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HALLAM  
STUDENTS'  
UNION**

REPRESENTING YOUR ACADEMIC INTERESTS

**COURSE  
REPS**

REPRESENTING YOUR ACADEMIC INTERESTS

**DEPARTMENT  
REPS**

## **Student Representative Report**

**2019**

Liz Chitwood - Researcher

Alison Worsley - Academic Representation Manager

Olivia Smye-Rumsby - Academic Interests Coordinator

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# 1: Summary & Recommendations

## 1.1 Summary

The 2019 Student Rep Survey received 245 responses: 240 Course Reps and 17 Department Reps. Eighty-four percent volunteered for the role, with some Reps commenting that they would like a fairer recruitment process, though 85 percent were satisfied with the recruitment process. Exactly three-quarters of respondents thought that their training equipped them for their role, but only 66 percent felt that they used the skills obtained in their training in the role. However, 16 percent of respondents were not formally trained at all (e.g. attending a group training event, becoming individually trained by Students' Union staff, etc.) and commented that they learned about the role from their Course Leader informally.

When asked about challenges faced in their role, Reps struggled, at times, to obtain student feedback. Throughout qualitative comments, some Reps mentioned that their cohort did not understand nor see the impact of the Student Rep role and, thus, were less eager to give their feedback or opinion. When Reps did successfully collect feedback from their peers, this was normally in-person (either formally in a lecture setting or informally outside of timetabled sessions) or using social media.

There was a rise, for both Course and Department Reps alike, in the percentage of respondents that felt they were both listened to and respected in formal meetings (Student Staff Committee Meetings or Department Board Meetings, respectively). For Course Reps, the majority found the Student Staff Committee Meetings (SSCM) productive, yet some commented they were unable to attend all meetings and this was a challenge of the Student Rep role. Just over half (52%) of Course Reps received action logs after every meeting and 57 percent kept in contact with their Course Leader in their capacity as a Rep outside of formal meetings using email. Positively, nearly all Department Reps were invited to SSCM's, though not every Department Rep received meeting minutes. For Department Reps specifically, nearly all thought that Department Board Meetings are efficient, productive and that their comments were listened to, respected, and acted on.

## 1.2 Recommendations

1. Raise awareness of the Student Rep system amongst the wider student population.

Only 62 percent of Reps thought other students saw the Student Rep system as a valuable improvement tool. Throughout the qualitative comments, however, Reps noted the difficulty in collecting feedback from other students, with respondents citing student concerns with a lack of visible impact on their course. As mentioned throughout Section 5 (see 5: *Collecting Feedback*), spreading awareness of the Rep role across the rest of the student body would, hopefully, aid in increased numbers of students participating in the Rep System and understanding the importance of their feedback.

2. Ensure cohesive training across all entrants to decrease the number of untrained Student Reps.

As Section 4 summarises (see 4: *Training*), 16 percent of respondents had never been formally or properly trained in their role as a Rep and these same Reps commented that they would have liked the opportunity to become trained. Whilst the majority of new Reps are recruited at the start of the traditional academic year, and are then trained throughout October, this survey found that not all of these Reps are actually trained, even when they start during the 'traditional' period. As expected, there are also some respondents on courses which start in January or March who had not been trained. Therefore, it is recommended that the Students' Union and the University work together to ensure a more cohesive approach to training which could involve a review after busier training periods (i.e. October, January), offering additional training to Reps who are still untrained or unprepared, and removing Reps who are no longer interested in the role.

3. Implement an online platform for Student Reps to interact with other Reps and share information.

Throughout the comments, Student Reps mentioned wanting a space to interact with other Reps or to easily access their training material (see *Section 4.1 Resources*). Having an online space means that Reps could interact with others, ask questions and share information which has been helpful for them. Though any online platform could work well, integrating a Student Rep page onto Blackboard, a site which is already regularly used by our students, means that Reps could access the page easily. As a Students' Union, a Blackboard site would also help to ensure that, as referred to in Recommendation 2, all Reps have information about the role, even if they slip through the training gaps.

4. Continue sharing of meeting outcomes through action points after Student Staff Committee Meetings to improve accountability for follow-up when issues are raised.

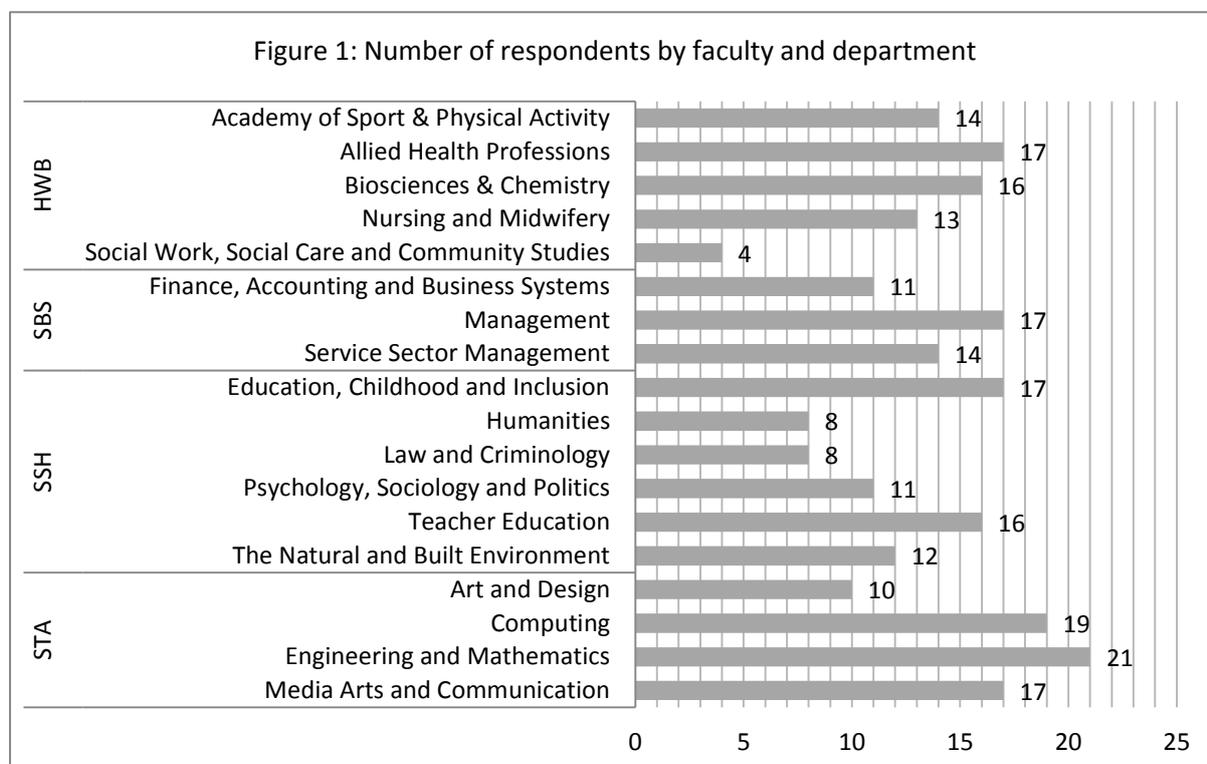
As recommended in the 2018 Student Rep Report, though the percentage of Reps seeing improved action after Student Staff Committee Meetings has risen by 1 percent (see *10: Appendix B - 2018 to 2019 Comparison*), more could be done to continue to improve this area. As some Reps commented, they experienced barriers to making change happen due to lecturers or course leaders not taking on feedback, or not communicating why action was not possible. Whilst most Reps may have felt listened to (88%) and respected (89%) during meetings, some Reps commented that a lack of action made them feel as if their input and contribution to improving the course was superfluous. This, in turn, is reflected in Recommendation 1, wherein the wider student population, as well as Reps, do not understand and see the impact of their contribution.

## 2: Introduction & Research Method

At Sheffield Hallam University and Sheffield Hallam Students' Union, the Student Rep system is an integral part of student voice. This system aims to not only understand what issues our students might be facing, but to improve, where possible, the course experience for all of our students. Currently, there are just over 1800 Student Reps at Hallam from undergraduate to postgraduate research level. The annual Student Rep Survey, therefore, aims to better understand the experience of our students with the intention of improving the role year-on-year.

