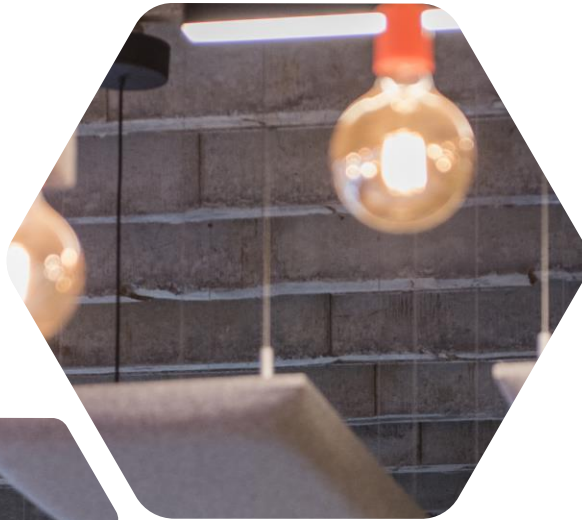


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# Course Rep Handbook 2020 - 2021





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# Welcome



Welcome to the Course Rep Handbook! Here you will find all the Information that you need to make the most out of your new role. It is an amazing opportunity to be able to make a difference here at the University and as a course rep your voice goes a long way. In fact, you are the core of what we as a Students' Union do, our primary role is to represent your interests as students and we couldn't do that without you. Your voice is the most important thing and we want to hear what you and your cohort have to say. It is important that you give honest feedback, as it is the main driver for change on your course. Make no mistake, one person can make a big difference.

So if you ever need someone to talk to or reflect with, please come and talk to myself or Chloe who is your Vice President, we will listen and help make necessary change.

I hope you have a fantastic year and look forward to seeing you over the year.

Thank you

**Ebony Banks**

**Students' Union President 2020-2021**

Congratulations on being elected as a Course Representative, where you will play a key role in helping the University to gather student feedback. As Deputy Vice-Chancellor with particular responsibility for the quality of our academic provision here at the University, I work closely with the Students' Union to ensure that together we continue to develop student learning opportunities across all courses. Your role as a Course Rep is vital in this respect. By gathering the views of students you can help influence improvements at course and university level, shaping future developments and ensuring that we offer the best possible opportunities for all students to succeed in their studies.

I am delighted that you have taken on this important role and look forward to meeting you during Course Rep training.

With best wishes for the year ahead

**Dr Claire Taylor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor**

# Your Students' Union

The Students' Union is a representative body for the students – run by the students, for the students. The Students' Union aims to promote the welfare and equality of the students at Glyndŵr University, and is there to offer support to anyone who has any concerns whilst they are studying at the University. As an enrolled Glyndŵr University student, whether you are studying at the Glyndŵr University campus, or at one of the *local, national or international **Partner Institutions*** or on placement as part of your programme of study, you are automatically a member of the Students' Union. If you wish to opt out of membership, please contact the Students' Union. The Students' Union will play a vital role in your time at Glyndŵr University. As well as offering advice, guidance and information, it also helps and encourages students to run and participate in sports and societies.

The Students' Union is an Independent, autonomous, self-governing body. The President and Vice-President are the two full-time sabbatical officers elected into office annually by the student body, with a maximum term of office of two years. As a Course Representative, you have the opportunity to engage in the promotion and development of the Students' Union as well participating towards policy change within the Union, the Institution and nationally through the NUS. Your point of contact as a Course Rep is Katie Taffinder – Student Voice Co-ordinator.

