

ECSA Class Rep Update

November 2022

Background & 2022-23 context

The Students' Association has been running an online system of Class Rep registration since 2016-17, with various iterations of the process improving the quality and interconnectedness of the system each year.

In 2021, ECSA and the College signed a new Data Sharing Agreement, formalising the sharing of student information, courses, and classes, between the two organisations. We are now able to pre-populate our database with student information, meaning vastly improved accuracy of what we gather. When a student is registered by their LDT or lecturer as a Class Rep, it will auto-fill their name, EC number, College e-mail address, etc. reducing the opportunity for human error.

Furthermore, throughout the last 3 academic years, we have used Microsoft Teams as a central point for Class Reps to meet, ask questions, and discuss issues, so we have now developed the system so that every Class Rep is automatically added to this Teams site and included from the very start of their role.

We are also now able to drill down into live course lists, allowing us to remove courses which are not currently running, or we would not expect to select a Class Rep. For example, commercial courses or day-release courses. This has given us a much clearer picture of coverage of representation across the College.

Improving the standard of our information will improve the accuracy of our reporting back to the College.

As a change to the previous 2 academic years, our lead Full-Time Officer (FTO) for Class Reps, David Elder, President, took the decision to move back to more on-campus, in-person events this year, with the option of some online activity for those who could not make specific times or locations.

Additionally, our full-time staff post responsible for Class Reps (Representation & Impact Coordinator) has been vacant throughout the first part of this academic year, with the previous post-holder leaving in the summer and their replacement due to start in post in December. That has meant that we have had far less resource to put towards Class Rep recruitment and training this year, than we would normally have had. We are delighted at how well the system has continued to run without a full-time staff member in post, which bodes well for further development in future years.

Class Rep Recruitment

ECSA worked with Learning Development Tutors (LDTs), and Lecturers with tutorial hours to promote the registration process throughout the first 6 weeks of the academic year. Class Rep Registration opened on the 16th of September once the new student data was uploaded to our database.

The registration system is hosted within our website (<https://ecsa.scot/staff/electreps>), using the college-wide log-in system, so LDTs and teaching staff can log-in directly and register their class reps during class. The registration page includes [a video from our President, David](#), explaining the importance of class representation and how the Class Rep system at Edinburgh College works. This allows LDTs and tutors to show their classes the information directly from ECSA before they seek volunteers and submit the registrations.

At the time of writing, we have a total of 502 Class Reps registered for this year.

Our total number of Class Reps registered has just tipped over 500 for this semester (see breakdown by Curriculum Area at the end of this document). This is about what we would expect for this time of year. It is slightly less than 2021 levels, but slightly more than the previous year.

Given that there are less full-time courses running and fewer students in general, this is a good return, but, there is clearly still a lot of work to be done to get full coverage across all campuses and curriculum areas. We rely heavily on the good working relationships with LDTs and course tutors, and the new Representation & Impact Coordinator will focus on developing these in areas where we have seen less or no Class Reps registered this semester.

Class Rep Training

We have developed and adapted our training based on feedback from students over the past few years, and working alongside sparqs ([Student Partnership in Quality Scotland](#)). Our sessions are now 1 hour long, rather than 2 and are contextualised to Edinburgh College, rather than generic college content. The training content supports students to identify any concerns in their class, teaches them ways of gathering effective feedback and how to implement solutions.

As previously mentioned, after 2 years of hosting all of our training online via Microsoft Teams, we have moved back to providing the majority of our sessions in-person, on-campus. Training was delivered over a 2 week period, either side of the October Break, across all 4 campuses, as well as online via Microsoft Teams. This year, we have so far delivered 10 Class Rep training sessions as per the table below.

Granton	Midlothian	Milton Rd	Sighthill	Online
4	2	4	4	2

We have had quite a demand from Class Reps for more additional training sessions to be made available, so we are hosting further online sessions in the coming weeks. So far, a total of 172 Class Reps have attended the in-person or live online Class Rep Training sessions, and all Class Reps instantly get directed to the self-paced Moodle module as an introduction when there are first registered.

