



# **ACADEMIC REP TRAINING**



# Contents

- ▲ **What is academic representation?**
- ▲ **Course Rep responsibilities**
- ▲ **Key skills**
- ▲ **Collecting feedback**
- ▲ **Staff-Student Committees (SSC)**
- ▲ **Students' Union support**
- ▲ **School support**
- ▲ **Key contacts**

# What is Academic Representation?

## **RHSU definition:**

**“The purpose of academic representation is to achieve positive change that improves the educational experience of students at Royal Holloway University and engages students as partners in the development, assurance and enhancement of their learning.”**

# What is Academic Representation?

- **Academic representation at Royal Holloway has four levels.**
- **Each level of representation has specific responsibilities and duties to make sure the system is as effective as it can be.**
- **Each level feeds into the one above it, and vice versa, to ensure a constant flow of information from one end of campus to the other.**



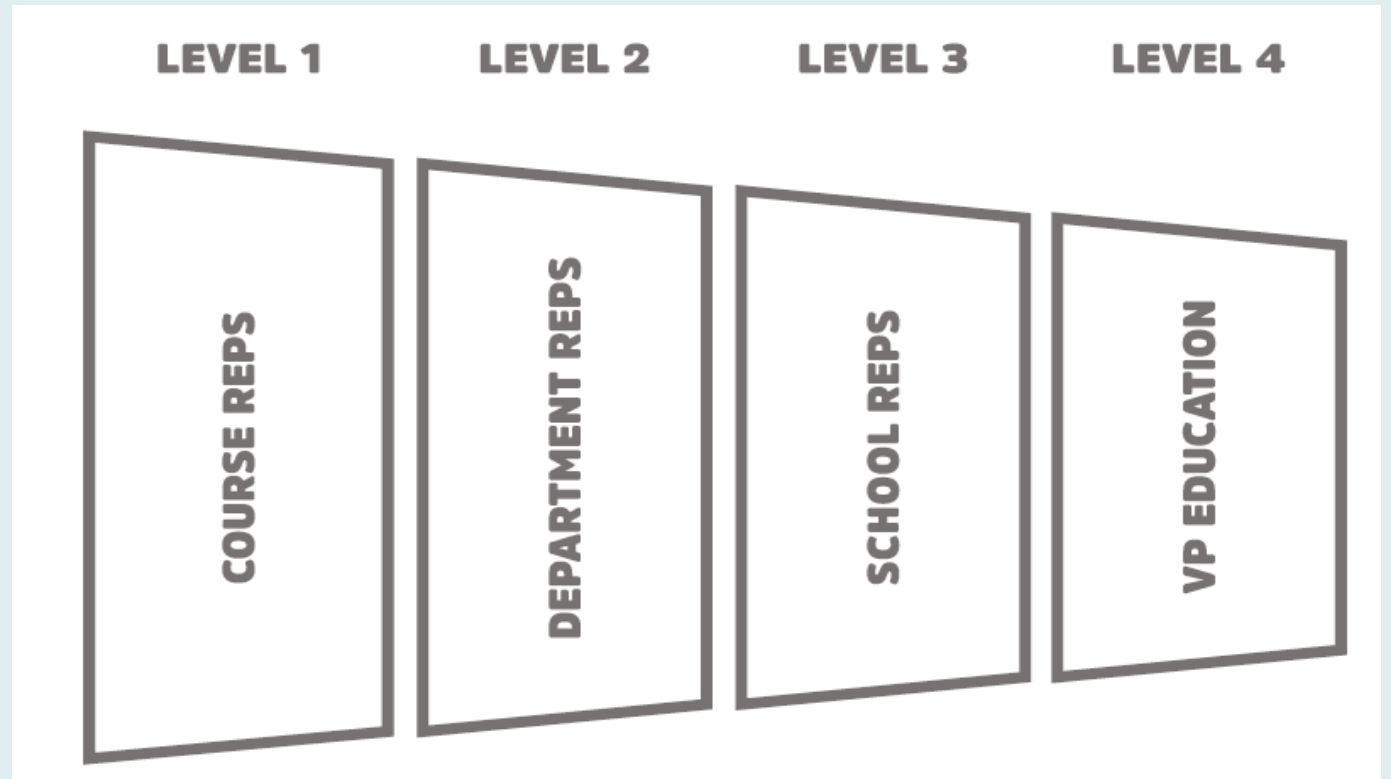
# Structure

**Level 1 – Course Reps**

**Level 2 – Department Reps**

**Level 3- School Reps**

**Level 4- Vice President Education**



# Specialisms

- **Specialisms have been created to help empower students from diverse backgrounds to utilise their own experiences.**
- **This will enable these students to anticipate change and give a different perspective due to their lived experience.**
- **This year, the following will be offered as a specialism:**
  - BAME student experience**
  - EU/International student experience**
  - Mature student experience**
  - Disabled student experience**
  - LGBT+ student experience**
  - Commuting student experience**

