

EC Students' Association

Class Rep Extended Report

December 2023

Class Rep Recruitment

In the first part of the 2023-24 academic year, EC Students' Association worked with Learning Development Tutors (LDTs), and Lecturers with tutorial hours to get as many Class Reps registered as possible. The registration system is hosted within our [website](#) and includes a [video](#) from our Full-Time Officer team, Skye, Luna and Jon, explaining the importance of student representation and how the Class Rep system at Edinburgh College works.

Class Reps: Key stats

- 473 Class Reps recruited
- 214 Class Reps trained
- 97 Class Reps attended the first round of meetings, with the campus breakdown as follows:
 - 19 Sighthill
 - 30 Granton
 - 19 Milton Road
 - 29 Online

In total, 473 Class Reps have been registered so far this year. Considering the major disruption caused by strikes being held by lecturers' union EIS local for the first six weeks of term, we see this as a high uptake, though numbers are slightly down on last year (502 Class Reps registered in 22/23). We are pleased to share that a higher proportion of Class Reps undertook training this year (214, versus 179 last year) which we hope will increase the overall engagement levels of Reps in the coming months.

Reflecting on Induction

The Class Rep system is an invaluable way of gathering student feedback on all aspects of their Learning & Teaching. For the first meetings of the year, which took place on the week of 6th November, we asked students about their experience of induction. The following themes emerged.

Strikes

The vast majority of the Class Reps who attended our November meetings said that their induction experience was negatively impacted by strike action. In particular, there was anxiety around how assessments will now be taking place when students have not been given the opportunity to catch up on Learning & Teaching that they missed out on as a result of the strike.

Facilities issues

A number of Class Reps raised specific issues about facilities and access needs, such rooms being unfit for purpose (with broken whiteboards and a lack of chairs), equipment braking easily and software on campus PCs not

being able to support all courses. Many of these issues are being followed up with the relevant staff and departments and are now being resolved.

Retention

We asked our Class Reps about whether there had been a high drop-out rate among their fellow students on the course. Where this was the case, the following reasons were most cited: lack of support and contact time (due to strikes); anxiety around assessments; technological barriers; lack of LDT; lack of reasonable adaptations relating to disability; poor communication and not knowing what help was available.

Staff

While there was a significant proportion of Class Reps who felt their relationships with the College staff had been negatively affected by the strike action, overall there was a positive perception of staff who played a big part in students feeling welcome and positive about the learning environment at Edinburgh College.

Icebreakers

A number of students highlighted the importance of proper icebreakers to be included in induction at the start of term, to help facilitate friendships between their classmates.

MyEC App

There was frustration among students about the MyEC App being unavailable on Android devices. Some felt that previous systems, e.g. for SAM Forms worked better before and are not as clear now that they are embedded in the app.

Communication

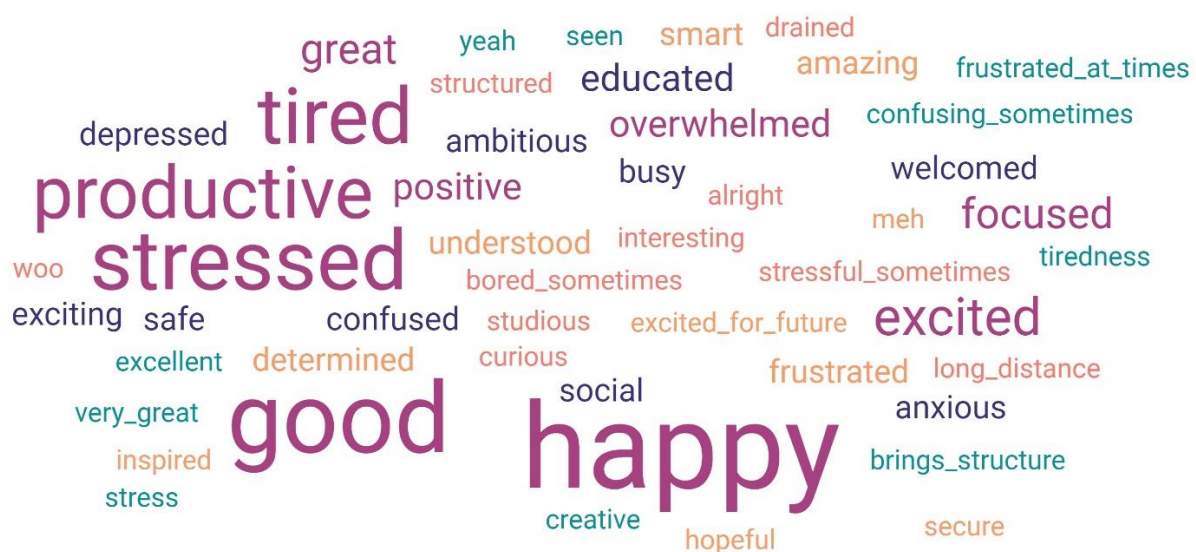
Several students flagged that being communicated with by different methods (Teams, Email, Moodle) by different staff had led to confusion. Communication was negatively impacted by strike action in most cases.