Representation and Democracy Manager	Marc Caldecott	<a href="mailto:Marc.Caldecott@glyndwr.ac.uk">Marc.Caldecott@glyndwr.ac.uk</a>	01978 294404
Student Voice Co-ordinator	Katie Taffinder	<a href="mailto:Katie.Taffinder@glyndwr.ac.uk">Katie.Taffinder@glyndwr.ac.uk</a>	019782932316
President	Ebony Banks	<a href="mailto:supresident@glyndwr.ac.uk">supresident@glyndwr.ac.uk</a>	01978 293225
Vice President	Chloe Williams	<a href="mailto:suvs@glyndwr.ac.uk">suvs@glyndwr.ac.uk</a>	01978 293296
Student Advisor	Kim Lloyd	<a href="mailto:Kim.Lloyd@glyndwr.ac.uk">Kim.Lloyd@glyndwr.ac.uk</a>	01978 294453
Student Advisor	Cath Clark	<a href="mailto:Cath.Clark@glyndwr.ac.uk">Cath.Clark@glyndwr.ac.uk</a>	01978 294453



# What is a Course Rep and Faculty Rep?

## Course Reps

We rely on Course Reps to be active campaigning members of the Students' Union who work towards the goal of improving the student experience. You are our ears to the ground, working to resolve local departmental issues such as, feedback standards or the facilities available to the students and much more. Additionally, informing the department about what works well, what the students on your course have enjoyed and what should be built upon in the future is just as useful.

As a Course Rep your role is to express the collective view of the students on your course and ensure that this view is heard by those in a position to effect change. This may involve lobbying your Course Leader and Programme Leader for more resources, timely feedback, better timetables, or improved facilities. It may be telling the officers of the Students' Union that the students you represent think that Union and the University should be doing more for them. On occasion, you may be required to represent a view you do not necessarily agree with, but if it is the view of the students, then it is your responsibility to articulate this to the best of your abilities.

## Faculty Reps

Faculty Reps are elected by students from within the Faculty to gather the wider views of the student population through liaising with Course Reps. Faculty Reps will become full members of Student Council which decides on Union policy, mandates people to put policies into action and ensures the elected officers are representing students effectively. Student Council also discusses topics raised by students, from political debate down to the smallest areas of University life. It is the most important forum for debate and discussion, and will have a major influence on the direction and development of the University and Students' Union in the coming years.

Faculty Reps run academic campaigns on issues important to you! Faculty Reps are also members of a number of Faculty level committees as student members to provide the student voice at a Faculty level. There will be opportunities for you to meet with your Faculty Rep through organised sessions arranged by the Students' Union. For more information please visit: [www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk](http://www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk) or email [Katie.Taffinder@Glyndwr.ac.uk](mailto:Katie.Taffinder@Glyndwr.ac.uk)

For students at our Partner Institutions we can support your journey by offering online Course Rep training, and where possible we will collaborate with partner institutions to offer direct training sessions at your institution.



## What is in it for me?

As a rep you can gain.....

- Recognition from your peers via personal feedback
- Opportunity to be nominated for an award at the Annual SU Awards!
- Valuable experience that is transferable for your future careers
- Access to the extra 20 credit module Advocacy Module
- An opportunity to be a part of the Students' Union's volunteering scheme – Glyn Gives!

But above all you will be making positive change to the student experience, not just for your peers but for students in years to come.



# Responsibilities of a Course Rep

## Course Rep responsibilities include:

- Complete the online training and take advantage of further training opportunities.
- Network with key associates of the Students Union and the University at the annual Course Rep Conference. (where possible)
- Gather opinions and feedback from their peers, via the online feedback tool TELLGLYN <https://tellglyn.co.uk/>
- Listen to what students tell them and present their views in a constructive, clear way - even if you don't agree!
- Ensure that their personal views don't impact on their ability to represent your peers.
- Attend Student Voice Forum meetings to talk to staff about what's working well, what might need changing and any new ideas they might have relating to their course.
- Pass on any topics they would like to discuss in the meetings to the organiser so they can be added to the agenda
- Communicate with other Course Reps and Faculty Reps to pick up on recurring issues.
- Promote and support the academic staff with the Student Evaluation Module survey SEMs to engage honest and open feedback
- Close the feedback loop! Make sure they work with academic staff to inform students of the outcomes of any issues raised at Student Voice Forums.
- Update the Students' Union on any changes that they make.

