

STUDENTS MATTER

2009-10 edition

Making connections between students, their representatives and staff at Dundee University to improve the quality of the student experience



STUDENTS MATTER aims to show how student representation can improve your learning experience by explaining:

- how student representation operates within Dundee University and its Students' Association (DUSA)

- how you can get involved

**the
Union**

PLUS@Dundee
www.dundee.ac.uk/aatu/plus.htm

REPRESENTATION FROM YOUR ANGLE

You can also get more information from: www.dusa.co.uk and www.dundee.ac.uk/QAF/studentrepresentationoverview.htm



This joint University-DUSA document outlines the representation structure in place to help you put your views forward. However, none of this works without your help. I would like to encourage you all to take part and get involved in representation. Your views really do make a difference; the staff are eager to listen and do their best to help

you. If you feel I can assist in any way do not hesitate to contact me. Drop in and see me on Level 4 of the Union, I'm in the offices behind the glass door. Alternatively, email me on deputypresident@dusa.co.uk or call 01382 386007.

**RIMPLE PALANA,
DEPUTY PRESIDENT 2009-10, DUSA**



When I started in first year, I decided to run for class rep thinking it would be similar to being a class rep at school. It was the complete opposite! The lecturers on the student staff committees really take on your ideas, often resulting in action which impacts your whole degree programme. Get involved, meet new people and most importantly, have fun, there are so many different ways to get involved with student life.

**NATALIE COUPAR,
SCHOOL PRESIDENT
OF HUMANITIES**

DUNDEE'S REPRESENTATION AND FEEDBACK STRUCTURES PUT SIMPLY



Many students enter University thinking that the teacher-pupil relationship from school still applies. Instead, the truth is that both students and staff are seeking after new knowledge and understanding in a partnership. Many staff will tell you that they learn a lot themselves from lecturing, while many graduates say that learning relationships have had a profound effect on them. The key is to interact. The jargon phrase for this is that students are 'co-creators of their own learning'. At Dundee, we certainly believe in this principle and it means that we take full account of all forms of student feedback.

**JAMES CALDERHEAD,
VICE-PRINCIPAL (EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

‘ ...students are ‘co-creators
of their own learning’ ,



Being a School President is a really good way to get involved with the organisation in the university as a whole; as well as being the voice of students in your school, it offers you the opportunity to engage with all levels of the representation structure. It looks great on the CV and builds skills

outside of your degree and it is a great way to network and meet new people. Whether you become a class rep, a School President, or join DUSA's SRC, I strongly encourage you to get involved!

**LYNSEY-ANN BURKE,
SCHOOL PRESIDENT OF LIFE SCIENCES**



Your time at uni is about you. The staff and student reps are here to help you with any problems you may be having. My best advice is don't be afraid to talk to them, especially your class reps and your School President; they're going through the same and they have put themselves forward to help you! There is a great support network

here at Dundee and I've had experience on both sides; as a class rep and as a student needing advice. It can be tough to first break the ice but it's worth it to have someone you know you can turn to. Use it and get involved!

**FIONA GROVES, THIRD YEAR CLASS REP,
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WORK
& COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

Student Representatives 

University Structures



DUSA Executive

Court, Senate and their Committees

Students Representative Council (SRC)

