

Committee Title	Student Voice					
Date of Meeting	25 th March 2019					
Item Number and Title/Subject	Academic Representation Review					
Paper Presenter	Rachel Simpson					
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	<p>During the Academic Term 2017/18, the Full Time Officer Team undertook a high-level review of the academic representation structure as a team objective. Outcomes from this review, combined with a change in the structures of the Academic Schools during the Summer in 2018, and consultation with key partners, informed modifications to the academic representation structures.</p> <p>In response to these changes, at the beginning of the Academic term in 2018/19, GCU Students' Association proposed to review and evaluate the new academic representation model again in the 18/19 FTO Team Objectives.</p> <p>This paper outlines the context, implementation and evaluation for the academic representation models, and their impact on the student experience and voice. Consultation was undertaken throughout the 2017/18 Academic year prior to the restructure, and the resulting data has been compared with data collated following the restructure to compare the impact of the previous and current models.</p>					
Recommendation(s)	Information		Discussion	X	Approval	
	<p>Following positive student feedback regarding the 2018/19 Models for UG Departmental and PGT Representation, we would recommend that these models continue into the 19/20 Academic Year and beyond.</p> <p>After exploring the PGR Student experience and feedback, we are recommending a change in the representation model moving forward to a school based structure with 4 representatives.</p>					
Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	<p>Student Summit SAGE Executive Committee Paul Stalker, Academic Rep Coordinator Sara MacLean, Student Voice Team Leader</p>					
Staff/Student Protocol	Yes	X	No		N/A	
Will any decision approved directly affect the work of staff?						
Should the paper be submitted to any other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting?	<p>ETSE/APPC SAGE Senate</p>					
If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.						

Academic Representation Review

Rachel Simpson, Student President

Eilidh Fulton, VP SCEBE

Moses Apiliga, VP GSBS

Yetunde Ogedengbe, VP SHLS

Background to Review

During the Academic Term 2017/18, the Full Time Officer Team undertook a high-level review of the academic representation structure as a team objective. Outcomes from this review, combined with a change in the structures of the Academic Schools during the Summer in 2018, and consultation with key partners, informed modifications to the academic representation structures.

In response to these changes, at the beginning of the Academic term in 2018/19, GCU Students' Association proposed to review and evaluate the new academic representation model again in the 18/19 FTO Team Objectives.

This paper outlines the context, implementation and evaluation for the academic representation models, and their impact on the student experience and voice. Consultation was undertaken throughout the 2017/18 Academic year prior to the restructure, and the resulting data has been compared with data collated following the restructure to compare the impact of the previous and current models.

Recommendations

Following positive student feedback regarding the 2018/19 Models for UG Departmental and PGT Representation, we would recommend that these models continue into the 19/20 Academic Year and beyond.

After exploring the PGR Student experience and feedback, we are recommending a change in the representation model moving forward to a school based structure with 4 representatives.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Departmental Representation Role Description

Appendix 2 – PGT Role Description

Appendix 3 – PGR Role Description

Undergraduate Departmental Representatives

Class representatives are the largest element of the UG academic representation system, and are supported by a mid-layer departmental representation model. A review of the Class Representation structure will occur in the 19/20 Academic year, and this year we focused on changes to the Departmental level structure.

Formerly known as School Officers (renamed Departmental Representatives in 18/19), their role is to represent the views of students within their School at meetings of the School Board and other committees as appropriate. The Departmental Representative also has a responsibility to gather student feedback before meetings and to report back to the Students' Association throughout the year.

They are voting/quorate members of Student Voice, full members of Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE) and voting/non-quorate members of their School Board.

2017/18 Evaluation of model

The School Officer model in 2017/18 was made up of three department based representatives, one for each of the three academic departments in each of the schools.

Undergraduate School Officer Representation Structure 2017/18 (diagram 1)



As part of the 2017/18 Full Time Officer Team Objectives, a review was undertaken with key stakeholders from the Students' Association and University on their thoughts on the undergraduate departmental based representation.

Those consulted included the staff support in the Students' Association, 6 UG School Officers, the deans of the Academic Schools, Class Representatives, and other students.

Participants were asked to respond to:

1. How do you feel about the current recruitment process?
2. Do you understand the role description?
3. How do you feel students understand this?
4. Any other comments?

