

Section 12: BIMM Institute Student Representation Scheme

Purpose: Student Feedback

The BIMM annual Quality Cycle ensures that feedback from students and staff is included in annual monitoring. Student questionnaires are set for each module on an annual basis and the module leaders collate this information and respond to it in their annual report.

Students also give their feedback through student representation.

Elected Student Representatives report 3 times a year at college Boards of Studies (BoS) and may be elected to attend other key academic committees such as:

- Academic Board (AB)
- Learning, Teaching & Enhancement Committee (LTEC)
- Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Student Reps are asked to comment on:

- The quality of their courses
- Core decision-making that affects their courses
- The student experience as a whole

The Board of Studies Meeting is the main opportunity for student representatives to pass on and discuss feedback gathered from other students on their course with the members of the academic team (this is a standing item on the agenda for the meeting under 'Report from Student Reps'). It also provides the College with an opportunity to feedback information to peers that should be passed on to all students.

Process:

- Student Reps are elected by secret ballot during Term 1 of the academic year;
- Candidates are asked to make themselves known to the Course Leader early in Term 1 and may present a short manifesto to their peers prior to election;
- Reps normally serve for one calendar year* but there is no limit on standing for re-election whilst still a student at BIMM.

*this does not apply in BIMM Dublin due to the different academic calendar.

Benefits of the Student Rep Scheme

Student Reps are democratically elected to represent their peers. They enable a useful and effective communication link between staff and students. They provide helpful feedback to staff on courses, raise concerns in a constructive manner, give feedback to other students on why particular decisions are made, and can help to pre-empt concerns becoming serious issues.

Why become a Student Representative?

- To represent the views of others
- To enhance your personal development
- To develop valuable transferable skills such as:
 - Communication
 - Organisation
 - Team work
 - Negotiation skills and conflict management
 - Time management
 - Speaking in public
 - Confidence

What can you gain from being a Student Rep?

Experience of taking on this role will benefit you in other areas of your academic life and beyond:

- The opportunity to develop skills sought by employers
- Valuable experience, which can be highlighted in your CV
- Important experience of formal meetings
- Knowledge of your institution and current issues in higher education
- The chance to make a real difference to the experience of students at BIMM

What is the role of a Student Representative?

BIMM Student Representatives are expected to:

- Self-publicise the role to students in your cohort/college
- Consult students to find out their opinions on:
 - BIMM
 - Their course
 - The student experience
- To collect the views of students on matters relating to their learning experience and to help find solutions
- If necessary, refer students with individual problems to appropriate sources of help - e.g. the Student Services team
- Represent the views of students through attendance at:
 - Boards of Studies (one per term per course)
 - Key Academic Committees – see above (one per term, one rep for each college)
- Inform students of outcomes and follow up on any agreed action points from the meetings

Support for Student Representatives

Student Services also hosts a training session for all new Student Reps shortly after their election and a Student Rep Handbook is provided. BIMM has provided a dedicated Student Rep page on Moodle that includes separate college-level and group-wide forums that enable Student Reps to communicate with each other.

Resolution of complaints procedure for Student Representatives:

By standing for and accepting a post of Student Representative, Reps agree to adhere to the roles and guidelines as set out above.

If a complaint or concern (by students, Reps or BIMM staff) is raised where a Student Rep is unable to fulfil their duties, the following procedure should be followed:

- The complainant should informally approach the Rep in question and try to resolve the situation
- The complainant should contact Student Services or the Course Leader to mediate a solution, with the possible outcomes being:
 - SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely) being agreed for the Student Rep
 - The Student Rep stepping down

Policy for replacing a Student Representative in-year:

When a Student Representative is no longer in post, the other Reps will decide between the following options:

- The remaining Reps cover the extra work load
- The remaining Rep for that course covers the work load
- A new Rep is elected as follows:
 - Where only one candidate is interested, the support of the relevant cohort should be sought in class;
 - Where more than one candidate is interested, elections will take place.