

Class Reps Problems – Case Studies

1) You face apathy from your classmates. It seems that they are not aware of what you, as a Class Rep, can do for them.

Ways to become more visible and approachable can be:

- collect all your classmates' email contacts and send them emails (but do not spam!), or send out an email to all classmates via the course secretary;
- create a Facebook group (or other social media);
- ask your lecturer if you can use a few minutes before or after a lecture to introduce the role of Class Rep to your classmates and explain how and why they should contact you;
- organise a feedback gathering event or a pre-SSCC meeting (free snacks can enhance attendance!)
- Hold a Class Rep 'office hour'

2) Members of staff and academics in your School do not seem to know what the role of a Class Rep is, and this makes your job more difficult.

You could ask your School President to email or arrange a meeting with the key people in your School to explain the role of academic representatives.

This could be something that's brought up as an agenda item at your School's first SSCC meeting.

The Students' Association is also committed to introducing new academic members of staff with the role of Class Rep, and you can always get in touch with the DoRep or with the Education and Representation Coordinator (academicreps@st-andrews.ac.uk).

3) One of your classmates contacted you with an academic issue that is only specific to them and not relevant to the rest of the class (e.g. they live outside St Andrews and the timetable makes it difficult for them to attend all lectures). You are not sure if you should deal with this or not.

Even if only one (or a few) classmates are having a problem, you should still try to solve it if it falls under your responsibilities. Try to establish whether it is something that should be discussed in a SSCC meeting, or whether you can solve it by discussing it with the relevant person (e.g. the relevant lecturer, the Director of Teaching or the School Secretary).

There are resources in place to support Commuter students e.g. there is a common room, a Facebook group and a society so you might be able to point them towards these as other possible sources of help.

4) You have been approached by one of your classmates with a personal non-academic issue (e.g. mental health, a welfare issue, money worries) or about an academic appeal, and you are not sure if you should deal with it.

No, you should not deal with it. You are not trained to give this kind of advice. Instead, there are people in the University whose job is to deal with these issues. It would be helpful for you to know the University well, so you know to whom you can refer your classmate.

For instance, if it is a mental health, welfare, or money issue, refer your classmate to Students Services. If it is about an academic appeal, refer them to the Education Advocate of the Students' Association. If you are not sure about what falls under a class rep's responsibilities, ask the DoRep or the Education and Representation Coordinator.

5) One or two of your classmates think that there is too much reading for an assignment and that they are spending too much time keeping up with the requirements for this ONE assignment.

The best thing to do in this case is to ask the rest of the class how they are experiencing the workload. If the one or two students are isolated cases, refer them on to other potential places for help. For example, CAPOD can help with time management and academic reading, or their tutor/lecturer might be able to give some guidance.

6) The SSCC meeting clashes with your class or with another prior commitment you have.

If you prefer to attend your class or other prior commitment, email your secretary or School President as soon as possible with any bullet points you wish to add to the agenda of the meeting and a report containing the information and feedback you want to be read aloud during the meeting.

If you prefer to attend the meeting, let your tutor know in advance with the reason why you will not be able to attend class that week, and make sure that you find a way to catch up afterwards. We don't want you to neglect your studies!