Key themes which emerged from both students and staff were –

- A need to review and update the role description for all academic representatives
 - Handovers should be built into the role description for the officers
 - Could outline the benefits, support and training of the role more clearly
- More clarity needed around the requirements of the role – “Other School Meetings”

- It was felt that the name 'School Officer' was confusing as students did not represent the school but an academic department
- Was it a requirement for students to be involved in the representative structure ahead of becoming a departmental representative (e.g. a class rep?) or could they learn this through training and support.
- Representatives felt they understood their role well once they had attended training – but due to the name it was unclear for the average student and class representatives when to contact them
- Representatives could benefit from a glossary of academic terminology (e.g. what is LTSC, APPC, other acronyms used at committee meetings)
- General consensus that conducting partnership interviewing was a good methodology for appointing representatives
- Raised questions around the number of students that each department represents (for example Nursing reps vs. Law)

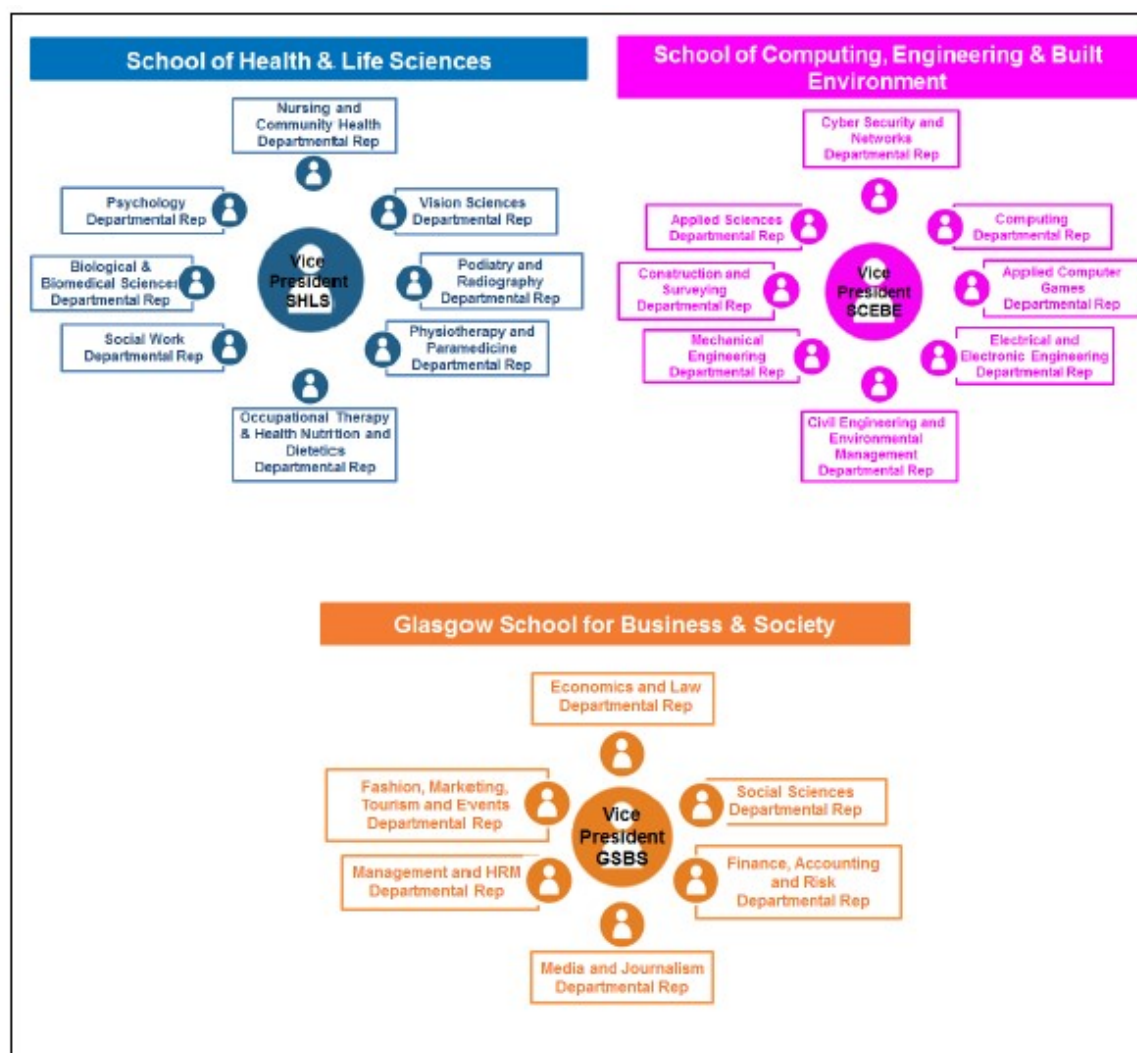
Action Points emerging from the 17/18 Review:

What	Completed
Review of Role Description	Appendix 1
Clarity of role requirements	Appendix 1
Name change	Appendix 1
Consideration of requirements to be a representative	Appendix 1
Glossary of GCU Academic terms	Ongoing
Review of number of students each representative is responsible for	Considered in Review

2018/19 Adaptions to representation model

Following the feedback from the 17/18 consultation of the School Officer representation model, and the Academic Schools Re-fresh, a number of changes were implemented to the representation structure to enhance the student voice and academic experience. It was agreed following consultation with the Enhancing the Student Experience Steering Group and Academic Practise and Policy Committee that the student representation model should remain at one representative per academic department, and move from 9 academic representatives to 22.

Departmental Representation Model 18/19 Diagrams 2)



Action Points

Role Description, Name and Requirements

The recommendations to alter the role description, requirements and title were addressed and can be seen in *Appendix 1*.

The title of the representatives was also altered to address feedback and concerns around the role from School Officers to Departmental Representatives.

Glossary of Academic Terms

The need for a glossary of academic terms is being addressed through consultation at our Academic Representation Gathering in Trimester B and will be made available through our resources in our website.

2018/19 Evaluation of model

Following the change to the academic representation model at the beginning of the 2018/19 Academic Year, the Full Time Officers undertook a second Team Objective to review the enhancements made to the academic restructure.

A consultation was again undertaken with key stakeholders from the Students' Association and University on their thoughts on the changes to the undergraduate departmental based representation. Deans of the academic schools were contacted for comments, and staff/ student representations were consulted at SAGE.

Participants were asked to respond to:

1. How do you feel about the current recruitment process?
2. Do you understand the role description?
3. How do you feel students understand this?
4. Any other comments?

Key themes which emerged were –

- Recruitment should occur as early as possible, in partnership by both the Students' Association and University
- More awareness raising of Departmental Representatives and their roles could occur for both students and staff
- The role description is clear, but reps need to be more involved in handovers
- It's easier to engage with the departments now that the role engagement is smaller
- Students like the increased amount of reps as it allows for more focused feedback and more proportionate representation

PGT Representation

PGT students are represented by class reps comparable to the UG academic representation system. Class representatives are then supported by three representatives at school level, (GSBS, SEBE, SHLS). These representatives are then supported by a Full Time Officer lead with the remit for Post-Graduate Taught students.

Additionally, there is a PGT Representative at GCU London, called the GCU London Rep.

2017/18 Evaluation of model

Overall, PGT Feedback has shown a high level of satisfaction and engagement with the school based representation model. However, feedback collected from Exit Surveys showed the need for further evaluation of the role description and requirements of PGT representatives.

Action Points emerging from the 17/18 Review:

What	Completed
Review of Role Description	Appendix 2
Clarity of role requirements	Appendix 2

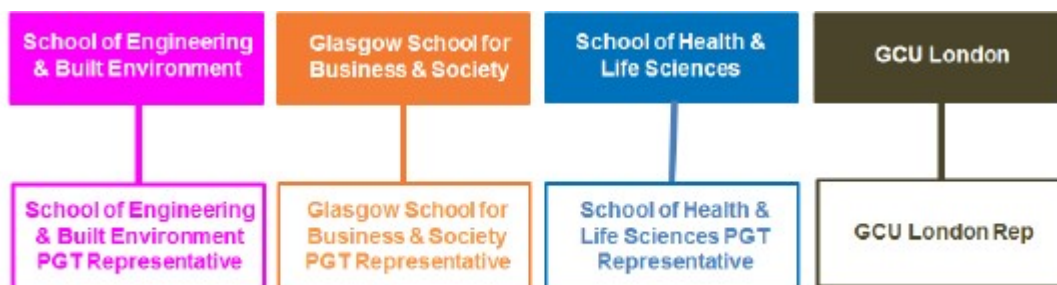
2018/19 Adaptions to representation model

As the student feedback identified that there was a high level of satisfaction for the current structure, alongside the structure being un-impacted by the School's Re-Fresh, the decision was taken to remain with the same structure for PGT Students. The number of PGT Students studying at GCU would also not have justified moving to 22 departmental based representations, or additional school level representatives.

