELFARE REPS



TRAINING 2025 TRAINING 2025 TRAINING 2025 TRAINING 2025



CONGRATULATIONS YOU'RE A REP

- What the Welfare Rep role is and why it matters
- How to represent and advocate for underrepresented students
- How to build trust and confidence in your community
- How to work with Officers, other Reps and SU structures
- How to plan inclusive events and campaigns
- How to recognise boundaries and signpost safely
- How to create positive, student-centred change



YOUR ROLE IN A NUTSHELL



- Represent the needs and experiences of your community
- Speak up on issues affecting underrepresented students
- Act as a bridge between students and the SU
- Help shape SU decisions through Council and Sub Council
- Support visibility, belonging and wellbeing



WHY IT MATTERS

- Underrepresented students often face unseen barriers
- Your perspective improves SU decisions and priorities
- You can bring lived experience into rooms it is missing from
- Your work strengthens inclusion across the university
- Small actions from Reps can create large shifts in culture



WHAT REPRESENTATION INVOLVES



- Listening to students and understanding their concerns
- Spotting themes and patterns in student experiences
- Sharing what you hear in a respectful and accurate way
- Bringing community knowledge into SU discussions
- Working with Officers to influence change



QUESTIONS

- What does advocacy mean to you?
- What type of advocate will you be?



WHAT IS ADVOCACY



- Speaking up even when the issue feels difficult
- Explaining why something matters for your community
- Highlighting barriers that others may not see
- Supporting students to raise concerns in safe ways
- Keeping the focus on student voices rather than your own



BEHAVIOURS OF AN ADVOCATE

- Listen more than you speak
- Ask open and curious questions
- Check you understand what students mean
- Be honest about what you can and cannot do
- Share information clearly and calmly





SKILLS OF AN ADVOCATE

- Communicate confidently in meetings
- Frame issues in ways others can understand
- Connect individual experiences to wider themes
- Speak from evidence and lived experience
- Challenge decisions respectfully and thoughtfully



QUESTIONS



- How will you engage others?
- How can you build a relationship with those you represent?



BUILDING TRUST

- Show respect for all identities and backgrounds
- Be reliable and follow up when you say you will
- Protect students' privacy when they share concerns
- Be approachable and visible within your community
- Create opportunities for students to talk openly



UNDERSTANDING EXPERIENCES



- Recognise that every student's story is different
- Avoid assuming you already know the answer
- Be aware of barriers you may not personally experience
- Reflect on your own position and privilege
- Stay open to being challenged and learning



WHAT MAKING SPACE LOOKS LIKE

- Let quieter students speak before jumping in
- Share airtime fairly in discussions
- Invite perspectives that are missing
- Pay attention to who is not in the room
- Use accessible, inclusive language



ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION



- Create welcoming spaces where students feel safe
- Ask what people need to feel comfortable
- Offer different ways to contribute beyond speaking
- Celebrate contributions and ideas
- Check back with students to show they matter



QUESTIONS

- What is good leadership?
- What type of leader will you be?





HAVING COURAGE FOR OTHERS

- Speak up when something is not fair
- Raise concerns even when it feels awkward
- Represent students honestly even when views differ
- Stay grounded in your community's needs
- Use your voice to open space for others



HAVING INTEGRITY



- Act with honesty and consistency
- Avoid sharing private information
- Declare where you have conflicts of interest
- Stay respectful during disagreements
- Hold yourself accountable to the students you represent



COLLABORATING WITH OFFICERS

- Keep communication clear and constructive
- Flag issues early so Officers can act
- Give honest feedback about what is working
- Help Officers understand student experiences
- Use team strengths to build inclusive change





HOW YOU'LL WORK WITH IFFAT

- Share insights and concerns from your community
- Help shape campaign ideas and priorities
- Support events and outreach activity
- Coordinate communication with student groups
- Plan together for Sub Council meetings



WHY THIS MATTERS



- Reps and Officers bring different strengths
- Working together increases impact
- Joint working avoids duplication
- Consistent messages strengthen student voice
- Shared planning improves wellbeing outcomes



WORKING WITH OTHER REPS

- Share learning and good practice
- Support each other
- Coordinate across communities with similar needs
- Help each other prepare for meetings
- Work on joint projects when issues overlap



YOUR ROLE IN SUB COUNCIL



- Bring forward issues from your community
- Discuss welfare and inclusion priorities
- Shape campaigns with the Officer team
- Contribute to decisions that affect student wellbeing
- Support collective problem solving



THE FOCUS

- Barriers to participation and inclusion
- Student safety and wellbeing
- Community building and visibility
- Support needs and access to services
- Collaborative campaigns across communities





STUDENT COUNCIL

- Represent your community's views
- Contribute to policy discussions
- Share lived experience where helpful
- Hold Officers to account fairly
- Support decisions that align with student interests



HAVING CONFIDENCE



- Prepare by reading your papers
- Ask clarifying questions if needed
- Speak from experience and evidence
- Support quieter voices in the room
- Reflect SU values in your contributions



PLANNING INCLUSIVE EVENTS

- Start with what students need or want
- Think about accessibility from the start
- Choose times and spaces that work for your community
- Communicate clearly and early
- Build in ways for people to feedback



GOOD PRACTICE



- Create a welcoming atmosphere
- Offer low pressure ways to take part
- Partner with relevant student groups
- Check in with the Officer team for support
- Reflect afterwards on what went well



QUESTIONS

How can you keep others safe?

What are your responsibilities?



KNOWING YOUR BOUNDARIES



- You are not a counsellor or caseworker
- You cannot promise to keep all information confidential
- You should not take on issues that risk your wellbeing
- You do not have to solve every problem yourself
- You can always ask for guidance from Officers or staff



SIGNPOSTING SAFELY

- Listen calmly and take the concern seriously
- Acknowledge the student's feelings
- Explain where they can get professional support
- Guide them to SU or university services
- Check if they need help making contact





SAFE PRACTICE

- Think about risks to wellbeing
- Protect privacy and personal information
- Make decisions with care and fairness
- Check your assumptions before acting
- Seek advice when unsure



ACTIVITY



- Give a 30-second elevator pitch
- Who are you
- What's your role
- What are you passionate about
- Why have you become a welfare rep.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your role supports underrepresented students
- Representation starts with listening
- Advocacy grows with practice
- You are part of a wider team
- Change is possible through collaboration



NEXT STEPS



- Connect with your community
- Meet with the Welfare and Diversity Officer
- Prepare for your first Sub Council
- Prepare for your first Student Council
- Reach out for support whenever needed