



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Reg. no. UFV 2019/1792

Guidelines for Student Influence at Uppsala University

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1. Introduction

Collegiality and student influence are fundamental principles at the University, and this is established in Uppsala University's *Mission, Goals & Strategies*. All staff and students share responsibility for the University's development.

In its bill entitled "Student influence and quality development in higher education" (Studentinflytande och kvalitetsutveckling i högskolan (1999/2000:28)), the Government describes how both staff and students play a central role in efforts to enhance quality in higher education. It is also the responsibility of the higher education institutions to practically facilitate, and in other ways encourage and contribute to the students' active involvement in the process of development. The Government's proposal was approved by the Riksdag and new provisions on student influence were introduced in 2000 in the Higher Education Act. Since then, it has been clear that quality enhancement is a common concern for higher education institutions' employees and students, and that students should have the right to exercise influence over their education at the institutions. Higher education institutions must endeavour to enable students to play an active role in the continued development of courses and study programmes.

The role and responsibility of students in this context is also regulated in Uppsala University's rules of procedure.

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clarify the work on student influence at Uppsala University. Student influence can take many forms, both informal and formal. These guidelines focus on the student influence that is exercised through student representation.

The appendix to the guidelines lists the national laws and regulations that apply to student representation as well as relevant internal rules at Uppsala University.

The document "Guidance for work on student influence" is also published together with the guidelines, and is intended to support work on student influence by developing and clarifying the guidelines and providing practical advice and tips. The guidance also provides information and advice regarding other forms of student influence, such as course evaluations, programme evaluations, student safety representatives as part of the systematic work environment management and individual study plans for students at doctoral level.

2. Definitions

2.1. Student

Here, 'student' refers to any person admitted to and undertaking Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral level studies. A person on a period of leave from studies, for example to work for a student union, is also considered a student in this context and can thus be a student representative.

2.2. Student influence

Student influence is regulated by the Higher Education Act, among others, which stipulates that students have the right to exercise influence over their education. Student influence refers to representation in preparatory and decision-making bodies, that the students' interests are safeguarded and that their views have the opportunity to make an impact on concrete measures and changes. This influence can be exercised in both informal and formal contexts.

2.3. Student representative

'Student representative' refers here to any person who is appointed by the student union to represent students at Uppsala University in a certain context. A student representative must also represent students who are not members of a student union.

2.4. Students' unions

The University Board decides whether an association that meets certain requirements in line with the Higher Education Act is given the status of a student union for one or more organisationally or geographically delimited areas of the University ("the students' union's area of activity"). According to the Ordinance on Student Unions, the students' unions' main purpose is to monitor and participate in both the development of the courses and programmes and the students' conditions for undertaking studies at the University. The unions are a prerequisite for the success of the work on student influence, as it is they who represent the voice of students when contacting the University. The bill entitled "Freedom and Influence - the abolition of obligatory union membership" (2008/09: 154, p. 47) states that the unions' core activities should consist of educational monitoring, educational development, work environment issues and support for the student representatives appointed by the unions. Activities linked to student welfare or other areas conducted by the unions are not considered to be covered by the term 'student influence'.

3. Student representation in preparatory and decision-making bodies

The students are entitled to representation when decisions or preparations are made that have bearing on their courses or programmes or the situation of students. The students themselves select their representatives via the students' unions or via bodies appointed by the students' unions.

To enable them to participate in meetings of various university bodies, elected student representatives must be given the opportunity to adapt their study route in order to exercise student influence, where this is practically and economically feasible. The documents entitled "Guidelines on the remuneration of undergraduate and Master's students on boards, committees and councils" and "Guidelines for extending the period of employment and study for doctoral students in elected positions" regulate some of the prerequisites for student representatives.

It is of great importance that decision-makers at all levels of the University have an understanding of student influence and students' right to be represented. The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for ensuring the students' right to exercise influence over their education. At departmental level, the head of department or equivalent is responsible for ensuring that the conditions are in place to enable student influence.

3.1. Appointment of student representatives

When student representatives are to participate in preparatory and decision-making bodies, the students' unions must be given the best possible conditions for appointing them. Assignments must be communicated with good planning and clarity about the nature of the assignment and what expectations are placed on the student representatives.

4. Decisions

4.1. Decisions taken by a group of individuals

If decisions are to be made by a group of individuals and the decisions are of importance for education and the students' situation, the students are entitled to representation by at least three members. The number of student representatives in such a group may however be fewer than three if there are special grounds in view of the total number of members in the group. The majority of the individuals are to be academically qualified. Student representatives are normally entitled to be replaced by an alternate member.

4.2. Decisions taken by a single individual

If decisions or preparations are to be made by one individual, information is to be provided and consultation take place with a student representative in ample time before the decision is made or preparations concluded.

5. Communication

Efficiently functioning student influence is based on good communication between the University and the students on issues that affect students' situation and education.

In collaboration with the student unions, Uppsala University will provide information about what student influence means and about the opportunity to exercise it.

The chair of each body is responsible for giving the new student representative a relevant introduction to the body's work, purpose and organisational home.

