

## **Amendment to the bye laws**

**Proposer** Jenna Chapman (Undergraduate Education Officer)

**Seconded** Martin Marko (Postgraduate Education Officer)

### **Summary**

To make changes to the by-laws in relation to convenor bursaries and also introduce the code of conduct for course reps as mandated last year.

### **Council Notes**

1. School and faculty convenors currently receive a bursary of £250 each year, this adds up to around £7500
2. Convenors were originally paid for by the University, but haven't been for the past couple of years
3. The school and faculty convenors are volunteers and many put in a lot of time to their role, the bursary is not promoted as a reason to run for the role and is given to all at the end of the year, regardless of commitment
4. Student representatives cannot legally be paid for more than 2 years (e.g. as full time officers)
5. The bye-laws currently state that the convenors as part of education committee set their own bursary
6. Students are able to run for both a faculty and school convenor role
7. Council approved for a code of conduct to be made for course reps last year

### **Council Believes**

1. The SU has many volunteers who give up their time and we cannot provide bursaries for all
2. This money could be used to promote the course rep system better overall
3. Both school and faculty convenors require a lot of time and responsibility, so a student should not be able to hold both roles. This would mean more students have the opportunity to take part

### **Council Resolves**

1. Remove the following bye laws:

School convenors:

"1.32 They may be paid a bursary. The value of the bursary, and any terms related to it, shall be decided by the Education Executive in liaison with the University, and full details will be included in the application pack."

Faculty convenors:

"1.35 They may be paid a bursary. The value of the bursary, and any terms related to it, shall be decided by the Education Executive in liaison with the University, and full details will be included in the application pack"

2. Add the following to the relevant section in the bye laws and number accordingly

"A student may not hold the role of both a school and a faculty convenor, however is permitted to nominate themselves for both. If successful for both, they must then resign from one of the roles within 5 days and the next successful candidate will be given the role"

3. Add the following Course Rep code of conduct to the bye laws:

## **Bye-Law 14**

### **Basis**

- 14.1 The University of East Anglia Students' Union is a democratic organisation. Therefore, it is necessary that free and fair elections for Course Representatives take place to ensure that the University and the Students' Union works in the best interest of students. This is also in line with the University of East Anglia's Code of Practice for Student Representation.

### **Purpose**

- 14.2 The purpose of this Bye-Law is to:
  - 14.2.1 outline the timings and length of elections for Course Representatives;
  - 14.2.3 outline the decision making process for the number of Course Representatives on each course;
  - 14.2.4 outline the process for running online elections for Course Representatives;
  - 14.2.5 outline the process for co-opting Course Representatives into position;
  - 14.2.6 outline the roles and responsibilities a Course Representative is expected to have;

- 14.2.7 outline the potential reasons for the removal of a Course Representative from their elected position;
- 14.2.8 outline the process for the removal of a Course Representative; and
- 14.2.9 outline the process for filling the created vacancy.

### **Timeframe for the election period**

- 14.3 14.3.1 The elections for Course Representatives should take place twice every academic year. Course Representatives for Foundation Year, First Year and Postgraduate taught/research are elected around September and October; whilst returning students shall be elected around March or April.
- 14.3.2 The election for the role of Course Representatives must be made up of at least two weeks of nominations with one week of voting during each election.

### **Determining the number of reps to be elected**

- 14.4 14.4.1 Prior to each election period, the Education Officers for Undergraduate and Post-Graduate and the Student Engagement Coordinator (Representation) shall have a discussion with each Student Partnership Officers to determine how many representatives are to be elected for each course.
- 14.4.2 Schools should aim to have a minimum of 1 representative per 50 students per course per year group. If demand is higher, a higher ratio is welcomed.
- 14.4.3 Where Schools have a large or particularly diverse student body more representatives may be identified to ensure representation across the cohort, for example a mature student or international student representative.
- 14.4.5 The decision as to whether more representatives are elected remains at the discretion of the Student Partnership Officer.

- 14.4.6 Following this discussion, it is the responsibility of the Student Partnership Officers to communicate the outcomes of the meeting to programme leaders prior the commencement of the elections period.

### **Election Process**

- 14.5 14.5.1 The election for Course Representatives take place online.
- 14.5.2 Online Elections will be available at the University of East Anglia Students' Union website.
- 14.5.3 Students will only be able to nominate themselves or vote in the election for Course Representatives for the course that they are currently studying.
- 14.5.4 All elections will use the Single Transferable Voting (STV) system and have a set of rules made available on the website.
- 14.5.5 Candidates will be informed via email whether they have won or lost, within 24 working hours of the closing of the elections period.
- 14.5.6 The Student Partnership Officer is to be informed of the successful candidates within 4 working days of the closing of the elections period.

