
9a Student Representation

9.1 Student Voice Leaders

9.1.1 *Responsibility*

The student representation system is managed in partnership between the University and Middlesex University Students' Union (MDXSU). MDXSU are responsible for the nomination, training and support for Student Voice Leaders.

9.1.2 *Scope*

Student representatives for programmes are referred to as Student Voice Leaders (SVL's). They represent the interests of their peer group at Programme Voice Groups, other relevant committees and/or Faculty meetings. There is a minimum of one SVL per year/stage of each programme and a minimum of two per programme (part time programmes do not have a separate representative unless they are taught separately from the full-time students). The role descriptor can be found in **appendix 9a**.

9.1.3 *Promotion*

Student Voice Leaders are nominated/self nominated to represent the views of the students on their programme to the university and the Students' Union.

Information about the opportunity to become a Student Voice Leader is available for students on the MDXSU website and in MyMDX. Promotion of the role of SVL commences during pre-arrival throughout the induction/welcome period. This promotion is jointly undertaken by MDXSU and the University.

The university and MDXSU have a shared responsibility, and work in partnership to ensure Student Voice Leaders are nominated to all programmes. MDXSU should, wherever possible, be invited to attend induction sessions to promote student representation. Academic staff should, wherever possible, actively seek nominations from students through the MDXSU website.

Students should be informed of the benefits to being a Student Voice Leader, including training and support available, along with the development of transferrable skills such as the chairing and leading of meetings, providing constructive feedback, and management and organisational skills.

9.1.4 *Nomination*

MDXSU run the online nomination process for Student Voice Leaders per the following:

- Prior to start of academic year – nominations open for Student Voice Leaders

- Nominations closure is by the end of Learning Week 4. Results will be announced after training by Learning Week 7.

The term of office will run for the academic year, unless the student leaves the University or does not fulfil their responsibility. This will ensure that representatives are still in post for any meetings prior to the election of new representatives in each new academic year.

For programmes with different start dates, or any other specific requirements, the Programme Leaders should discuss the timing of nominations with MDXSU.

Rollover

At the end of each academic year, SVLs at FHEQ levels 4 and 5 (years 1 and 2) and postgraduate research students are offered the opportunity to continue in their role for the next academic year (i.e. be rolled over).

SVLs will be eligible to continue to be reappointed for another academic year as long as they progress and remain on the same programme. This will help to provide continuity and build expertise and professional development.

The process is conducted by MDXSU and programmes will be informed of any SVLs who have rolled over at the end of the academic year, ahead of recruitment for the new set of SVLs. There will be an option to recruit at least one additional SVL to a programme where there has been a rollover if this is requested.

9.1.5 *Duties and Training*

The full list of duties is detailed in Appendix 9a.

Student representative training and a guide for Student Voice Leaders is designed by MDXSU and CAPE, with training sessions delivered throughout the year, alongside online training. Materials are also available on the MDXSU website:

<https://www.mdxsu.com/studentvoiceleaders>

The University has guidance available for staff members on the Student Representation process.

9.2 Programme Voice Groups

9.2.1 *Purpose*

Programme Voice Groups (PVG's) are one of the main formal methods to encourage an open dialogue and partnership between staff and students. They are a forum in which students and staff can constructively discuss their programme of study including good practice, areas for improvement, programme developments, and the student experience, with the collective aim of enhancing programmes and the student experience. Students and staff will not be penalised for providing feedback at the Programme Voice Groups.

9.2.2 **Scope**

Faculties and Campuses should determine the arrangements for the PVG's. It is expected that two PVG meetings are held across the academic year (one per relevant semester) **Every programme** (including apprenticeships, those at overseas campuses and collaborative programmes) should be represented at a PVG. Full details and guidance for the process can be found in **appendix 9b**.

It is recommended that where appropriate, PVG's are established for groups of cognate programmes, for example for a subject cluster or an academic department, but should not mix undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research programmes without good reason. Only if part time and full time students are taught separately is a separate student representative required. However, staff should consider the size of the PVG's when combining, and whether students would be able to give feedback adequately. If programme teams feel there is good reason to mix cohorts of students, this should be discussed and agreed with CAPE and MDXSU.