The Glasgow based school PGT Reps are each voting/quorate members of Student Voice, full members of Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE). Following approval of new terms of reference for School Boards at Senate, each PGT Rep is also voting/quorate members of their school board.

The GCU London Rep is a full (voting/quorate) member of the GCU London School Board and the GCU London Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.

PGT Representation Structure 2017/18 and 2018/19 (diagram 3)



Role Description and Requirements

The recommendations to alter the role description and requirements were addressed and can be seen in *Appendix 2*.

2018/19 Evaluation of model

A consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders from the Students' Association and University on their thoughts on the PGT Model at SAGE.

Participants were asked to respond to:

1. How do you feel about the current recruitment process?
2. Do you understand the role description?
3. How do you feel students understand this?
4. Any other comments?

Key themes which emerged were –

- Students didn't find the previous role description clear, and find that engaging prior representative in handovers may be beneficial
- Representatives need to be clearly communicated to relevant students to help establish a supportive community

PGR Representation

2017/18 Context to structure

Postgraduate research students were represented through both a department level and school level representative for the Glasgow based schools. PGR Department Research Leads represent research students at departmental research committees as well as school research committees.

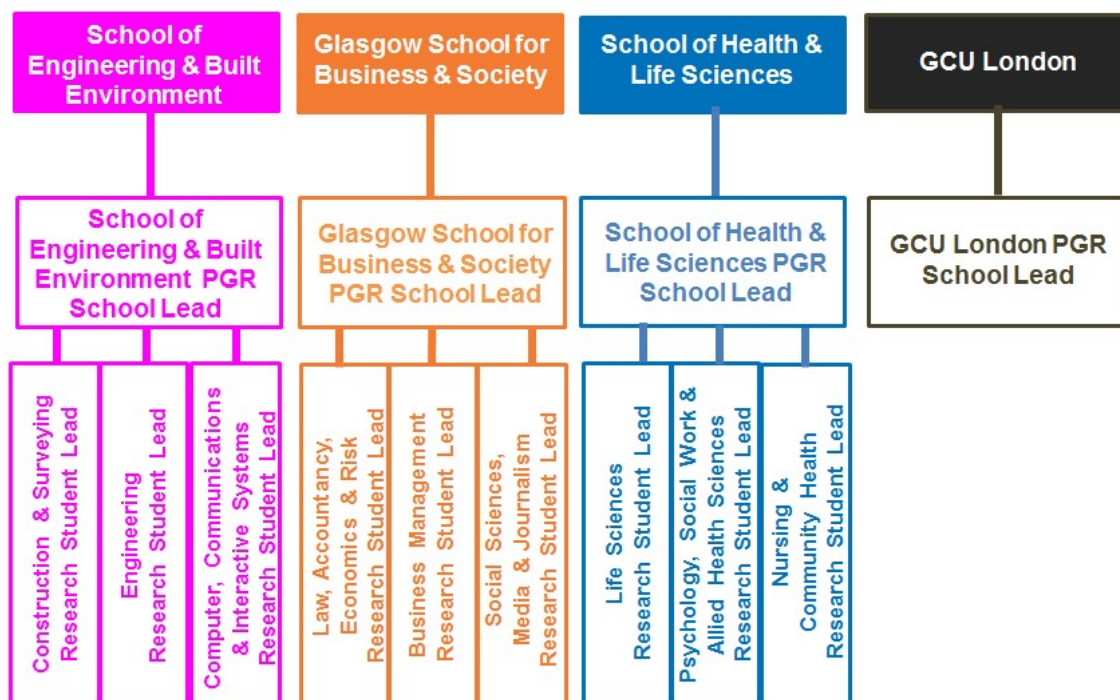
The PGR School Research Lead supports the PGR Departmental Research Leads as well as represents the school research students at School Research Committee, University Research Degrees Committee, Student Voice and SAGE.