**Please use the 'Tell Glyn' online tool to record your feedback. Information on Tell Glyn can be found in this handbook and the tool itself can be found on the Students' Union website or at [www.tellglyn.co.uk](http://www.tellglyn.co.uk) .**

**The Students' Union is expected to:**

- Provide initial training to help be an effective Course Rep, alongside additional training opportunities throughout the year.
- Organise networking events for reps to meet fellow Course Reps and Faculty Reps.
- Hold events or meetings with Reps throughout the year to ensure lines of communication are maintained between Officers and the University.
- Be on hand to help reps with anything related to their experience as a Course Rep
- Maintain a list of reps on the SU database.

**Important: From time to time students may approach you with sensitive and personal issues. Please do not try to resolve these issues and refer students to Kim Lloyd or Cath Clarke Student Advisors at the Students' Union.**

**The University is expected to:**

- Facilitate democratic course rep elections via programme leaders.
- Provide information about meetings, dates/ times and venues to Student Voice Forums and committees well in advance.
- Provide documentation when relevant, such as agenda and minutes for their meetings
- Recommend appropriate members of staff to refer student issues to.
- Consider all feedback presented by Reps.
- Act on feedback where appropriate.
- Work with course reps to feedback to students and close the feedback loop.



# Course Rep Elections



**Elections Will be open**

**from the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**Close the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**If you would like to become a course rep, please contact your programme leader to inform them of your interest.**

Course Reps are elected by their cohort not by staff. (This ensures our democratic processes are met). Please note that course reps who were elected in previous years are not automatically reps for this academic year unless the cohort agree. Brand new elections should take place each year.

We ask that a minimum of TWO representatives are elected per course per year.

Academic staff should ask those who wish to run for course rep to put their names forward and an election should take place. As we are all mainly working online, our recommendation is that students put forward their reasons to become rep and these are shared to students by the programme team, the election process would then take place by students emailing their preferred candidate to the programme leader. This is just one idea but the process must be democratic and fair. Once elected, staff should email Katie Taffinder by the deadline provided above.

Lastly, elected reps will receive an email to their student account from the Students' Union informing them of the next steps to take in terms of training and support



# Student Voice Forum (SVFs)

SVF meetings are a chance for students to formally discuss the quality of their learning experience with academic staff. It is also an important phase that either escalates or closes the student feedback from Tell Glyn. This will then conclude with staff and partners creating solutions as a result of the feedback.

- Course Reps and students to feedback to staff about their programme and overall student experience
- Reviewing the current programme(s) to inform change and improvement regularly
- Students to feed 'the Student Voice' into the university's strategic decision-making for the future.



## When to attend

The meetings are usually held **twice a year** at the end of **semester 1** and **2**. **An invitation will be sent to all listed attendees via Moodle or University email system. The course rep is responsible for knowing the date, time and location of where the SVF is held** The meetings can take place in many ways such as face to face or online.

**\*Attending SVFs is mandatory for All Course Reps**

## Who can attend?

- The meeting will be chaired by someone who is independent from the management and delivery of the programme(s)
- Course Reps within the programme
- All enrolled students in the programme can be invited by course reps
- Course and module leaders within the-programme
- A member of the Students' Union can be invited when necessary

### **What can be discussed?**

Although there is a set agenda at SVF meetings, it also gives you the chance to feed back to staff about your course, shape changes for future enhancement of the course and also the University strategic decision making. You should contact the chair beforehand if you wish to include anything on the agenda.

### **What happens after an SVF?**

Feedback on actions from SVFs should be provided to students via the Moodle Hub within two weeks of the SVF meeting. The course leader or relevant staff members will follow up any issues and will notify course representatives of any outcome or changes. It is then expected that the Course reps and Programme Leader will feed these outcomes back to students through various methods discussed earlier in this handbook and will assist the department in any 'Together We' campaigns.



More information on Student Voice forums, including the SVF Guide can be found on the Students' Union website and Moodle.