172 Class Reps trained so far, with all Reps directed to the Moodle module

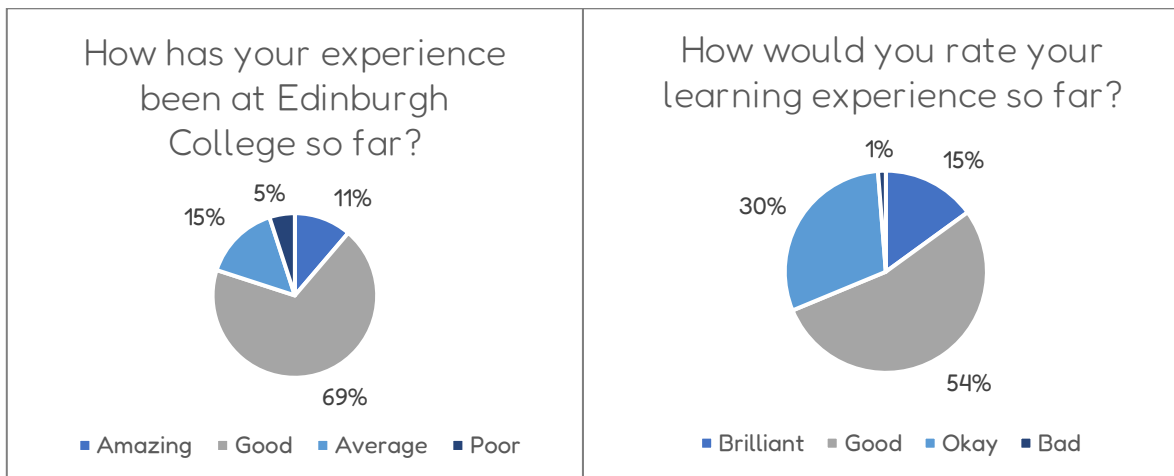
All Class Rep training sessions have been delivered by our FTO team, with the vast majority being delivered by our President, David. Although this has been an incredible amount of effort to deliver, it has given David, Skye, & Luna the opportunity to get in front of Class Reps early and begin to develop relationships which are vital for the quality of feedback that we wish to gather on the student learning experience.

Class Rep Meetings

Our first round of Class Rep Meetings took place on the week beginning the 7th of November. We held 2 in-person meetings and one online meeting to accommodate as many students as possible. These meetings focussed on the student experience of the first couple of months on their courses. We devised short survey and asked Class Reps to speak to their classes and complete the survey before the meetings as a reflection

on the class experience. The feedback provided in this survey helped us to identify some areas to discuss further during live meetings.

The survey was completed by 82 Class Reps, which represents approximately 1200 students. Over two thirds (68%) of all classes reported having had a “Good” experience so far at Edinburgh College, with a similar number (67%) rating their learning experience as “Good” or “Excellent”.



Around a third of classes (32%) reported that they had members of their class facing issues that had led to them considering or actually dropping out of their courses by the end of October. When asked about timetabling, 31% of classes reported not having received their timetable or full information about their classes before the first week of term. Conversely, 82% of classes felt that induction sessions delivered by curriculum teams and LDTs gave them the information they needed to start their course.

Some of the issues students have realised during the first round of meetings that have impacted their learning experience include:

- Timetabling – not received on time or class times/days being changed at short-notice, impacting on childcare, travel etc.
- Staffing - Lecturing vacancies in some departments meaning classes not being delivered
- Assessments – some courses still facing significant assessment bunching
- Support plans – students who have been given support plans not being implemented in class in a timely manner
- Travel – significant disruption with public transport including train strikes and extremely poor or unreliable service from Lothian Buses
- Equalities – 23% of classes reported that they felt there were equalities issues on campus to address. A specific theme emerged around the use of gender pronouns in classes, preferred names on registers, and a lack of gender-neutral facilities on campus

Summary

We will be hosting 3 main Class Rep Meetings throughout the year, themed around student feedback on major issues or topics. We hope to engage with specific staff teams from across the College to be involved with developing these sessions to enable them to be as useful as possible for Class Reps and for gathering feedback.

Once again, a huge thank you to staff from across the College. We really do appreciate that this is a huge task every year and with the support from all departments we are getting to a place where our reporting will be more accurate and reflective of the student representation currently at Edinburgh College. We will continue to report on student feedback following Class Rep Meetings and other representative activities.

Class Reps Registered by Curriculum Area