# Course Rep Responsibilities

**1. Connect with all students you represent and present a balanced view**

**2. Engage with under represented students**

**3. Prepare for and attend Staff-Student Committees (SSC)**

**4. Maintain strong relationships with your programme leaders and provide input about what is working well or could be improved**

**5. Work with the department rep to engage with and participate in periodic departmental reviews**

**6. Gather feedback from students and escalate issues that affect students beyond your programme**

# **Your role as a Course Rep & Key Skills**

**As a Course Rep, you should have:**

- **Excellent communication skills**
- **An ability to listen and effectively represent students' views**
- **A basic understanding of education policy issues**
- **A commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion**
- **Strong relationships with students, University staff and the Students' Union**

**Some of the key skills you will develop throughout your time as a rep include:**

- **Teamwork**
- **Leadership**
- **Strategic thinking**
- **Decision making**
- **Problem solving**
- **Delegation**



# Feedback Loop

**As a Course Rep, communication is key when collecting feedback to help close the feedback loop.**

**The feedback loop follows the this structure:**



# Collecting Feedback

**There are several ways of collecting feedback and there are likely to be some that you prefer to use over others.**

**You could try:**

- **Talking informally to students**
- **Hosting drop in sessions or focus groups**
- **Using social media groups**
- **Giving classmates 5 minutes at the start or end of class**
- **Creating a survey or poll**
- **Using a physical feedback box**
- **Adding a feedback section on Moodle**

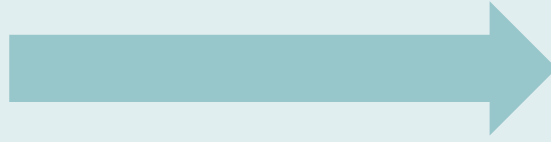
**Remember that effective representation should be accurate, constructive and depersonalised!**

# Feedback Timeline

**1. You find out  
about a  
problem**

# Feedback Timeline

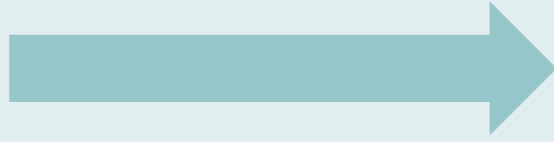
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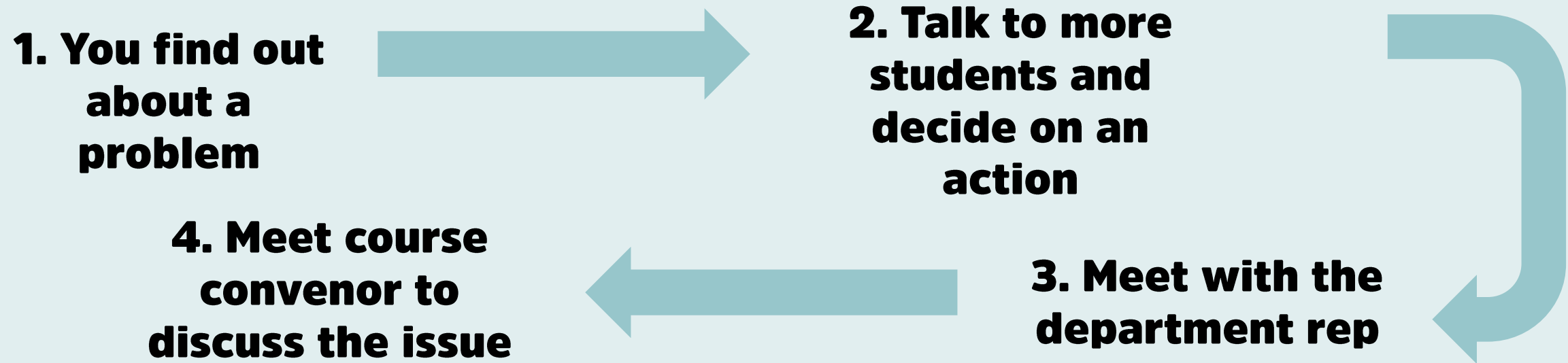