College Boards

Services & Facilities Sub-committee

Learning & Teaching Sub-committee

School Boards

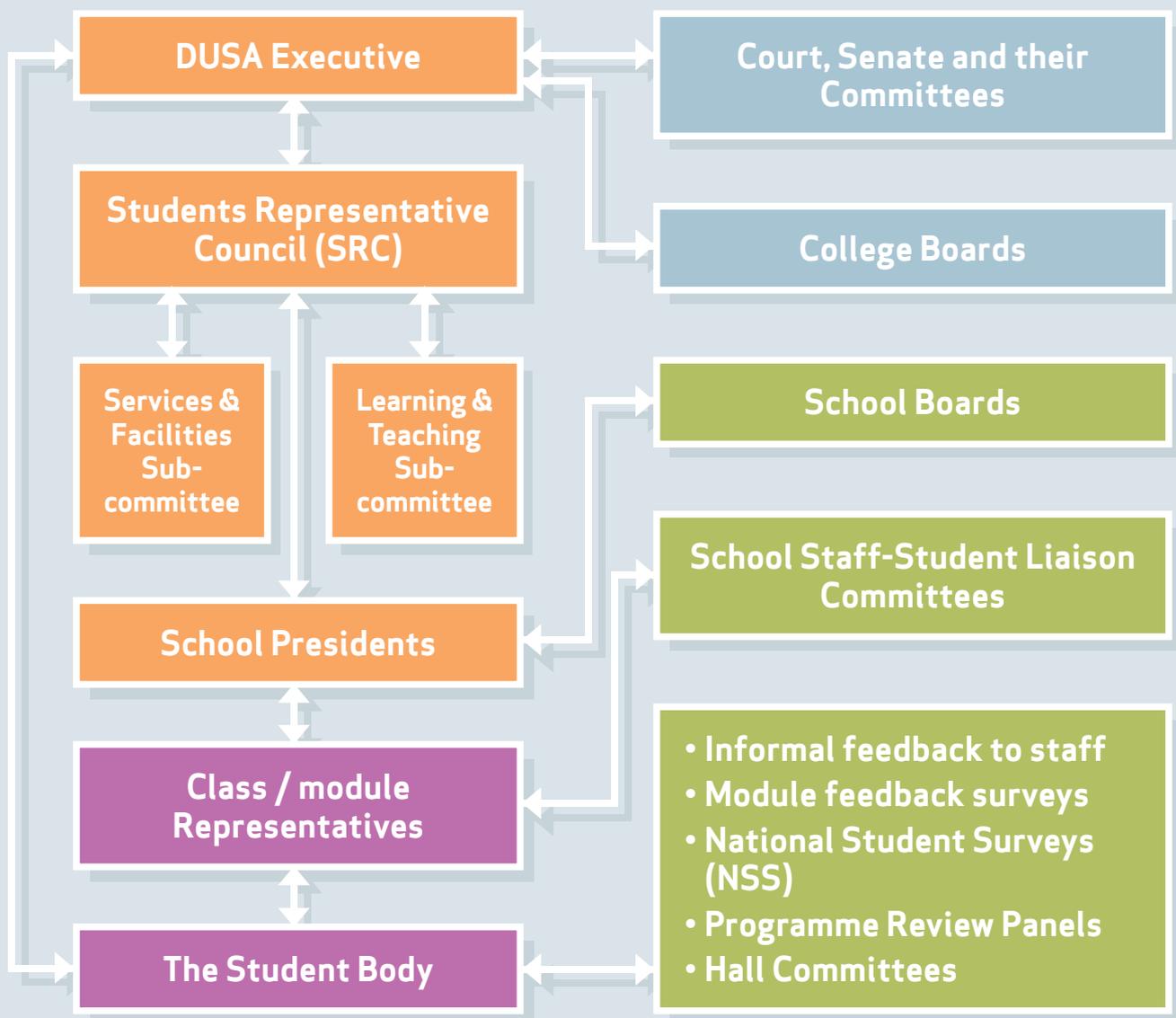
School Presidents

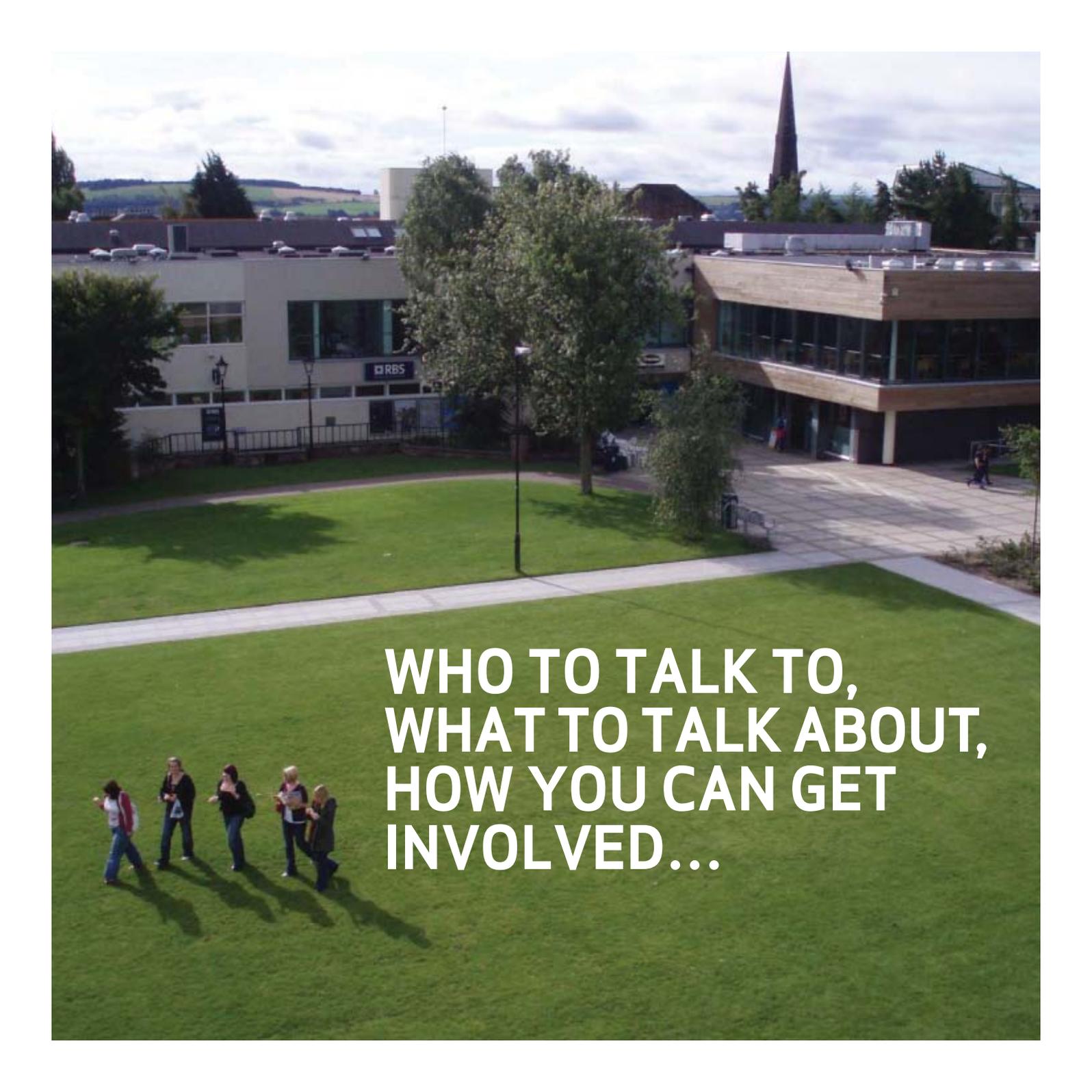
School Staff-Student Liaison Committees

Class / module Representatives

- Informal feedback to staff
- Module feedback surveys
- National Student Surveys (NSS)
- Programme Review Panels
- Hall Committees

The Student Body





**WHO TO TALK TO,
WHAT TO TALK ABOUT,
HOW YOU CAN GET
INVOLVED...**

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (SRC)

The highest level of student representation. Every problem, large or small, gets discussed here. SRC meets four times a semester to make sure that your problems are sorted and your voice is heard. In fact, members are elected each year in October, and you, yes you, can join them. All school presidents are SRC members.

Look out for election info and check out the SRC online at dusa.co.uk under the section on **Representation**.

SUBCOMMITTEES OF SRC

There are two subcommittees of the SRC; Learning & Teaching; and Services & Facilities. Further information is available from dusa.co.uk under the section on **Representation**.

DUSA EXECUTIVE

Seven student representatives, four sabbatical and three non-sabbatical.

The sabbatical members of the Student Executive are students who have dedicated a year of their life to making sure that your students' association is run the way you want it. They work full time from their offices, which are on level 4 in the Union, and their doors are always open.

Minutes of meetings are available from dusa.co.uk under the section on **Representation**.

CLASS/MODULE REPRESENTATIVES