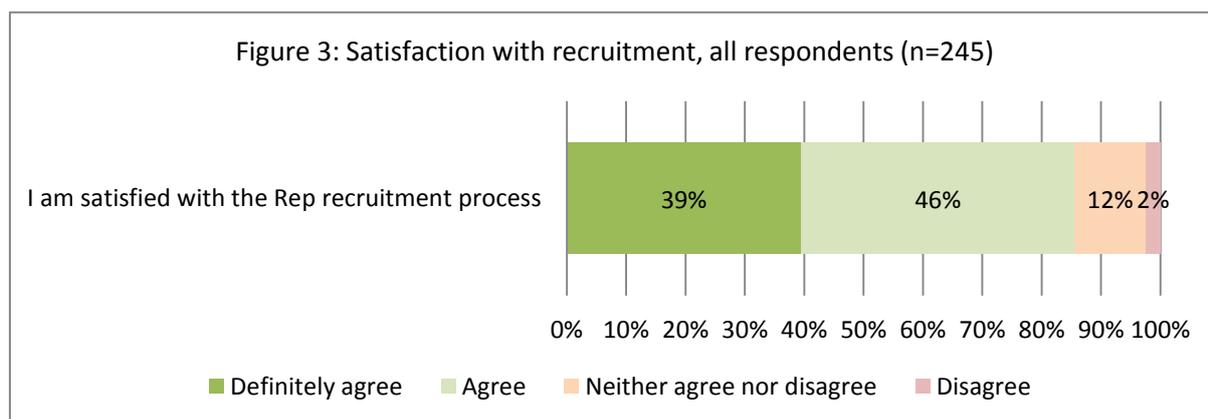
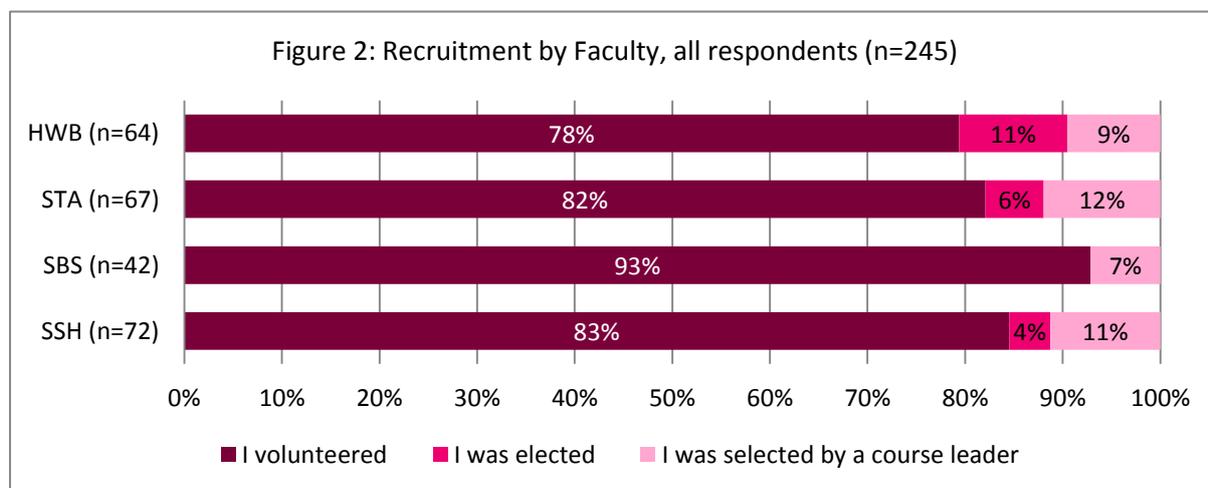
The survey was open from 7 May to 8 July 2019 and students were incentivised to complete the survey, with two respondents winning £50 each and five respondents winning £10 Amazon voucher. This year, 245 Reps responded to the survey (14% response rate). The response rates within each faculty are largely representative of the wider student population: 26 percent from Health & Wellbeing; 27 percent from Science, Technology and Arts; 17 percent from Sheffield Business School; and 29 percent from Social Sciences & Humanities. Figure 1 has Faculty and Department break-down with the number of respondents from each area.

The results are presented in the same, or similar, order to the survey and the data was analysed and compared, where appropriate, to previous year's Student Rep Survey data. Respondents were asked a range of questions, from their motivation to take part, to their thoughts on feedback practices and sharing successes and challenges in the role. The survey included both quantitative questions and open-ended, qualitative questions.



### 3: Recruitment

Firstly, respondents were asked how they became a Student Rep, with the majority, 84 percent (n=205), volunteering for the role. Exactly 10 percent (n=25) were selected for by their Course Leader and only 6 percent (n=14) were elected into their role. When analysed by Faculty (Figure 2), students from the Faculty of Health & Wellbeing (HWB) were slightly more likely to have been elected into their role compared to all other faculties. In addition, Reps from Sheffield Business School (SBS) were also more likely to have volunteered for the role, comparably. Generally, as Figure 3 highlights, students are quite satisfied with the recruitment process for the role, with only 2 percent of Reps dissatisfied.



Respondents were asked to comment on improvements to the recruitment process. Just under half of respondents commented, with many students wanting a bit more information about the role in general before they started. Similarly to previous years, students would like to know more about the details of the role, including the commitment levels, and skills they would develop as part of the role. Additionally, though some students felt that the recruitment process was fine as is, with the majority noting that volunteering for the role was satisfactory, other students would like to see a more formal interview or election process (including information about the candidates).

*"I found as a first year volunteering was the best recruitment process as I didn't have to worry about organising an election candidate for myself in front of my peers which at the time I didn't know so well. It also relieved the stress of trying to organise an election while I was still getting to grips with the change of going to university." - Health & Wellbeing Rep*

*"An informal interview to determine students who are serious about the position as there were many who volunteered but did not contribute." - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep*

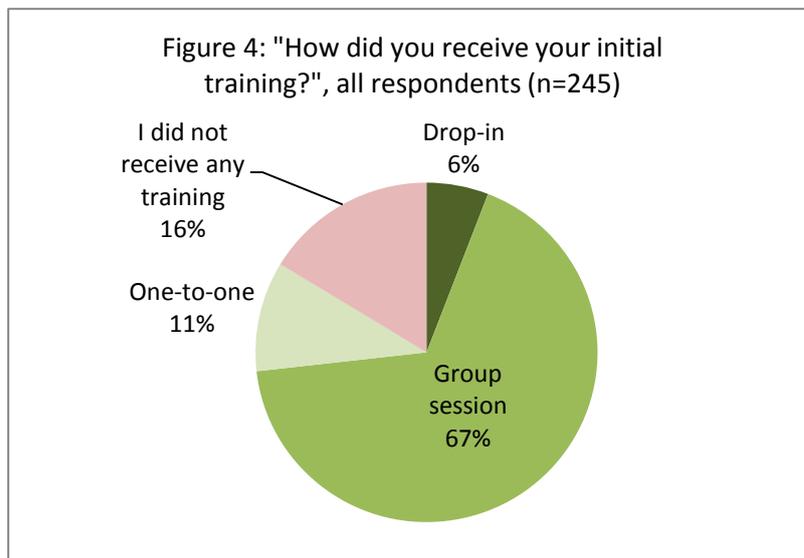
*"Students were expected to vote for their course rep during the first week of placement, and they were only provided with the names of the people standing. Therefore, it wasn't a fair process."  
- Science, Technology & Arts Rep*

Lastly, some students commented that the timing of recruitment could be improved and, for courses that run with the traditional academic calendar, holding recruitment before the summer starts, would enable new Reps to start their role as soon as the academic year begins. As one Rep commented:

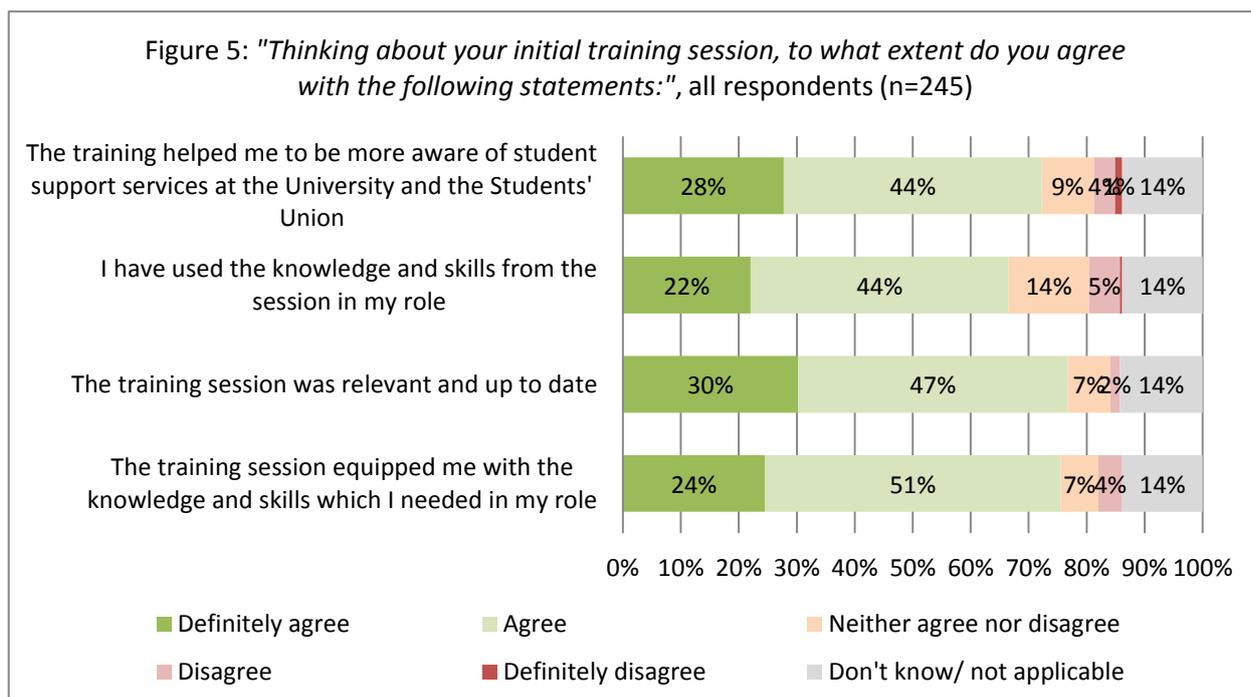
*"By beginning the recruitment process at the end of the academic year before the role begins you would massively enable a better amount of time to make alterations and improvements based upon student feedback, furthermore it would allow students more time to become accustomed to what their role requires thus allowing a better more efficient process" - Social Sciences & Humanities*

## 4: Training

Most respondents received their training in a group session, though 16 percent did not receive any training (Figure 4). Without proper training, Reps are likely to be unprepared to represent their peers in Student Staff Committee Meetings (SSCM) or at Department Board Meetings, be unaware of formal procedures or additional support available to them or their peers.



Furthermore, in relation to the training received, respondents generally thought that, when applicable, the training sessions did equip them for their role (75% in agreement). Despite this, only 66 percent used the knowledge and skills from the training in their role as a Student Rep (see Figure 5). Comparing 2018 to 2019, the percentages of students that agreed with the statement about training (and where the statements remained the same), all rose (see 10: *Appendix B - 2018 to 2019 Comparison* or 11: *Appendix C - 2018 to 2019 Faculty Comparisons*).



Respondents were asked to comment on additional training needs they identified throughout their time as a Rep. The majority of comments were on collecting feedback, with Reps wanting more advice on what to do if their cohort does not give feedback or they struggle to engage their peers. Other Reps would have liked more information about Student Support Services, so they felt equipped to convey this information to their peers, should they need to. Although Reps are not in a position to give advice to students, they are an accessible group of students to signpost peers that might not want or feel comfortable approaching their lecturers or tutors for information.

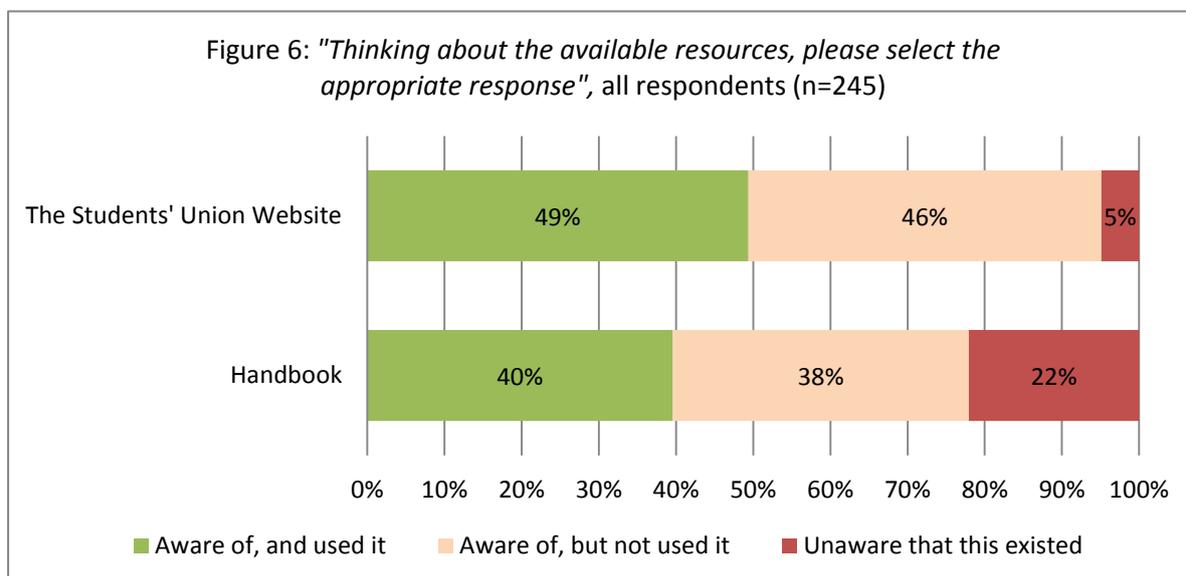
*"Strategies to engage students. Largely left to student reps"* - Science, Technology & Arts Rep

*"I feel like there was not enough information on where to send students with problems the student reps could not help with."* - Social Sciences & Humanities

As noted in Figure 4 above, 39 (16%) respondents did not receive any training and some Reps commented that they had not been made aware that training was available to them at all. Also a recommendation (see page 3), all Reps should be trained, in some capacity, about the role including the importance of their role to improve the student experience.

#### 4.1 Resources

As Figure 6 displays, nearly half of all Reps (49%) were aware of the Students' Unions website and used this in their role and an additional 46 percent were aware of the website, but did not use it in their role. Slightly less respondents used the Course or Department Rep handbook in their role and 22 percent were unaware that the handbook existed at all.



Lastly, Reps were asked to comment if they needed any additional resources to fulfil their role. Similarly to last year, Reps would like an online platform where they could access the training material after attending training and give them an opportunity to have discussions amongst other Reps. This would provide them with a space to share ideas and helpful tips and as an informal meeting space when needed. A small number of Reps specifically mentioned using MyHallam/Blackboard as this online platform.

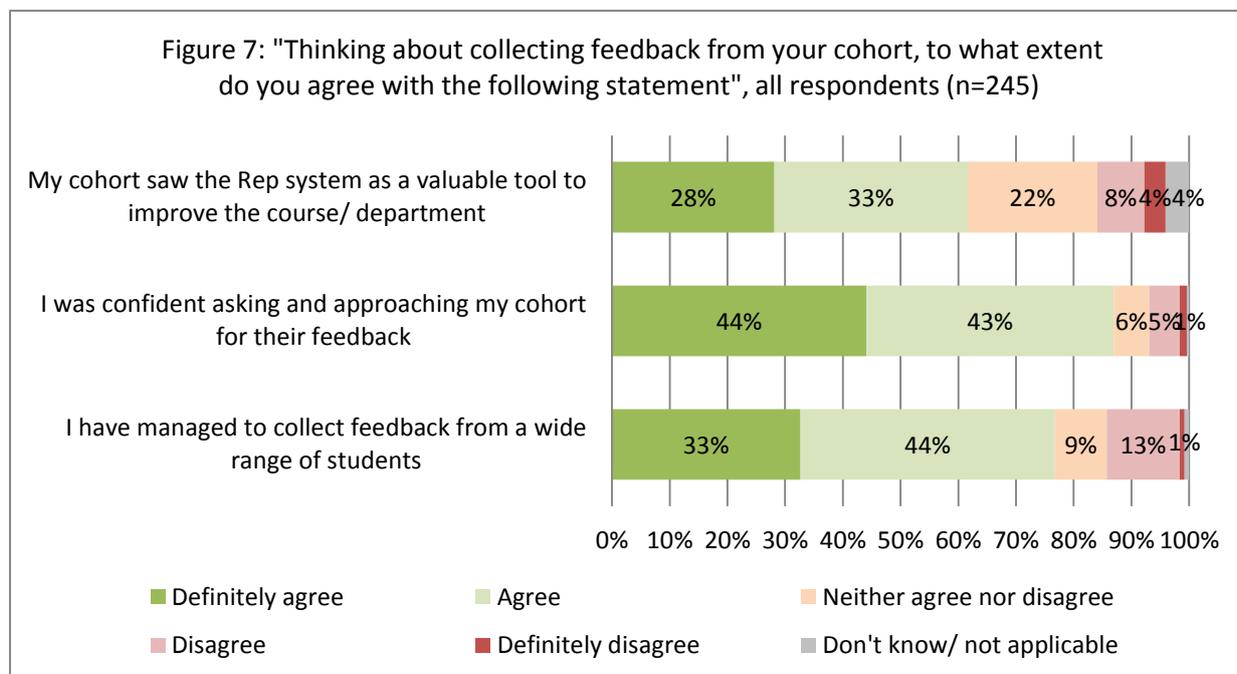
*"A "ready to use" or available system where students on the course are made aware of the course rep and give them ways to contact them through an open discussion board / forum." - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep*