PGR School Research lead were also invited to School Boards as a non-voting participant. Further, there is two Students' Association positions on the University Research committee which is shared between the three PGR School Level Research Leads and the Vice President with the PGR policy remit.

GCU London also has one PGR School Lead who is a full member of the GCU London School Board.

PGR School based leads are supported by the Full Time Officer Policy Lead for Postgraduate Research Students.

PGR Representation Structure 2017/18 (diagram 4)



2017/18 Evaluation of model

Following evaluations from focus groups with PGR Students and representatives, discussions with key partners and Exit Surveys, it was found that the student representation or the PGR Student Experience was unclear when based in departmental based representation.

This is due to the fact that research students can often study multi-disciplinary research topics which cut across various departments. To address this, and following the re-fresh, and in consultation with the Graduate School, the decision was made to maintain the same number of representatives and adapt these to the new discipline models – whilst reviewing the description and requirement of the representatives.

Action Points emerging from the 17/18 Review:

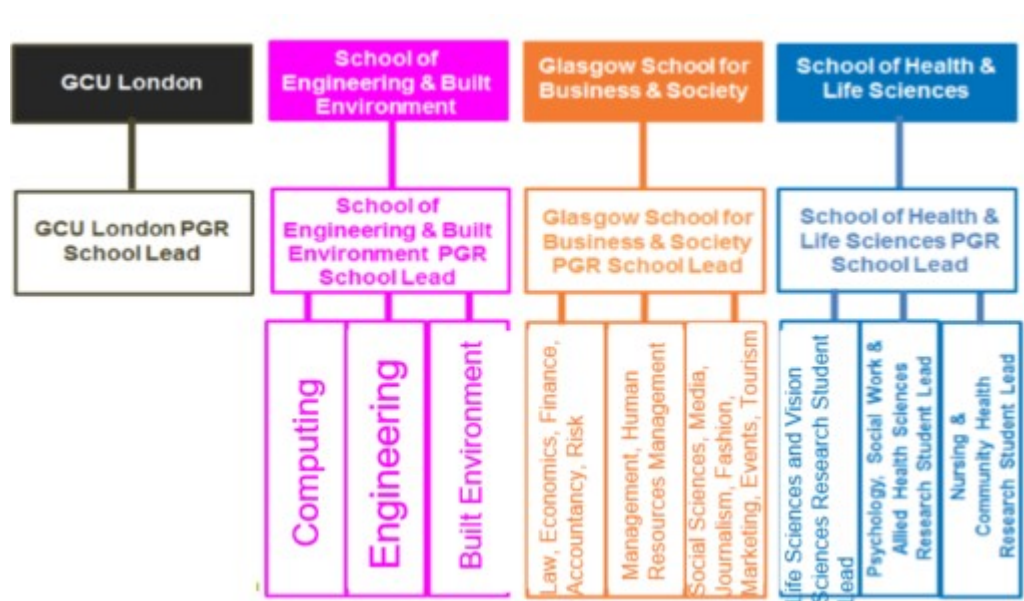
What	Completed
Review of Role Description	Appendix 3
Clarity of role requirements	Appendix 3

2018/19 Adaptions to representation model

The Students' Association in partnership with the Graduate School and Academic Quality following discussions at APPC implemented a new PGR Representation model to enhance the student experience for the academic year 18/19.

This model focused on having a Postgraduate Research Lead representing research students at both a school and discipline level.

2018/19 PGR Representation Model (Diagram 5)



Role Description and Requirements

The recommendations to alter the role description and requirements were addressed and can be seen in *Appendix 3*.

2018/19 Evaluation of model

A consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders from the Students' Association and University on their thoughts on the PGR Model at SAGE and the Students' Association Executive Committee.

Unlike the representation models for PGT and UG Departments, the amendments to the model for 2018/19 PGR Students when evaluated were found to be still unclear for students and representatives. Issues were highlighted around the number of representatives for PGR Students, (as their student experience is unique to each student, and they do not have a collective experience in the same way PGT or UG Students do), and a lack of understanding around which discipline students would refer too.