### **Vacancies**

- 14.6 After the election period for course representatives, should vacancies remain, there will be co-options with the agreement of the School Convenor and Student Partnership Officer.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 14.7 14.7.1 Course Representatives, when formally expressing an interest in the role, should understand and acknowledge the importance and time needed to undertake the role effectively.

- 14.7.2 Course Representatives should attend all mandatory training to ensure that they are prepared for the role.
- 14.7.3 Course Representatives are expected to prepare for meetings by gathering student feedback:
  - 14.7.3i Course Representatives are to gather feedback from students on their course;
  - 14.7.3ii Course Representatives are to provide feedback through departmental and Faculty structures. They should also provide feedback to appropriate Students' Union bodies when required.
- 14.7.4 Course Representatives are expected to feedback to students on their course.
- 14.7.5 Course Representatives should attend and engage in all Student Staff Liaison Committee's in their area. If the Course Representative is unable to attend for any reason, it is expected that they would send apologies to the SSLC Secretary, and send on any issues or comments of the agenda so they can be raised by the chair.
- 14.7.6 If the Course Representatives feels like they can no longer fulfil the role, they should inform the Student Engagement Coordinator (Representation) who will then contact the School.
- 14.7.7 If a Course Representative fails to meet the requirements of the role, they may be removed.

### **Reasons for removal of a Course Representative**

- 14.8 A Course Representative may be removed from their role as a Course Representative for the following reasons:
  - 14.8.1 there is a breach of the Students' Union Code of Conduct applicable to all members
  - 14.8.2 there is a breach of the University of East Anglia's General Regulations;

- 14.8.3 if a ban from the Students' Union is placed upon the Course Representative ;
- 14.8.4 if a formal complaint or concern is upheld by the University;
- 14.8.5 if the Course Representative is found to have negatively used their power as a Course Representative by not representing the views of others on their course;
- 14.8.6 if the Course Representative is found to have exhibited unacceptable or abusive (physically or mentally) behaviour towards another student or member of staff;
- 14.8.7 if evidence of significant dissatisfaction with the work of the Course Representative is provided to the Education Officers (UG and/or PG), the Education Officer will then refer this matter to the Education Committee for investigation;
- 14.8.8 or lack of attendance without apologies at 2 or more SSLC.

### **Process for removal of a Course Representative**

- 14.10 A request for the removal of a Course Representative must be made by a student studying the course represented by that Course Representative; the relevant School or Faculty Convenors online or in person; or in the instance of a complaint of unacceptable or abusive behaviour, by a member of University or Students' Union staff.
- 14.11 University staff are not able to request the removal of a Course Representative on the grounds of unsatisfactory election. However if evidence is provided that the Course Rep is not performing in satisfactory standards and evidence is provided, removal may be considered.
- 14.12 If the Course Representatives concerned wishes to step down because they do not feel like they are able to fulfil their role effectively, he or she should be allowed to do so by informing the Student Engagement Coordinator (Representation) via email.
- 14.13 The Course Representatives and Student Engagement Coordinator (Representation) will discuss the concern and create an action plan to resolve the concern:

- 14.13.1 this could be simply informing the Course Representatives of the concern raised by their fellow course mates or working with the SU to provide further training;
- 14.13.2 Discuss the possibility of a role share if possible.
- 14.14 If no agreed steps or action plan has been made by the Course Representatives to resolve the concern or a new complaint is received regarding that same behaviour attempted to be tackled previously, further actions will need to take place only if a new concern has been submitted irrelevant to the first concern, it should be regarded as a new case.
- 14.15 If it seems that no signs of improvement can be seen, the case will be referred to the Education Committee to consider and rule if the Course Rep is asked to leave their role.
  - 14.15.1 If they are, the Course Representative has the right to appeal to the Campaigns & Democracy Officer [who will convene a panel to consider the case].
- 14.16 Each case shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Education Committee or their nominee. The final decision shall be made by the Campaigns & Democracy Officer at the point of appeal.
- 14.17 If a Course Representative is removed from position, they shall not be able to stand as Course Representative again. This does not prevent them from standing for other union roles.

### **Process of filling the vacancy of the removed Course Representative**

- 14.18 In first instance, an election would be held for that role. Any unsuccessful candidates who previously were unsuccessful in election for that role will be invited to submit a nomination, as well as the School advertising to that course. An election will then be fulfilled in the usual way.
- 14.19 Should there be only one person show interest in the position, or should the Course Rep be removed in the

Spring semester then, the School Convenor and Student Partnership Officers will co-opt a student into the position if they agree on the candidate.