*"Some kind of online feedback form for the course that reps can access." - Sheffield Business School Rep*

*"A page for students rep on blackboard so it's easy to get to information, as it's with your other course information / modules." - Sheffield Business School Rep*

## 5: Collecting Feedback

Collecting feedback from their peers is an integral role of the Student Rep experience. Respondents were asked a few questions about this, presented below.



Notably, most Reps felt relatively confident asking and approaching their cohort for feedback, with 87 percent of respondents agreeing to this statement. Respondents, however, felt slightly less positive about collecting feedback from a wide range of students; thirteen percent of respondents did not feel that they managed to collect a range of feedback and this was evident in some comments as well. As with the previous comments about creating an online platform specifically for Reps, some respondents would like to have an online space for their peers to be able to leave anonymous comments at any time, whether through the Students' Union website or through MyHallam/ Blackboard.

*"Have a direct channel through shospace for people to message a rep in their department. So there'd be a STA "rep directory" wherein the student writes to the rep and the rep can see it - the student can choose which rep to talk to and whether to be on anonymous or not. Then the rep can compile all of this — I think it'd be a great way to get more feedback from people as I've found that people prefer using online platforms to vent their spleens than in person." - Science, Technology & Arts Rep*

Furthermore and similarly to previous years, some Reps commented that they would like to have access to student emails on their course, to more easily get in contact with students. Other respondents would like to have mandatory, timetabled opportunities for all students to submit their feedback in-person. Some Reps commented that their cohort did not understand nor see the value in the Rep system, and thought that mandatory time would result in students taking the role more seriously.

*"Maybe to set up a specific session in a room, without any lecturer being in the room so it would be between the course reps and the students. That way it would make the students feel easier about expressing a potential concern towards a module or lecturer." - Health & Wellbeing Rep*

*"5-10 minutes planned every so often during a lecture/seminar to collect feedback without the tutor." - Sheffield Business School Rep*

As noted above and in Recommendation 1, some Reps were worried that their cohort did not see the benefit of the Rep role. A few Reps commented that communicating to all students about the Rep system and the positive changes that can be made by Reps, would hopefully lead to students sharing their feedback more regularly.

*"Was quite easy to gain feedback in person but just found some students didn't really think their feedback was important or that it would change anything." - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep*

*"Explaining to other students the importance of feedback!" - Health & Wellbeing Rep*

*"Regarding my answer about whether students find our role beneficial, I worry that sometimes some students think that issues we raise may not be solved. Though that is dependent on each issue's nature. Collecting feedback can be hard because if I sent out a questionnaire, I'd hardly get any responses" - Science, Technology & Arts Rep*

Lastly, when asked how respondents normally collect feedback from peers, approximately two-thirds of respondents do so during timetabled sessions and/or on social media. Some other methods that students used, listed in Table 1, are collecting information via email, text messages, or in-person outside of normal timetabled sessions.

<b>Table 1: Collect Feedback (Selecting all that apply)</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
In-person, during timetabled session	164	67%
Social media	160	65%
In-person, not during timetabled session	104	42%
Email	79	32%
Text messages	56	23%
Online survey (e.g. survey monkey, google forms, etc.)	43	18%
Other	7	3%

Responses to the statement "How would you normally collect and record feedback" from all respondents (n=245). NB: percentages will not add up to 100 as respondents were asked to select all collection methods which they have used.

## 6: Course Reps

The following section provides analysis for data from the 240 respondents that were Course Reps.

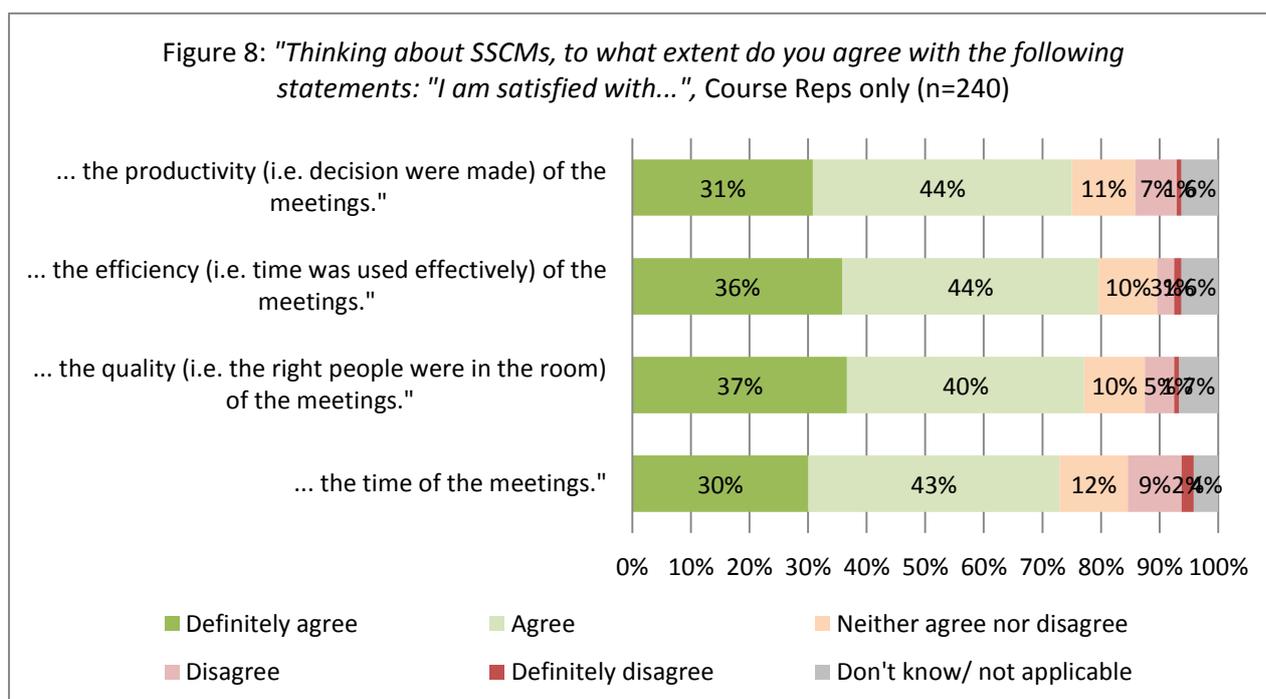
### 6.1 Student Staff Committee Meetings

Positively, the majority of Course Reps have been invited to all of their Student Staff Committee Meetings (SSCM's) and only 5 percent of respondents were sure that they had not been invited to all meetings (See Table 2).

Table 2: Invited to all SSCM's, Course Reps only	Count	%
Yes	192	80%
Don't know/ not sure	35	15%
No	13	5%
Total	240	100%

Responses to the statement "Have you been invited to all of the Student Staff Committee Meetings (SSCM)", completed by Course Reps only.

In addition, Reps were asked to respond to different aspects of the Student Staff Committee Meetings. Generally, across all statements, respondents were relatively satisfied, with 80 percent agreeing that the time in the meeting was used efficiently. Despite this, marginally less (73%) were satisfied with the timing of the meetings. Responses to these statements were also analysed by Faculty and compared to 2018 data, where appropriate (please see 11: Appendix C - 2018 to 2019 Faculty Comparisons).



Furthermore, when asked specifically about their contributions during SSCM's, a very high proportion felt that they were respected (89%) and listened to (88%). Respondents were less positive about their opinions and input being acted upon (as noted in Recommendation 4). Throughout the survey, Reps mention difficulties having academic staff respond and act on some of their feedback.

