

Title:	Improving Representation & Democratic Engagement	Date of Group Chat:	DD/MM/YY
Proposer name:	Nithin-Raj Govindan	SID:	
Secunder name:	Akshay Kumbalath	SID	

Union Notes:

1. The [Articles](#) (governing documents of the Students' Union) state that it is the objective of the Union to ensure the advancement of education of Students at Anglia Ruskin University for the public benefit by:
 - promoting the interests and welfare of Students at Anglia Ruskin University during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising Students
 - being the recognised representative channel between Students and Anglia Ruskin University and any other external bodies.

2. To achieve help this, the Students' Union may:
 - carry out campaigning activities
 - seek to influence public opinion; and
 - make representations to and seek to influence governmental and other bodies and institutions

3. In doing this work the Students' Union must seek at all times to:
 - ensure that the diversity of its Student Membership is recognised and that equal access is available to all Student Members of whatever origin or orientation
 - pursue its aims and objectives independent of any political party or religious group
 - pursue equal opportunities by taking positive action within the law to facilitate participation of groups discriminated against by society.

4. The Students' Union Board of Trustees identified significant challenges with student engagement and the overall effectiveness with our representative and democratic systems. The Board directed the Union to conduct a full review of our representation and democratic systems. The objectives of this review are to make the necessary changes to ensure that:
 - Our elected reps are accountable for their work
 - Students and ARU staff will have confidence in our elected reps
 - Students will participate in choosing their reps
 - Our democratic structures and roles will reflect our students and their needs.

5. The Students' Union conducted a research exercise to gather insight and input from students and staff members at the University and Union. The Students' Union also looked at other evidence such as attendance at Executive Committee Meetings, active engagement in roles and turnout in elections. The Students' Union spoke with other Unions across the country to help identify good practice and innovative ideas for supporting representation at ARU.

Union Believes:

1. That the research findings outlined in Appendix 1 are useful feedback to help improve our democratic processes.
2. That informal feedback from stakeholders and other Unions has also guided the Union in developing new ideas.
3. That student consultation about our next steps is essential.
4. That continuing with the system as it currently exists does not meet the obligations outlined in our Articles (see Union notes) and so changes must be made.

Union Resolves:

1. To use the discussion and feedback provided my students at the Student Summit to guide the next phase of implementation of this review. Proposals for discussion are outlined in Appendix 2.

Policy Summary:

To seek student input into the next phase of our Representation & Democracy review proposals to:

- To focus the purpose, membership and scope of the Executive Committee to its core responsibilities, as outlined in our Articles.
- To support student-led societies to elect campaign reps as part of their committee and provide specific support for them to campaign on issues relating to that society.
- To support accountability, engagement and scrutiny of elected roles through better communication of the work of the elected reps and informal opportunities to ask questions about this work.

Please e-mail to Fraser Luther Yarwood, Democracy Coordinator at f.luther-yarwood@angliastudent.com