Quiet Rooms

It was raised that the Quiet Rooms are being misused by some students (especially at Sighthill), which has now been passed on to the Security team.

Have your say

We asked students several questions using the anonymous online tool Mentimeter to gather feedback. The wordcloud below shows the range of responses when asked how being at College made them feel.



We gathered some direct feedback on student experience by asking students to note down reflections in their own words:

"Good. It's been very stressful but completely different than school. I feel like I found my place and have grown as a stronger person."

"It has been stressful, rushed and unorganised the lecturers are doing their best given the difficult circumstances. The college as a whole has not done good enough by disabled students."

"The communication would be better if all the lecturers agree on using only one platform to communicate, it's quite annoying to check email, Moodle and teams all the time."

"Very good; It has been an awakening, life changing experience. Don't get me wrong, it's not perfect. When I'm prime minister, I'll make sure it's got the funding necessary!"

"My experience so far has been okay. More communication from lecturers would be helpful to say they will not be in class. Some of my classmates are struggling with assessments (as they are all given at once) including myself. Bursary is ridiculous, had to argue to get it sorted."

We asked the Class Reps to respond to a series of statements reflecting on their overall experience at Edinburgh College so far. Respondents rated a series of statements on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree".

Statement	Weighted Average Score (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)			
	Sighthill	Granton	Milton Road	Online
At Edinburgh College I feel cared about as a student	3.6	3.7	4.7	3.8
My course and classes have met my expectations	3.3	3.6	4	3.2
I feel positive about the College facilities	3.5	3.7	3.6	3.8
I feel positive about the online learning environment	2.9	2.9	3.8	3
My induction went really smoothly	2.9	3	3.6	2.5
I feel I've settled in well at College	3.7	4.1	4.4	4.3
I feel safe at Edinburgh College	3.8	3.8	4.6	4.4
I'm pleased I became a Class Rep	4.6	4	4.6	4.3

The above results show that though induction and the online environment were some of the lowest scoring areas, overall Class Reps tend to feel safe, cared about and say they have settled well into College. The scores also demonstrate that most responders feel pleased that they have become Class Reps.

Further Feedback since the Class Rep meetings

Since the Class Rep meetings took place in early November, a number of issues have been raised. We have continued to create new ways to allow students to communicate their feedback and questions to us, including:

- A [Live Q&A with the Principal](#), which took place on Wednesday 15th November. Issues raised included: the lack of accessibility of the campuses for students who use wheelchairs; physical vs digital student ID cards; catering issues; social spaces on campus; changing timetables to

replace course codes with course names; funding and questions about the future of the College. We hope those who submitted their questions felt they were answered fully.

- Our [Feedback Fridays](#) initiative, where we ask students a quick-fire question on a dedicated topic via our student newsletter, which is received by approximately 13,000 students fortnightly. So far, we have gained some useful feedback about how students rate social spaces on campus, and how their experience of assessments has been this term.
- We have also been operating our Reverse Shadowing Scheme with College Board Members, which gives them a chance to interact with students and hear their views. This has led to some productive conversations and hopefully increases the chances of student voices being heard at all levels of the College.

This report has looked at the feedback we have gathered from our Class Reps and the wider student community so far. Along with the data shown above, we have also collected individual feedback from each meeting, which we have been taking forward both with staff and individual students. We aim to try and resolve any issues promptly, by working in partnership with College staff.

A summary version of this report was circulated to the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience committee in advance of their meeting on Friday 17th November. This extended report will be circulated to all Class Reps and to the College's Senior Management Team.

The Class Rep system continues to be a valuable way for students to reflect on their Learning & Teaching experience, and we hope that our Reps feel empowered to know that their feedback is being heard across the College and will help to shape student experience in the coming months and years.