

## **053. Student Representation Policy**

# Student Representation Policy

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## Introduction

This Student Representation Policy outlines IFG's commitment to ensuring that our students are meaningfully involved in shaping their educational experience. Aligned with UK sector expectations, including the Quality Code for Higher Education, this policy ensures that students are partners in decision-making at all levels of the institution.

The policy sets out the structures and processes that support student representation, including the election, training, and support of Course Representatives, School/Department Representatives. These representatives work collaboratively with IFG's academic and professional services staff to enhance teaching, learning, and the overall student experience.

Key principles include:

- **Inclusivity and Accessibility** – ensuring representation opportunities are open to all students.
- **Democracy and Transparency** – enabling fair and open election/selection processes.
- **Training and Support** – equipping student reps with the skills and knowledge to be effective.
- **Feedback and Impact** – ensuring students are informed about the outcomes of their feedback (“You said, we did” approach).
- **Continuous Improvement** – reviewing representation systems annually in partnership with the Students’ Union.

This policy reinforces IFG's commitment to student partnership and responds to regulatory expectations set by the Office for Students (OfS) and quality assurance agencies.

## **Student Representation**

Students are actively involved in IFG's quality assurance and governance processes relating to their courses. IFG's main formal body in this regard is the Student Committee, which is a sub-Committee of the Academic Board. The Committee is chaired by the Senior Student Representative (voted by student reps) and another student representative. The role of the Student Committee is to:

- Provide a student perspective on issues relating to course delivery, curriculum, assessment, and support services.
- Ensure effective communication between students and academic staff.
- Bring forward student feedback and concerns to the Committee for discussion and action.

As a small institution, IFG maintains a continuous ongoing dialogue with our students and the highly formal processes that are in place in large institutions can be counter-productive to this dialogue. Therefore, students from each course and cohort are invited to put themselves forward to sit as members of the Student Committee, with normally a maximum of 3 students from any one course sitting as members. In years where membership is high, sittings of the Committee may be divided to support meaningful dialogue and work of the Committee that will naturally occur in a smaller group.

## **Selection of Student Representatives**

The choice of student reps is made by students at an annual student meeting in the college shortly after the start of a new term. The Academic Director sends an email to all students to explain the role of a student representative.

The process of selection is then left to the students at the student meeting to decide. Depending on cohort size, we recommend choosing three representatives in each cohort. At the moment, with small numbers, we don't make any effort to provide representation for each course as there are common modules for all students, so students generally know each other irrespective of the specific courses they are on.

IFG explains to the wider student body that there are delegates for the whole student body. Students can talk to reps who will then pass on these views to the management. However, it is stressed in the student induction, that students are free to contact any of the IFG team directly with any concerns or recommendations for improvements.

Student reps are encouraged to engage actively in discussions and provide feedback on behalf of their peers. A report of matters discussed, student feedback and actions agreed by the Student Committee is submitted to the Academic Board for monitoring and to close the feedback loop, at the next available meeting following a sitting of the Student Committee.

## **Arranging of social functions**

IFG provides student reps the freedom to propose social activities, which are then put to the management team for discussion and/or approval, and usually also for funding. The IFG Management team oversees the choice of social activities based on age, religion, disability and inclusion of the student body and also monitors the outcome and any complaints or issues that may arise. All of which are discussed at the next Student Committee meeting.

## **Student Feedback**

Student feedback is a central part of our annual monitoring process and provides valuable insights into the quality of the student learning experience. IFG's feedback forms are collected via an online platform.

Feedback is collected through:

- Course-specific surveys conducted at the end of each module or course to capture students' views on teaching, learning, and assessment.

- Internal Surveys: These surveys provide additional insights into student experiences across a range of courses. Internal Surveys include Pre-Arrival, Induction with specific course feedback forms at the end of each semester.

Student feedback forms:

- Student Feedback Form on Admissions, Enrolment and Induction (053a)
- Student Feedback Form on Modules (053b)
- Student Feedback Form – End of first TERM (053c)
- Student Feedback Form – The end of the course (053d)

All feedback is reviewed by the Academic Board, and actions are taken to address any issues raised. Other members of staff as relevant may be involved in the review process.

### **National Student Survey (NSS)**

IFG recognises that participation in the National Student Survey (NSS) is a valuable data source relating to undergraduate students' experiences. Therefore, if IFG's application to register with the Office for Students' is successful and when we start offering HE courses, we will also add the NSS to our feedback repertoire.

Results from the NSS will be reviewed annually to identify trends and areas for improvement in student satisfaction.

The NSS results will be reviewed by the IFG Board and Board of Governors, along with relevant academic leads, and an action plan will be developed to address any areas where student satisfaction is lower than benchmark. Actions may also be taken to address areas where NSS scores are at or above benchmark but where these are below other area scores.

### **Student Voice, Representation and Feedback, and Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom**

All students are required to be conversant with, and abide by, the IFG Freedom of Speech Policy, which also covers academic freedom. In engaging with our Student Voice systems, including the representation of peers, individual, and group feedback, students should ensure that they recognise that academic and other staff of IFG, and other students, have the right to lawful freedom of speech. There may be occasions where students may report views expressed as being offensive, but this does not mean that those views or speech are unlawful.

Students representing themselves and/or their peers are expected to conduct themselves in a collegial, respectful and sensitive manner with all staff and students of IFG, even where they may disagree, from individual informal interactions right through to formal IFG Committee meetings.

Provided they maintain a respectful and professional dialogue sensitive to the context and individuals involved, students will be encouraged and supported to engage in meaningful representation and provide honest, direct feedback without worry of causing offence or getting into trouble. Where students are attending formal IFG Committee meetings, support and guidance will be given prior to those meetings about what to expect, how to raise any matters, and how to best engage with those processes.

Where students have any concerns that lawful freedom of speech may be being restricted, they may raise a complaint under the IFG Freedom of Speech Complaints Procedure. The Student Complaints Procedure may also be used for this purpose but in this event, matters will normally be referred into the IFG Freedom of Speech Complaints Procedure to be investigated and resolved.