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**3. Meet with the  
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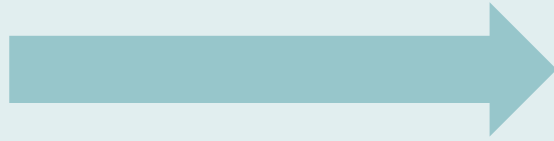


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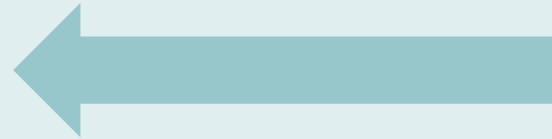
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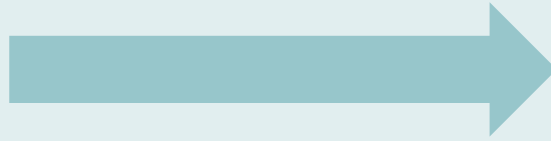
**4. Meet course convenor to discuss the issue**



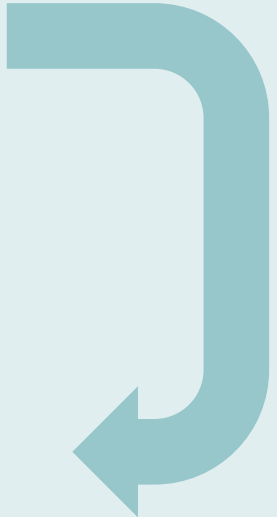
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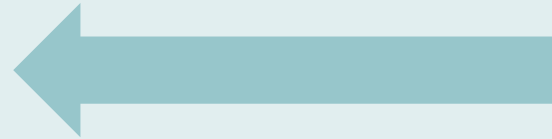
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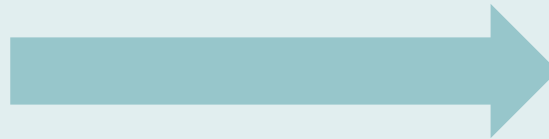
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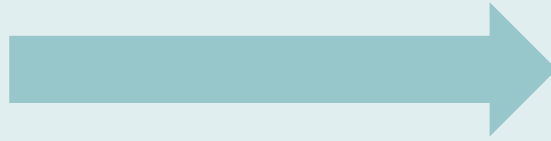