Feedback from SAGE highlighted that there were issues surrounding the communications of the representatives to their constituents, and representatives could benefit from more extensive handovers.

Moreover, a scoping exercise was conducted to examine the number of meetings that PGR Discipline and School based representatives attend, and found significant overlap between the representatives in their responsibilities.

Due to this feedback, the Students' Association are recommending implementing three school-based PGR students Leads across campus with the removal of the discipline-based reps. The remuneration would remain the same at £150.

The meetings the PGR School Level Representatives would attend are:

	University meeting	Students' Association	Other Activities
School Research Leads	School Board (4 x Academic Year)	Student Voice (4 x Academic Year)	Meetings with School Postgraduate Research Tutors (PGRT)
	School Research Committee	S.A.G.E Committee (4 x Academic Year)	Meetings with Discipline Level Research Student Leads
	Research Student Leads Network (4 x Academic Year)		Engagement events/ activities with students
	(Research student leads can use this forum to have a catch-up with each other and VP policy lead)		University level sub-committee working groups University school level sub-committee working groups

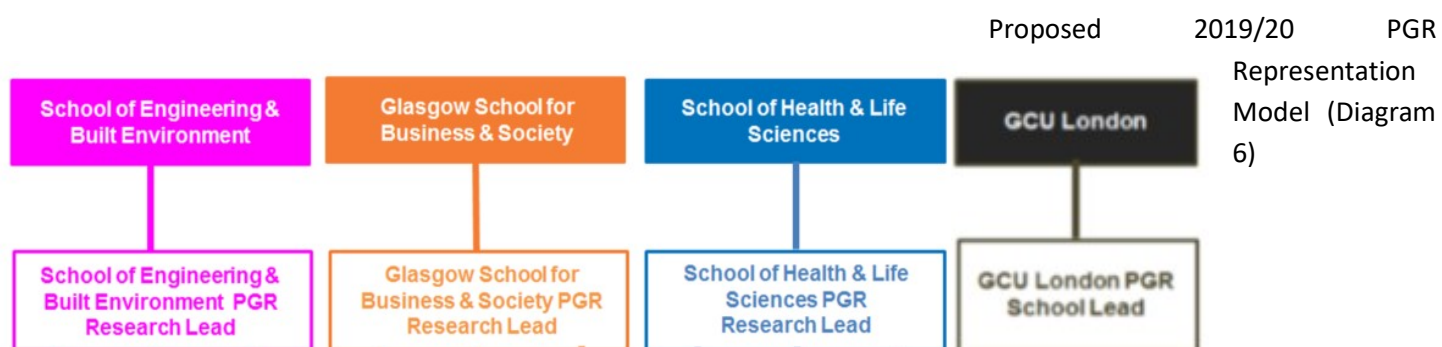
			<p>Induction Events</p> <p>Meetings with Dean/ Associate Dean Of Research</p>
London Research Student Leads	School Board (4 x Academic Year)	<p>London Student Voice (4 x Academic Year)</p> <p>S.A.G.E Committee (4 x Academic Year and (Dial in)</p> <p>Research students SSCG</p> <p>Regular catch-up with Research Policy Lead</p>	<p>Meetings with School Postgraduate Research Tutors (PGRT)</p> <p>Engagement events/ activities with students</p> <p>Induction Events</p> <p>Meetings with Dean/ Associate Dean of Research</p>

Moreover, representatives will be nominated to attend:

- University Research Committee (4 x Academic Year)
- Research Degrees Committee (4 x Academic Year)

There are three options for how representatives could be nominated:

- 1) One out of the three elected PGR student leads can be nominated to attend either of the meetings.
- 2) It could be an open place for PGR students and could be filled by nomination through Student voice.
- 3) Nomination can be open to the wider PHD students (by election).



Department Rep Role Description

Role Purpose:

To represent and act as the voice for all students in your department and to feedback key issues that affect the student experience to both the University and GCU Students' Association.