## National Student Survey (NSS)

The **NSS** is a high profile annual census of nearly half a million students across the UK. Conducted annually since 2005, it is an established survey and produces useful data to help institutions and students' unions identify areas of success and areas for enhancement. The NSS is completed by final year students and gives a chance for students to give feedback on their student experience through a scoring method on areas such as module delivery, assessments and assessment feedback etc. The results of this survey go public and are used to determine where the University will sit in the University league tables. During SVF meetings, students will have the opportunity to see the previous year's NSS scores from their course and suggest ways for the course to improve for the future. As a Course Rep, it is expected that you will support the Students' Union and the University to encourage final year students to fill out this important survey! More information on the NSS will be given at Course Rep training.



## External Examiner Report

The external examiner report will:

- Ensure that the performance of students is assessed fairly
- Advise the University on whether the academic standards of all of its awards are consistent with the standards of similar awards elsewhere;
- Provide an external evaluation of the effectiveness of academic regulations and an external monitoring of the consistent and fair application of those regulations and associated procedures

Course Reps should be sent a copy of the External Examiner's report by the Programme team before each SVF.





# Tell Glyn

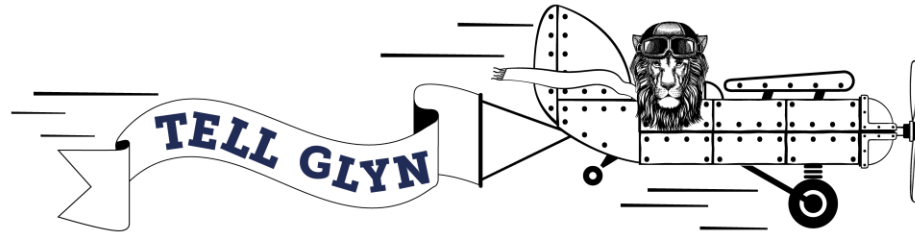


The Students' Union and the University have worked in partnership to create an online feedback tool that can be used by **all** Glyndwr University. 'Tell Glyn' is designed to enable students to tell us what works well and what doesn't work well on their programme of study. Additionally, Tell Glyn gathers feedback about any University areas that are of concern to our students.

Tell Glyn can also be used by Course Reps too! It is a really useful way to log any feedback you receive from students. When a Course Rep uses Tell Glyn it gives them the option to identify as a Course Rep and it asks how many students are present, so it is particularly useful when you are stood in front of your class and need to log all the feedback! Tell Glyn is also mobile friendly!

All **academic** feedback will be automatically sent to your specific Course Rep for your programme, who will action it by opening a dialogue with the course or programme leader. In addition, the dedicated Student Voice Coordinator from the SU will receive, and examine, all feedback and the final outcome. Furthermore, to ensure the University is acting upon and challenging feedback, a regular review of Tell Glyn feedback will be actioned by the Universities Senior team (Associate Deans) of the faculty. This means that every piece of academic feedback that is entered via Tell Glyn will be seen by the Associate Deans who will ensure that the most appropriate action is completed.

The Students' Union will also have a copy of all anonymous feedback given.



# Tell Glyn



Students and Course Reps should use Tell Glyn to feedback on academic and operational areas. Anything academic will be sent to their Course Rep, anything operational such as I.T and Wi-Fi will be sent direct to that department so that students can receive a direct response. The best thing about this tool is you can also feedback anonymously if you want! But if you do feedback anonymously please Tell Glyn as much information as possible about the issues that bothering you.

Follow Glyn's prompts throughout the feedback form, ensuring all fields are filled and not using N/A.

For example, tell us

Details of what the problem is...

Where the problem is?

Is it an academic issue, expand the details to help us fix the issue?

Is it a room, building or outside?

Is it computer, IT, a lack of books or access to academic support.

Time and date and anything else that YOU think is relevant and that will help us resolve any issue promptly

*Local, national or international* **Partner Institutions** please note that students of partner institutions can only feedback on academic matters currently only but can feedback on any operational matter during their Student Voice Forum.