5.1. Views and complaints

Each disciplinary domain is responsible for ensuring that there are procedures for handling views and complaints concerning student influence, education and the students' situation. It should be clear to students how they should go about presenting their views and complaints so that they can be dealt with.

6. Appendix

The appendix lists the national laws and regulations that apply to student influence as well as internal rules at Uppsala University. The Student Affairs and Academic Registry Division is responsible for updating the appendix where necessary.

6.1. Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)

Chapter 1

Members of the board of governors who are appointed by the students and student representatives

Section 7 of the Ordinance on Student Unions (2009:769) contains provisions stating that a higher education institution may appoint the members of the board that the students are entitled to appoint under Chapter 2, Section 4 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434). That same ordinance also contains provisions on how student representatives are to be appointed pursuant to Chapter 2, Section 7 of the Higher Education Act.

The Ordinance concerning Remuneration for Positions on Government Boards, Committees, Councils, etc. (1992:1299) is also to be applied to members appointed by students to a higher education institution's board.

Ordinance (2016:745).

Course evaluations

Section 14 Higher education institutions shall enable students who are participating in or have completed a course to express their experiences of and views on the course through a course evaluation to be organised by the higher education institution.

The higher education institution shall collate the course evaluations and provide information about their results and any actions prompted by the course evaluations. The results shall be made available to the students. Ordinance (2000:651).

Chapter 2

Section 7 a The teachers are entitled to be represented by three members of the board of governors. If, pursuant to the second paragraph of Section 1, the Government decides that the board of governors will have a chair and ten other members, the teachers may appoint two members of the board of governors. The teachers' representatives must be appointed by election within the higher education institution. The higher education institution may issue more specific regulations about the election procedure.

The students are entitled to appoint three members of the board of governors. If, pursuant to the second paragraph of Section 1, the Government decides that the board of

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governors will have a chair and ten other members, the students may appoint two members of the board of governors.

The chair and the other members of the board of governors who, pursuant to Section 4 of Chapter 2 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434), must be appointed by the Government, are to be appointed after a proposal pursuant to Section 7b. This proposal is to be preceded by consultation within and outside the higher education institution and comprise persons with competence and experience from activities that are significant for the institution's mandate pursuant to Section 2 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act. Section 2 of the Higher Education Act. 2 § Higher Education Act. An equal gender distribution among the members should be observed in this proposal.

The staff representatives who, pursuant to the second paragraph of Chapter 2, Section 4 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) are entitled to be present and speak at meetings of the board of governors, are to be appointed according to the provisions of the Staff Representatives Ordinance (1987:1101).

Student representation

Section 14 Chapter 2, Section 7 of the Higher Education Act (1992: 1434) contains a provision on students' right to representation when decisions or preparations are made.

If decisions or preparations are to be made by one a individual, information must be provided and consultation take place with a student representative in ample time before the decision is made or preparations concluded.

If a decision is to be made by a group of individuals pursuant to the second paragraph of Section 6 of Chapter 2 of the Higher Education Act, the students are entitled to representation by at least three members. The number of student representatives in such a group may however be fewer if there are special grounds in view of the total number of members in the group.

In other respects, the higher education institution itself decides on the entitlement of students to the representation stipulated in the first paragraph above.

Chapter 10

Section 4 The disciplinary board shall consist of the vice-chancellor as chair, a legally qualified member who shall hold or have held tenure as a judge, and a representative of the teaching staff at the higher education institution. Ordinance (1998:1003). The students at the higher education institution shall be entitled to representation on the board by two members.

6.2. Ordinance on Student Unions (2009:769)

Board members appointed by students and student representatives

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Section 7 A students' union at a higher education institution may appoint the members of the board that the students are entitled to appoint under Chapter 2, Section 4 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434). A students' union at a higher education institution may also appoint and dismiss the representatives referred to in Chapter 2, Section 7 of the Higher Education Act.

If there are multiple students' unions at a higher education institution, the task of appointing members of the board of governors, under the first sentence of the first paragraph above, may be conducted in the manner agreed by the students' unions. When students are entitled to representation on a body at the higher education institution that covers areas of activity for multiple students' unions or which is otherwise, in decision-making or investigation, relevant to multiple students' unions, the tasks referenced in the second sentence of the first paragraph above may be conducted in the manner agreed by the students' unions.

If the students' unions are unable to agree the higher education institution may decide, after giving the students' unions a hearing, how the members of the governing board or student representatives must be appointed.

Section 8 A student representative must also represent students who are not members of a union.

Section 9 If there is no students' union for an area of activity at the higher education institution, the higher education institution must organise direct or indirect elections among the students in that area for members of the governing board or student representatives.

The higher education institution may issue regulations on how such elections must be organised.

6.3. Internal rules at Uppsala University

[Uppsala University: Mission, Goals and Strategies](#)

[Rules of procedure for Uppsala University](#)

[Guidelines on the remuneration of undergraduate and Master's students on boards, committees and councils \(in Swedish\)](#)

[Guidelines for extending the period of employment and study for doctoral students in elected positions](#)

[Complaint management \(in Swedish\)](#)