*"The course leader did not take any of the issues raised seriously. It made trying to raise any further issues very disheartening."* - Sheffield Business School Rep

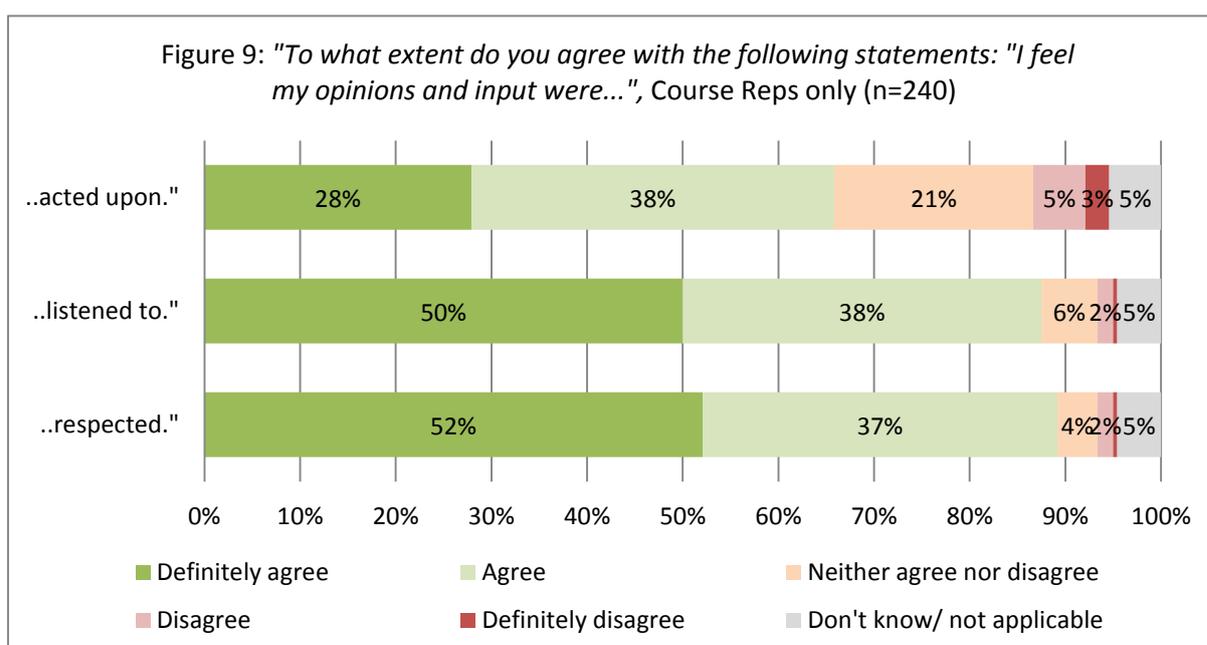
*"Each tutor just wanted to argue as to why they were right. I'm not here to talk about why you do what you do I'm here to give feedback from the students about how it is coming across. I wanted a clearer marking structure for the students as they weren't sure what would get what grade."*  
- Science, Technology & Arts Rep

*"Tutors just not taking anything on board as they felt their module was the best it could be and didn't want to make changes even though we stressed the extreme stress and pressure that students were going through."* - Sheffield Business School Rep

Additionally, although academic staff wanted to improve the course for students, some were unable to make changes due to university structures and processes.

*"Teachers were unable to make the changes for our year group. Additionally many of the issues we faced where the result of a staff member who was in a more senior role than our teachers so they felt they could not make changes."* - Health & Wellbeing Rep

*"The changes that we wanted (noise control in studio and free adobe software) were only affected if there was a budget for it, so it was outside the course leader's control, and he can do so much."*  
- Science, Technology & Arts Rep



This year's Rep Survey also asked students to feedback about the accountability of actions, especially in light of the newly implemented 'action logs' which aimed to create clearer actions and outcomes for both Reps and staff. As Table 3 displays, more than half (52%) of respondents stated that there was clear accountability for actions after every meeting and 22 percent stated that this happened, but not after every SSCM.

<b>Table 3: Accountability after SSCM</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, after every meeting	125	52%
Yes, but only after some meetings	53	22%
Don't know/ not sure	45	19%
No, it was never clear what actions were agreed and who was accountable	17	7%
Total	240	100%

Responses to the statement "*Was there clear accountability for actions agreed as a result of the SSCM's (i.e. who was responsible and by when)?*", completed by Course Reps only.

As Table 4 indicates, over half of respondents delivered feedback about the Student Staff Committee Meetings to their course in a conversation outside of timetabled session. In addition, Course Reps also regularly used social media, emails, or scheduled time in their timetabled session to let students know about meeting outcomes.

<b>Table 4: Feedback Delivered to Course</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
General conversation outside of timetabled session	134	56%
Social media	99	41%
Email/ letter	74	31%
Scheduled time in timetabled session	48	20%
Unscheduled time in timetabled session	36	15%
Other	11	5%

Responses to the statement "*How did you deliver feedback from meetings to your course?*", completed by Course Reps only. NB: percentages will not add up to 100 as respondents were asked to select all that apply.

## 6.2 Informal Meetings

New this year as well, Reps were asked how they kept in touch with Course Leaders outside of the formal SSCM, if at all. Over half (57%) of respondents kept in touch via email with their Course Leader and over a quarter had informal one-to-one meetings (Table 5). However, 28 percent did not keep in touch with their Course Leader outside of SSCM's.

<b>Table 5: Keep in touch with Course Leader outside of formal meetings</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, via email	137	57%
Yes, in one-to-one informal meetings	68	28%
No, we only had formal meetings (SSCMs)	66	28%
Yes, in informal group meetings	52	22%

Responses to the statement "Did you keep in touch with your Course Leader in your capacity as Course Rep outside of formal SSCMs?", completed by Course Reps only. NB: percentages will not add up to 100 as respondents were asked to select all that apply.

### 6.3 Course Rep Impact

When Course Reps were asked to comment on changes they had made this academic year, some of the most substantial changes are noted below:

*"Had a new module manual made for a topic. Changed lecture delivery style for a topic. Got extra podcasts released. Encouraged use of student support services"* - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep

*"Lecturers' approach, especially as the course was mainly formed by international students (better explanations, higher engagement). Shared feedback on the course content. Gave starting point for improving one of the modules."* - Sheffield Business School Rep

*"Implemented an increase to the number of library books humanities students are allowed to take out. Adaptations to timetables not only for my year but also year's lower down in the university. The assessment process for third year students (namely assessments worth 100% of the module) are now under review. The way in which modules are advertised to students at module fairs is now also changed. The process of planning dissertations and the help provided is now beginning at the end of second year"* - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep

Although not every Course Rep were able to have big impacts on their course, some Reps felt that they productively voiced the concerns of students on their course or that they made changes to their timetables, which affected many students on their course. Moreover, a few Course Reps felt that they had improved the assignments in some form, whether related to the submission process or the briefs.

*"Timetable suits everyone a little better!"* - Health & Wellbeing Rep

*"Timetable issues for seminars, and collecting feedback that adjusted how the materials are taught to us."* - Sheffield Business School Rep

Course Reps were also asked to comment on barriers to change, with many students noting the timing of meetings as a barrier for them. For Course Reps on placements especially, attending a meeting was a barrier to them fulfilling their role. Moreover, some Course Reps felt that there were not enough meetings and that issues would arise throughout the year that, with only two meetings per year, the issues were never addressed.

*"Our meetings tended to be towards the end of the semester so meant some changes were a little too late."* - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep

Some Reps felt that they were unable to make change happen as their tutors or lecturers were not receptive to feedback, as discussed previously and noted in Recommendation 4. As one student noted:

*"Lecturers didn't always understand the issues students had with the work or presentation of lectures."* - Science, Technology & Arts Rep

*"Some staff have been adamant that the current format of a module is effective and that changes are not necessary, yet student feedback is largely negative about the module and the changes are then not implemented."* - Health & Wellbeing Rep

## 7: Department Reps

The following section relates to responses from student that are Department Reps. In some cases, students were only Department Reps (n=5) or students were both a Course Rep and a Department Rep (n=12). In instances where they are both Course and Department Rep, respondents will have completed one section related to their experience as a Course Rep and an additional section, the information below, related to their experience as a Department Rep. Though percentages have been provided in this analysis, the impact that one respondent has on the outcomes is substantial.