Role activities:

- Support and communicate regularly with all the students within your department, and with GCU Students' Association's Full Time Officer Lead
- Attend and take an active part in School Board and School Board subcommittees
- Attend and take an active part in Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE) meetings
- Attend and take an active part in Student Voice meetings
- Produce a brief written report for Student Voice in trimester A and B
- Engage and promote Students' Association education campaigns
- Develop a written handover for the continuity of the role
- Attend and take an active part in the Academic Rep Gathering (Trimester A and B)

Role Benefits:

In your role you will have the opportunity to:

- Develop advocacy, representation and leadership skills
- Help shape the development of undergraduate Studies within your department and School
- Shape GCU Students' Association policy
- Take part GCU Students' Association Student Leaders Programme
- Network and meet new people
- Receive a £150 honorarium in trimester A and B from the University
- Make a real difference to your student experience and a positive difference in other students' learning experience

Support & Training:

To help you in your role we will provide training & support, including:

- Induction training
- Further development training
- Support from GCU Students' Association's Full Time Officer(s)
- Support from GCU Students' Association's Student Voice Team
- Support from your Department and School

Eligibility:

To be a Department Representative you must be a current Student and a member of GCU Students' Association. You must also be on a programme of study that falls within the role that you wish to volunteer.

Volunteer Role: Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Student Representative

Role Purpose:

To represent and act as the voice for all Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students in your School and to feedback key issues that affect the PGT student experience to both the University and GCU Students' Association.

Role Activities:

- Support and communicate regularly with all the PGT Class Reps within your School, and with GCU Students' Association's Full Time Officer Lead for Postgraduates
- Attend and take an active part in School Board and subcommittees
- Attend and take an active part in Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE) meetings.
- Attend and take an active part in Student Voice meetings
- Produce a brief written report for Student Voice in trimester A and B
- Help with and promote Postgraduate events and campaigns
- Develop a written handover for the continuity of the role
- Attend and take an active part in the Academic Rep Gathering (Trimester A and B)

Role Benefits:

In your role you will have the opportunity to:

- Develop advocacy, representation and leadership skills
- Help shape the development of Postgraduate Studies within your School
- Shape GCU Students' Association policy
- Take part GCU Students' Association Student Leaders Programme
- Network and meet new people
- Receive a £150 honorarium each trimester from the University.
- Make a real difference to your student experience and a positive difference in other students' lives.

Support & Training:

To help you in your role we will provide training & support, including:

- Induction training
- Further development training
- Support from GCU Students' Association's Full Time Officer Lead for Postgraduates.
- Support from GCU Students' Association's Student Voice Team.
- Support from your School.

Eligibility:

To be a PGT Student Representative you must be a current Postgraduate Taught (Masters) Student and a member of GCU Students' Association. You must also be on a programme of study that falls within the role that you wish volunteer.

Volunteer Role: School Level Research Student Lead

Role Purpose:

To represent and act as the voice for all Postgraduate Research (PGR) students within your School and to feedback key issues that affect the PGR student experience to both the University and GCU Students' Association.

Role Activities:

In your role, you will:

- Communicate regularly with all the PGR Students' within your research discipline to gather views, opinions and issues about the Postgraduate Research student experience.
- Meet and communicate regularly with GCU's Graduate School and with your School's Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT).
- Attend and take an active part in School Research Committee, School Board and Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE) meetings.
- Attend and take an active part in University Research Committee and Research Degree Committee if elected to participate.
- Attend and take an active part in Student Voice meetings, including to provide Student Voice with brief written reports on what you have been doing in your role.
- Promote and help deliver Postgraduate events and campaigns.
- To produce a handover document at the end of Trimester C.

Role Benefits:

In your role you will have the opportunity to:

- Develop advocacy, representation and leadership skills.
- Help shape the development of Postgraduate Research Studies within your School.
- Shape GCU Students' Association policy.
- Take part GCU Students' Association Student Leaders Programme.
- Network and meet new people.
- Receive a £150 honorarium each trimester from the University's Graduate School.
- Make a real difference to your student experience and a positive difference to other students' student experience.

Support & Training:

To help you in your role we will provide training & support, including:

- Induction training and further development training.
- Support from GCU Students' Association's Full Time Officer Lead for Postgraduates.
- Support from GCU Students' Association's Student Voice Team
- Support from GCU's Graduate School and from your School's Postgraduate Research Tutor.

Eligibility:

To be a Research Student Lead you must be a current Postgraduate Research (PhD) Student and a member of GCU Students' Association. You must also be on a programme of study that falls within the role that you wish volunteer.