Also elected by fellow students, generally at the beginning of each academic session. They have an important role to play in enabling communication between the student body, the academic staff and DUSA - and in promoting constructive change and improvements to learning and teaching at the University of Dundee. They are your first point of contact in resolving any issues you have from coursework and teaching to the temperature of the lecture room. These guys are here to help!

To contact your representative, ask your School secretary or visit dusa.co.uk under **representation**.

SCHOOL PRESIDENTS

Every school has an elected school president who is elected during the second semester for the following academic session and is the figurehead for the students in their school. To do this, they have access to School Board and Staff-student Liaison Committees as well as the backing of a member of the DUSA Executive. In short, the most important representative in your school.

In addition to all this, they also represent your school at SRC. Presidents provide a direct link between you and the top of the representation tree. Visit your School's website to find out who he/she is or ask your School secretary.

I wouldn't be in this job if I didn't enjoy interacting with students. I'm always happy to discuss academic issues and to act on student views on teaching and assessment. I often find I can suggest work-rounds or other ideas to help.

**WILL WHITFIELD,
SENIOR LECTURER,
COLLEGE OF LIFE SCIENCES**



REPRESENTATION FROM THE STAFF ANGLE



Like most staff, I look forward to receiving module feedback. It's always good to see the efforts we put in reflected in appreciative comments and always a salutary lesson when one's defects are pointed out (especially retro dress sense). I've definitely improved my lectures on the basis of past student comments.

**STUART CROSS,
SENIOR LECTURER, SCHOOL OF LAW**



Student feedback is discussed with students and staff and School Boards throughout the year and forms an integral part of the review process.

**LOUISA CROSS,
SCHOOL SECRETARY, COMPUTING**

WITH A FINAL WORD FROM THE ACADEMIC SECRETARY...