### 7.1 Student Staff Committee Meetings & Department Board Meetings

<b>Table 6: Invited to SSCM's and shared meeting minutes</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, I was invited and received the minutes	10	59%
Yes, I was invited but did not receive the minutes	5	29%
No, I was not invited and did not receive the minutes	2	12%
Total	17	100%

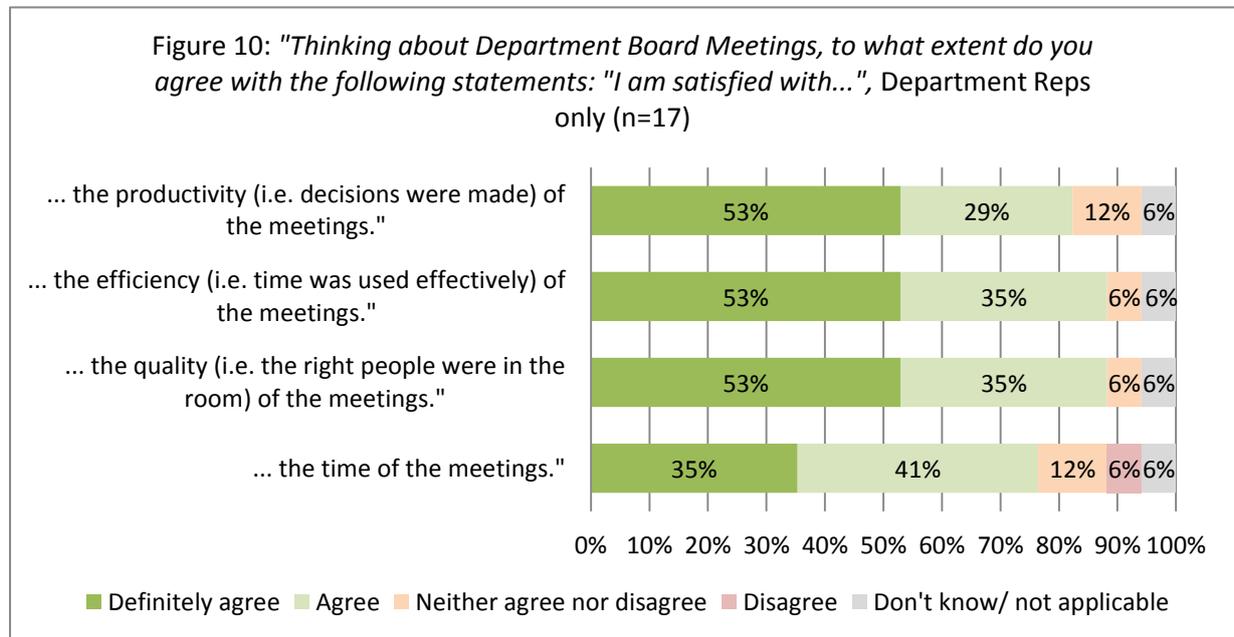
Responses to the statement *"As a Department Rep, you should be included in invites to Staff Student Committee Meetings (Course Rep Meetings), so you are kept in the loop. Have you been invited to all of the Staff Student Committee Meetings (SSCM) and/or were you send the minutes?"*, Department Reps only.

As Table 6 notes, nearly all Department Reps that responded to the survey had been invited to Student Staff Committee Meetings, though not all had received meeting minutes as well. Positively, nearly every Department Reps had been invited to all Department Board meetings (Table 7), though one respondent was not sure if they had been invited to all.

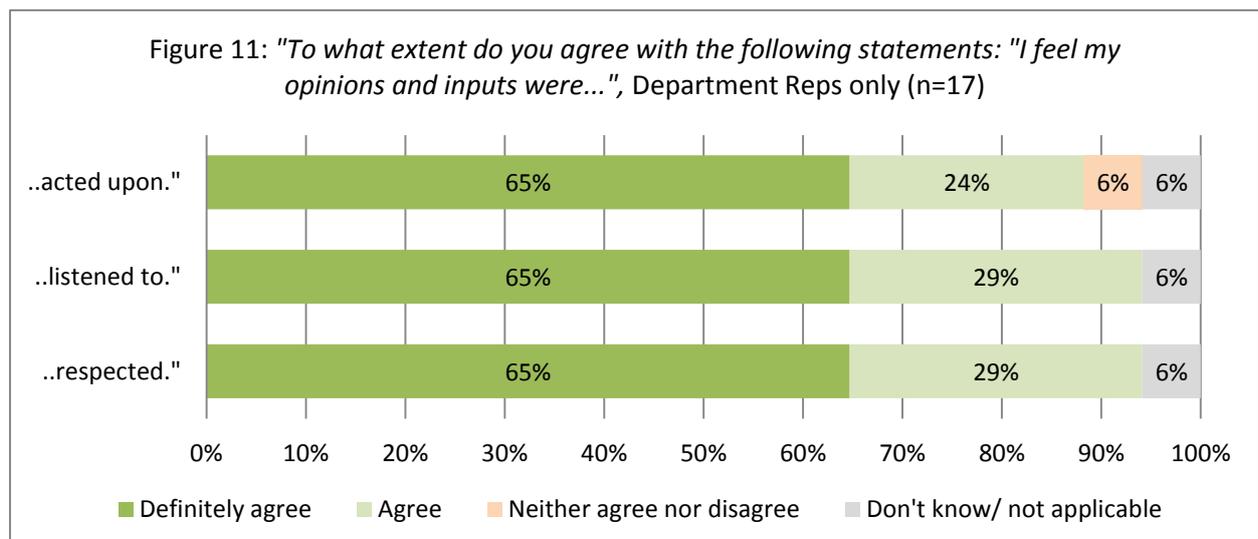
<b>Table 7: Invited to all Department Board Meetings</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	16	94%
Don't know/ not sure	1	6%
Total	17	100%

Responses to the statement *"Have you been invited to all Department Board Meetings?"*, Department Reps only.

Department Reps were asked to think about the extent to which they were satisfied with the below statements (Figure 10). Generally, most respondents were relatively satisfied with the productivity, the efficiency and the quality of the meetings; however, they were marginally less satisfied with the timing of the meetings.



As Figure 11 highlights, nearly all respondents felt that they had been listened to, respected, and had their feedback acted upon. There was one respondent throughout all measures (Figure 10 and Figure 11) that indicated they did not know or that the statement was not applicable to them; although this respondent was both a Course and a Department Rep, they might have prioritised one Rep role over another.



## 7.2 Informal Meetings

Similarly to Course Reps, Department Reps were also asked if they keep in touch with their Head of Department or other senior staff members

<b>Table 8: Keep in touch with HoD/ senior staff</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, via email	11	65%
Yes, in one-to-one informal meetings	7	41%
No, we only had formal meetings	5	29%
Yes, in informal group meetings	5	29%

Responses to the statement *"Did you keep in touch with your Head of Department or other senior staff members outside of formal meetings?"*, completed by Department Reps only. NB: percentages will not add up to 100 as respondents were asked to select all that apply.

Lastly, as Table 8 displays, eleven Department Reps kept in touch with their Head of Department or other senior staff members outside of formal meetings using email and seven had one-to-one informal meetings.