9.2.3 **Membership and Terms of Reference**

The membership and terms of reference for the Programme Voice Groups are outlined fully in **appendix 9d**. The main terms of reference are to allow students and staff in partnership to engage, discuss, provide feedback, and the opportunity to action change on programmes that will improve the student experience at Middlesex.

The meeting should be Co-chaired by a member of staff (ideally the Head of Department or Director of Programmes, Programme Leader), and a Student Voice Leader. Role descriptors for the members and a code of conduct can be found in **appendices 9a, 9e, 9f and 9g, 9h**.

9.2.4 **Setting the Agenda**

The agenda setting can be held as an online meeting between the Chair and SVLs or via online discussion forum or email as appropriate. The agenda setting-meeting/discussion should take place within two weeks of the main Programme Voice Group. It is recommended that the agenda setting is held online to be as flexible as possible. The agenda will be based on the collective feedback from the SVL's and staff. Full details are available in **appendices 9b and 9d**.

9.2.5 **Programme Voice Groups**

The agenda and papers should be distributed no later than 7 days before the meeting. The agenda template can be found in **template 9i**.

The terms of reference and membership of the meeting are outlined in **appendix 9d** and operational procedure are outlined in **appendix 9b**.

9.2.6 **Actions and Reporting on Feedback**

Following the PVG, the Officer will complete a set of minutes and actions for distribution to the members and the programme cohort(s). The actions will be reported at the next Programme Voice Group; however, staff are encouraged to feedback to students once an action has been completed. The minute templates can

be found in **template 9ii**. Details and requirements for the minutes are found in **appendix 9b**.

Actions should be distributed to the members within one week of the meeting taking place, the approved minutes (once approved by the Chair) should be distributed to the members no later than 4 weeks after the meeting. The minutes should also be uploaded onto the **programme space in MyLearning** and sent to MDXSU and CAPE. Where PVGs cover an apprenticeship programme, the minutes should also be sent to the Centre of Apprenticeships and Skills (CAS)..

SVL's are required to provide feedback to their cohorts, staff should encourage and support SVL's by allowing students a small amount of time in scheduled teaching/or other relevant session to report to students, and encourage feedback through alternative means such as social media, and discussion forums.

9.2.7 **Timelines**

There should be a minimum of two Programme Voice Groups in an academic year for each student intake. The Programme Voice Group meeting should take place by the end of the semester (ideally after module surveys). The dates should be set before the start of the academic year and communicated to all members as early as possible as well as being posted on the relevant programme space in MyLearning for students. General information about PVG's should be included in the programme handbook. The timetable for the operation of the meetings can be found in **appendix 9b**.

9.2.8 **Online Programme Voice Groups**

It is recommended to consider holding online or hybrid Programme Voice Group meetings, especially programmes with students who may find it difficult to attend meetings on campus, are currently on a placement or cannot be released from their place of work to attend such as apprentices, and for Distance Education programmes. By using the following approach students can contribute to the meeting. Please see Further guidance on online PVGs in **appendix 9i**

9.3 **Ethical Considerations of Student Feedback**

9.3.1 **Programme Voice Groups**

Student feedback at Programme Voice Groups is recorded in the minutes of the meeting, and no student names should be attributed to any discussion.

Students should be made aware that Programme Voice Groups minutes are public documents and are made available to all students, and external agencies when requested.

Students should be aware that their feedback will be actioned upon at department level, and that their feedback through the minutes will be reviewed by the University centrally by the Centre for Academic Practice Enhancement (CAPE) and MDXSU.

Student feedback that is reported at the Programme Voice Groups by the Student Voice Leaders should include feedback from all students on the programme, and no student should be discriminated against when providing feedback.

Staff should report actions taken in response to feedback and close the feedback loop as outlined previously in section 9.2.6.

9.4.2 Informal Feedback

It is important that informal feedback is acted upon. Students should be made aware of confidentiality issues if applicable and inform students of actions that will be taken. Students and staff should be aware of other policies including complaints and appeals, and other areas such as the prevent duty when receiving feedback from students. Reference should be made to these policies which are all available on the Middlesex Website and MyMDX, as well as Aptem for any apprentices.