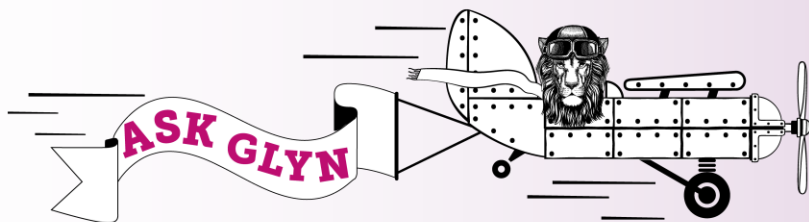
As a Course Rep, Tell Glyn will be your saviour and we ask that you signpost students to use the tool whenever they have feedback.

You can visit Tell Glyn at [www.Tellglyn.co.uk](http://www.Tellglyn.co.uk)

The Students' Union believe that Tell Glyn is not only a valuable tool for students but also *staff of Glyndwr University*. So, in addition to the students being able to submit operational feedback, now staff will be able to take advantage of this option too.

If you are a not receiving any feedback from Tell Glyn and you think you should, please contact the Student Voice Co-ordinator, Katie Taffinder. [Katie.Taffinder@glyndwr.ac.uk](mailto:Katie.Taffinder@glyndwr.ac.uk)





## ASK Glyn

As a Course Rep, if you are unsure about how you can help a student that approaches you, signpost them to ASK Glyn.

Ask Glyn is an online signposting tool that directs students to the relevant people depending on their enquiry. It is extremely user friendly and can signpost students to the information they need at the click of a button. Check it out at: [www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk](http://www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk)

# Advocacy Module



This professional course has been designed to provide the skills and knowledge to practise independent advocacy. The skills and knowledge acquired through this course will be transferable, enabling learners from a range of disciplines to employ the principles and practices of independent advocacy in a variety of settings.

You will learn more about the purpose and principles of independent advocacy, the advocacy relationship, how to develop and maintain the advocacy relationship and how to represent the voice of others. This course will expand on your understanding of the Course Representative system at Wrexham Glyndwr University and give you a formal acknowledgment of the training you have undertaken and the role you have fulfilled as a Course Rep.

This course will run more than once during the year on a first come first served basis. It is very popular so make sure you sign up quick. All the information for this module including the dates and how to sign up can be found at the Students' Union website [www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk](http://www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk)


**Assessments will be practical and not written.**





# To Do!



1. Have the dates for all of the Student Voice Forum (SVF) meetings of the year?  
If you can't attend one, organise replacements early and brief them with Tell Glyn and oral reports.
  2. Ensure you attend training sessions online or physically. If you are a returning Course Rep please attend the training as there is always exciting developments throughout the year.
  3. Have access to module feedback, external examiners reports, and NSS data? Your personal tutor/programme leader can provide you with these or they will be available on the Student Voice Forum Hub on Moodle.
  4. Have access to all of your students, including off-campus, mature, International, home, part-time, distance learners. Also, have a communication method to get through to all of the above. Here are some ideas on how you can do this:
    - E-mail distribution list
    - Space on the departmental notice board for pictures, current issues, contact details and feedback
    - Pigeon hole in the department (This will become handy for any anonymous comments, completed questionnaires, or a way for the department to leave papers of interest for you (make sure you publicise this if new at your meetings)
    - Internet forum
    - Facebook group
    - Weekly drop-in sessions
    - Updates through dept. societies etc
  5. Sign up to the extra 20 credit Advocacy module if you wish.
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# Get involved!

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From time to time the Students' Union may contact you to support them with campaigns or events. Getting involved with Union gives you the chance to meet other students whilst supporting your Union to fight for a better student experience. There are a number of societies that you may be interested in and if you contact us we can support you to find the right society for you. Whilst we will endeavour to fully support you during your time as a Course Rep, we understand that things do not always go to plan which may impact your responsibilities. If you are unable to continue to be a Course Rep, please let the Students' Union know so that we are able to find a replacement.