## 7.3 Department Rep Impact

Department Reps were asked to feedback what changes they had made whilst in their role and, though changes were varied and lacking overarching themes, four Department Reps commented that had acted as a bridge to help resolve issues for students. Some other changes that Department Reps have made are:

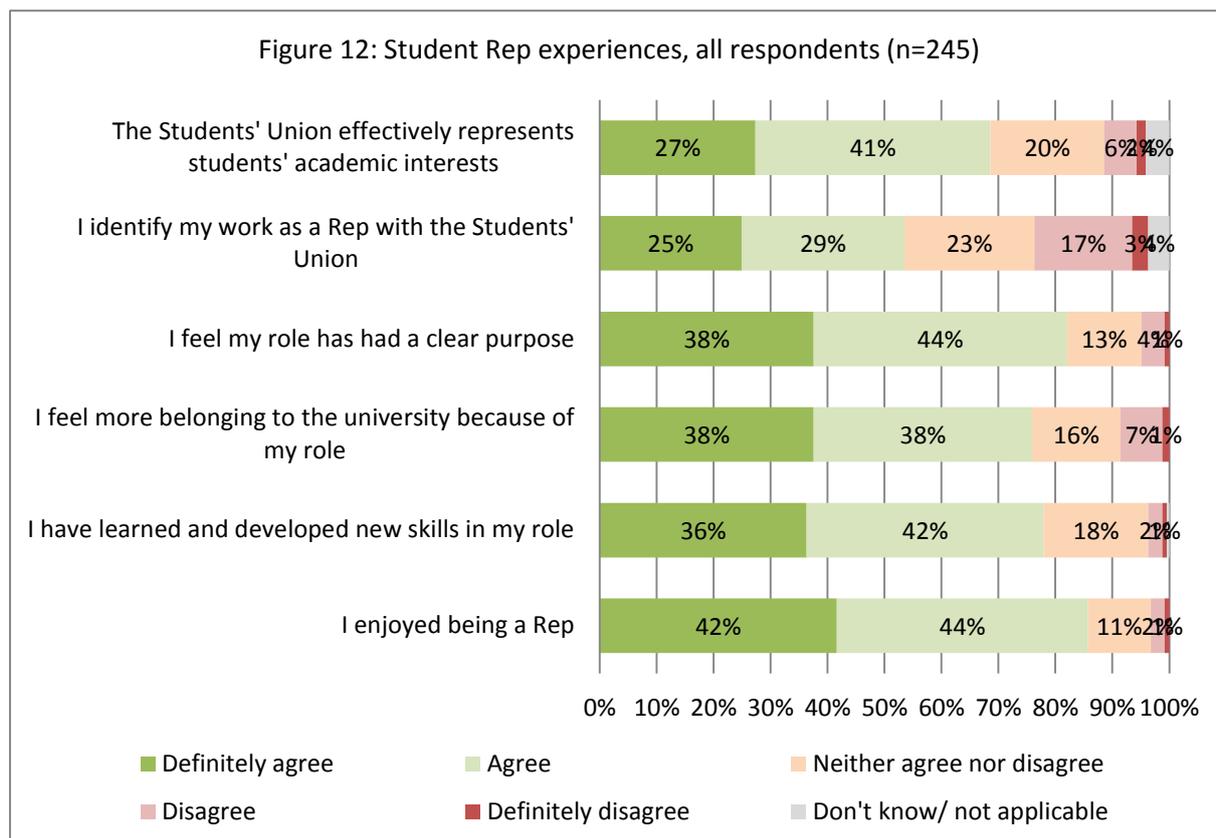
*"I have also made the department rep role more known and have made people massively more aware of who we are and what we can do — which has increased the flow of feedback coming back to me. I have also made the change of bridging the gap between course rep & department rep as the course reps didn't know who we were. We also now have an open door policy with the heads of department which makes implementing change easier."* - Science, Technology & Arts Rep

*"I ensured student carers get extended library loans."* - Health & Wellbeing Rep

*"We now have clear contact details for staff as these were not up to date before leading to confusion from students. We also now have better ways to hand in work rather than every module using different methods such as blackboard and Zend to and students have been shown how to use Zend to."* - Science, Technology & Arts Rep

## 8: General Experience

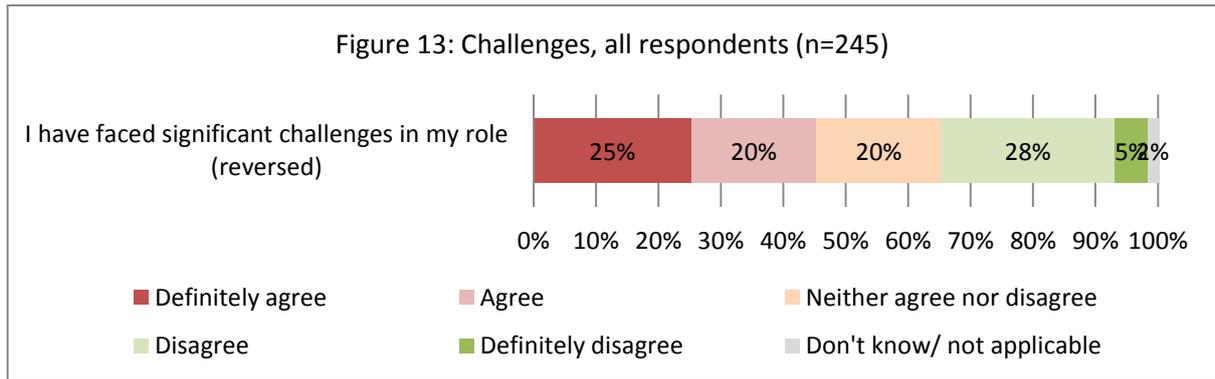
The last section of the Student Rep survey asks respondents to reflect on their experience as a Rep more generally. Eighty-six percent of respondents enjoyed being a Rep, which is a slight decrease on the percentage that indicated they enjoyed being a Rep in the 2018 Rep Survey (see 10: Appendix B - 2018 to 2019 Comparison). Fifty-three percent of respondents identified their work as a Rep with the Students' Union, a two percent increase from the 2018 Rep Survey.



### 8.1 Challenges

When asked if Reps faced significant challenges in their role (Figure 13), 45 percent agreed that they had faced challenges, though 33 percent had not. Some examples of challenges Reps have faced include difficulties obtaining feedback from their course and/or lack of engagement or knowledge of the Rep role (as noted in Recommendation 1). As one respondent noted:

*"There is no formal introduction of the rep to the course mates. The tutors do not necessarily go through you to make decisions. There could be a sense of irrelevance to the role."* - Science, Technology & Art Rep



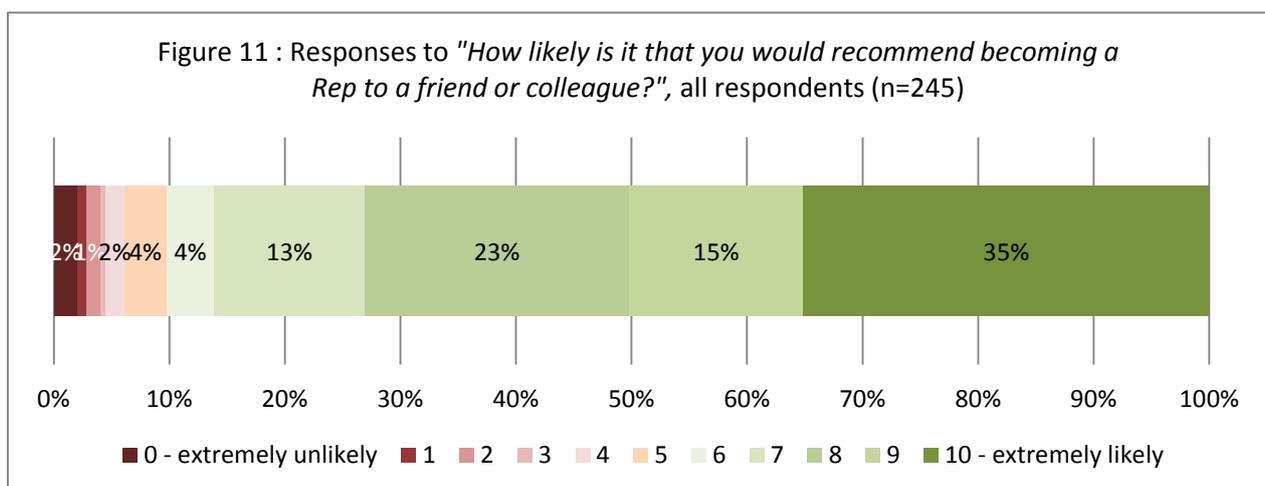
Furthermore, some respondents commented on the challenge of making change happen with their tutors and/or other university staff. A few Reps noted the challenges of working with members of staff that did not support their feedback or champion student voice work. This was also mentioned in Section 6.1 *Student Staff Committee Meetings*; some Reps felt that the Student Rep system was tokenistic, lacking true investment from the Course Leaders or lecturers to listen to and respond to feedback. Although the percentage of respondents that felt respected and listened to in meetings and that their feedback was acted on has risen for both Course and Department Reps, for some Reps, there is still an underlying feeling that their roles are not fully valued (as noted in Recommendation 1 and 4).

*"Tutors did not take any feedback seriously."* - Sheffield Business School Rep

*"Challenges were trying to get change to happen. Just kept having to go at the academics, some of which didn't actually come to the meetings."* - Science, Technology & Arts Rep

## 8.2 Recommend Rep Role

Lastly, respondents were asked if they would recommend being a Student Rep and 86 percent are likely or extremely likely to recommend the role (from 7 to 10). In comparison to 2018 survey, 83 percent of respondents were likely or extremely likely to recommend the role to a friend or colleague.