**6. Meet with Head of Department if still no resolution**



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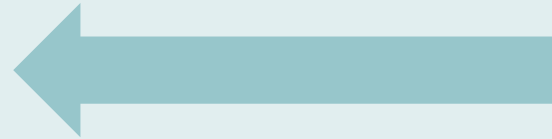
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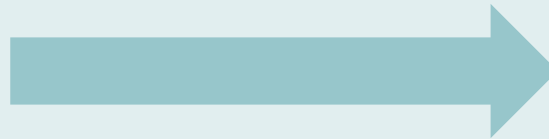
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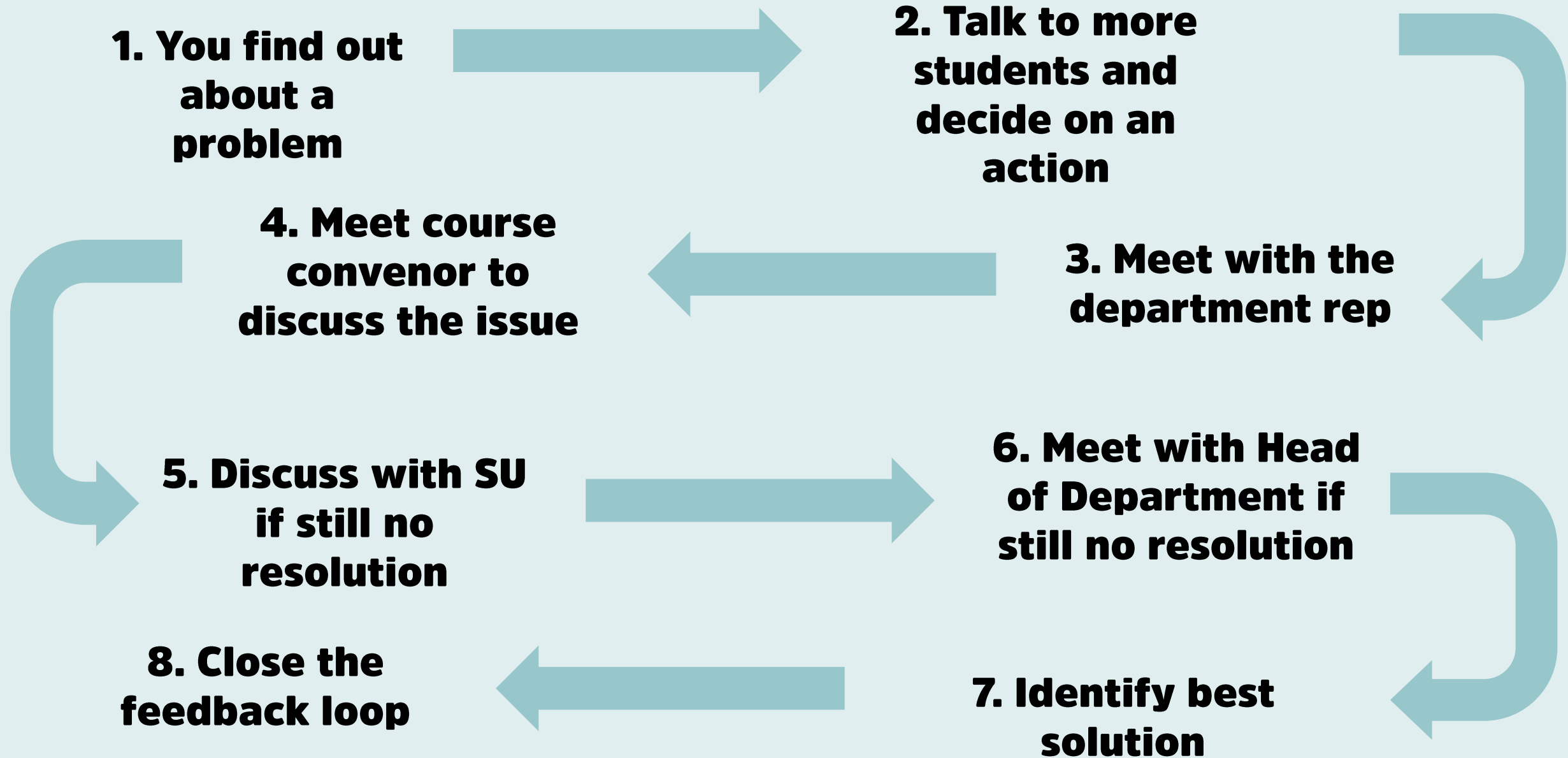


**6. Meet with Head of Department if still no resolution**



**7. Identify best solution**

# Feedback Timeline



# **Staff-Student Committees (SSC)**

- **Course Reps attend the SSC for their department and level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate)**
- **SSC meetings should have several key members of staff and course reps present**
- **Reps will have the opportunity to provide a verbal update of things working well and areas for improvement**
- **Staff will update reps on developments happening behind the scenes**
- **SSC meetings also look into strategic elements such as curriculum building and should create a lasting impact for students and staff**
- **They are used to help close the feedback loop and create positive change within each department**

# **SU Support**

## **Year long development programme:**

- November: Navigating a typical meeting
- December: Student networks
- January: Current Higher Education Policies
- April: Careers/Employability workshop



## **Day-to-day support:**

- Empower you to work with your department to make change
- Provide 1-1 meetings with Academic Communities Coordinator
- Give you the tools you need to create real change around campus
- Shout about your achievements and successes!

# School Support

- **Facilitating opportunities and tools for course reps to communicate with students they represent**
- **Using the SU system to log examples of positive change that have resulted from students' feedback and your work as reps**
- **Supporting and developing academic representation within the department**
- **Ensuring they make reps feel valued, supported and encouraged to submit feedback**
- **Proactively communicating with you as course reps about relevant information**
- **Maintaining effective communication with the Student Voice Team at the SU**

# Key Contacts

**Vice President Education:**

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**Lauryn Fleming**

**Student Voice Manager:**

**Phill Dowler**

**Student Voice Team:**

**Email - [Voice@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Voice@su.rhul.ac.uk)**

**Head of Department & Course Convenors**



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