Students are the most important group in any university community, so your views matter. That engagement can take many different routes, through the Students' Association, Colleges and Schools, but it has a common aim - to improve the quality of the Dundee University experience for everyone. Effective student representation is essential to ensure that services meet students' requirements. Student representation is also a vital part of the University's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), providing opportunities for students to contribute to the development and enhancement of their learning through the delivery of modules and degree programmes.

**IAN FRANCIS,
ACADEMIC SECRETARY**



NOW YOU KNOW ABOUT THE STRUCTURE... ...HERE'S THE BIT ABOUT WHO'S INVOLVED AND WHAT THEY DO

DUSA and SRC

Student representation, welfare, social events

DUSA Executive Committee (DEC) - DUSA President, Deputy President, Vice-President Student Activities, Vice-President Communications, Vice-President Campaigns (NS), Vice-President Student Welfare (NS), Honorary Secretary (NS).

Student Representative Council - DEC, School Presidents and a number of designated student members.

School Boards

Management of teaching

Each **School Board** includes one student from each of the degree programmes in the School, nominated annually by the students plus the School President. The School Board may in addition authorise the nomination of one or more postgraduates.

Residences

Student representation in University residences

The residents of each Hall of Residence (Belmont, Heathfield, Seabraes, Tay Mills and West Park) form the Halls' Students Association. They elect their flat representatives, Student Committees and Hall Presidents in the beginning of each academic year. The Committee runs the Hall's affairs during the academic year and represents the residents before the University, the Dundee Student Villages and DUSA.

Find out more at: www.dundee.ac.uk/studentservices/supportworker/

Student Feedback Mechanisms

Informal feedback to staff
Module feedback surveys
National Student Survey (NSS)
Programme Review

Informal feedback to staff - face to face or via *My Dundee* discussion boards.

Annual Module and Annual Programme monitoring - documented student feedback for taught programmes. Staff responses monitored by School Boards and Learning and Teaching Committee.

National Student Survey - views of final year students, see: www.dundee.ac.uk/principalsoffice/nss.htm

Programme Review - 5-yearly review of programmes with student membership (DUSA Executive member). A panel of students and/or graduates is interviewed as part of the review process. Student views summarised in the programme evaluation summary.

School Staff-Student Liaison Committees

Deal with learning and teaching issues

Staff-Student Liaison Committees - involve elected class representatives including the relevant School President; the number of students should exceed the number of staff members.

College Learning and Teaching Strategies and School Learning and Teaching Development Plans

Forward thinking at university, college and school levels

The DUSA President and Deputy President sit on the Vice-Principal's Review Group which reviews Colleges' Learning and Teaching Strategies and Schools Learning and Teaching Development Plans.

College Boards

Operational management of the University's four colleges

Each **College Board** includes at least one DUSA Sabbatical Officer, at least one School President from the schools within the College and at least one postgraduate student, and the College Board may authorise the nomination of one or more postgraduate students in the College for this purpose.

Court, Senate and their Committees

The main decision-making bodies of the University.

Students are represented as follows:

Court - DUSA President

Senate - DUSA President, Deputy President and Vice-President Student Activities

Learning and Teaching Committee - DUSA President, Deputy President and Vice-President Student Activities

Academic Quality Sub-Committee (AQSC) - DUSA President and Deputy President

Academic Professional Development Advisory Group - DUSA President co-opted for judging teaching awards

Library & Information Services Committee - DUSA Deputy President, Vice-President Communications and Vice-President Student Activities

Postgraduate Affairs Committee - DUSA Deputy President.



HOW CAN WE HELP?



Academic Issues

- Ask the lecturer or Course Director or your Advisor of Studies
- Approach Academic Achievement Teaching Unit for FREE assistance in developing your academic skills, see: www.dundee.ac.uk/aatu
- Speak to the school secretary
- Consult Library & Learning Centre
- Consult *Advance@Dundee* for help developing your academic skills, see: www.dundee.ac.uk/advancedundee

Student Services

See *My Dundee* or www.dundee.ac.uk/student-services

- Careers
- Counselling
- Disability
- Health
- Nursery
- Peer Connections
- Residences Office
- Student Funding
- Student Support Worker

Remember, your school president and class class rep are always available to help with any unresolved issues.

sparqs



student participation in quality scotland

sparqs assists student representation through training and support we provide to Universities, student associations and class reps. We would encourage all students to consider getting actively involved in representation, at some level, during their time at university.

NIK HEERENS,
sparqs
www.sparqs.ac.uk



This booklet has been jointly produced by DUSA and Academic Affairs Directorate.

www.dusa.co.uk

www.dundee.ac.uk/qaf/studentrepresentationoverview.htm

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or 1382 384290 for further information

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