When Reps enjoyed their experience and would recommend it, they had extremely positive comments about the role improving their confidence and helping them to feel more employable by giving them necessary skills.

*"The role is something that would be incredible to include on your CV. Aside from this, through the role you can see the direct impact you have on your course, your course members, the university and future students which provides a real sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Furthermore the skills you develop from engaging with such a wide variety of people, that requires different levels of formality etc etc. are incredible and should not be overlooked as they are great for future employment."* - Social Sciences & Humanities Rep

*"Improves your confidence. Gives you a better connection with people on the course. Helps skills with organisation, communication, time management and provides good skills when applying for jobs and in wider contexts."* - Health & Wellbeing Rep

Interestingly, this year, Reps commented that the role allowed them to make friends with other students on their course that they might not have otherwise interacted with. In addition, some Reps mentioned feeling an improved sense of belonging to the University and closer relationships to academic staff.

*"I've learnt a lot from the experience. I've developed a better and more personal relationship with the course leaders. More opportunities came around because they knew who I was and the capabilities I had outside of sessions."* - Science, Technology & Arts Rep

*"It is an experience I can put on my CV but not only that, it has given me the opportunity to talk to people that I maybe wouldn't have before. It's meant that I have friends throughout my course and not just in little groups."* - Health & Wellbeing Rep

*"It helped me get to know other students which I didn't know before and it was good to be part of an integral area of the course which I was not previously aware of. Overall it was a great experience and would recommend it to any future students."* - Social Science & Humanities

## 9: Appendix A - 2019 Faculty Analysis

The following presents the percentage of respondents that agree to the statements, analysed by Faculty.

		Recruitment	Training				
		To what extent do you agree with the following:	Thinking about your initial training session, to what extent do you agree with the following statements:				
		"I am satisfied with the Rep recruitment process"	The training session equipped me with the knowledge and skills which I needed in my role	The training session was relevant and up to date	I have used the knowledge and skills from the session in my role	The training helped me to be more aware of student support services at the University and the Students' Union	
	All (n=245)	85%	76%	77%	67%	72%	
Faculty	HWB (n=64)	89%	75%	73%	66%	69%	
	SBS (n=42)	81%	83%	83%	64%	76%	
	SSH (n=72)	86%	74%	76%	72%	74%	
	STA (n=67)	82%	73%	76%	63%	72%	

		<b>Collecting Feedback</b>		
		Thinking about collecting feedback from your cohort, to what extent do you agree with the following statements:		
		<b>I have managed to collect feedback from a wide range of students</b>	<b>I was confident asking and approaching my cohort for their feedback</b>	<b>My cohort saw the Rep system as a valuable tool to improve the course/ department</b>
	All (n=245)	77%	87%	62%
Faculty	HWB (n=64)	78%	86%	61%
	SBS (n=42)	74%	90%	52%
	SSH (n=72)	78%	85%	67%
	STA (n=67)	76%	88%	63%

		Course Reps						
		Thinking about SSCMs, to what extent do you agree with the following statements: "I am satisfied with..."				To what extent do you agree with the following statements: "I feel my opinions and input were..."		
		... the time of the meetings."	... the quality (i.e. the right people were in the room) of the meetings."	... the efficiency (i.e. time was used effectively) of the meetings."	... the productivity (i.e. decision were made) of the meetings."	..respected."	..listened to."	..acted upon."
	All (n=245)	73%	77%	80%	75%	89%	88%	66%
Faculty	HWB (n=64)	71%	84%	85%	81%	90%	89%	65%
	SBS (n=42)	73%	63%	78%	73%	88%	88%	59%
	SSH (n=72)	71%	79%	72%	74%	89%	85%	74%
	STA (n=67)	77%	77%	83%	72%	89%	89%	63%

		General Experience						
		To what extent do you agree with the following statements:						
		"I enjoyed being a Rep"	"I have learned and developed new skills in my role"	"I feel more belonging to the university because of my role"	"I feel my role has had a clear purpose"	"I identify my work as a Rep with the Students' Union"	"The Students' Union effectively represents students' academic interests"	"I have faced significant challenges in my role"
	All (n=245)	86%	78%	76%	82%	53%	69%	45%
Faculty	HWB (n=64)	86%	81%	80%	83%	55%	69%	45%
	SBS (n=42)	83%	69%	64%	79%	57%	69%	43%
	SSH (n=72)	90%	79%	79%	88%	53%	67%	50%
	STA (n=67)	82%	79%	76%	78%	51%	70%	42%

## 10: Appendix B - 2018 to 2019 Comparison

Section	Question	Statement	2018 (n=227)	2019 (n=245)	2018 to 2019 Comparison
Recruitment	To what extent do you agree with the following:	"I am satisfied with the Rep recruitment process"	88%	85%	▼
Training	Thinking about your initial training session, to what extent do you agree with the following statements:	The training session equipped me with the knowledge and skills which I needed in my role	68%	76%	▲
		The training session was relevant and up to date	71%	77%	▲
		I have used the knowledge and skills from the session in my role	64%	67%	▲
Collecting Feedback	Thinking about collecting feedback from your cohort, to what extent do you agree with the	I have managed to collect feedback from a wide range of students	77%	77%	▼
		I was confident asking and approaching my cohort for their feedback	89%	87%	▼
Course Reps	Thinking about SSCMs, to what extent do you agree with the following statements: "I am satisfied with..."	... the time of the meetings."	67%	73%	▲
		... the quality (i.e. the right people were in the room) of the meetings."	75%	77%	▲
		... the efficiency (i.e. time was used effectively) of the meetings."	70%	80%	▲
		... the productivity (i.e. decision were made) of the meetings."	68%	75%	▲
Course Reps	To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	..respected."	89%	89%	▲
		..listened to."	86%	88%	▲
		..acted upon."	65%	66%	▲

Section	Question	Statement	2018 (n=227)	2019 (n=245)	2018 to 2019 Comparison
<b>Department Reps</b>	Thinking about Department Board Meetings, to what extent do you agree with the following statements: "I am satisfied with...	... the time of the meetings."	77%	78%	▲
		... the quality (i.e. the right people were in the room) of the meetings."	82%	89%	▲
		... the efficiency (i.e. time was used effectively) of the meetings."	77%	89%	▲
		... the productivity (i.e. decisions were made) of the meetings."	73%	83%	▲
<b>Department Reps</b>	To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	..respected."	77%	94%	▲
		..listened to."	77%	94%	▲
		..acted upon."	77%	89%	▲
<b>General Experience</b>	To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	"I enjoyed being a Rep"	88%	86%	▼
		"I have learned and developed new skills in my role"	84%	78%	▼
		"I feel more belonging to the university because of my role"	78%	76%	▼
		"I feel my role has had a clear purpose"	85%	82%	▼
		"I identify my work as a Rep with the Students' Union"	51%	53%	▲
		"I have faced significant challenges in my role"	43%	45%	▲

## 11: Appendix C - 2018 to 2019 Faculty Comparisons

The following tables provide the comparable questions for each faculty between 2018 and 2019. Please note that, for the question on recruitment, the percentages for the Sheffield Business School and the Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities, this data was not provided in last year's report and, therefore, is missing from this report.

			HWB		2018 to 2019	SBS		2018 to 2019	SSH		2018 to 2019	STA		2018 to 2019
			2018	2019	Comparison									
<b>Recruitment</b>	To what extent do you agree with the following:	"I am satisfied with the Rep recruitment process"	92%	89%	▼	-	81%	-	-	86%	-	91%	82%	▼
<b>Training</b>	Thinking about your initial training session, to what extent do you agree with the following statements:	The training session equipped me with the knowledge and skills which I needed in my role	56%	75%	▲	88%	83%	▼	73%	74%	▲	60%	73%	▲
		The training session was relevant and up to date	61%	73%	▲	91%	83%	▼	74%	76%	▲	64%	76%	▲
		I have used the knowledge and skills from the session in my role	54%	66%	▲	78%	64%	▼	70%	72%	▲	55%	63%	▲
<b>Collecting Feedback</b>	Thinking about collecting feedback from your cohort, to what extent do you agree with the following statements:	I have managed to collect feedback from a wide range of students	83%	78%	▼	61%	74%	▲	71%	78%	▲	88%	76%	▼
		I was confident asking and approaching my cohort for their feedback	92%	86%	▼	77%	90%	▲	87%	85%	▼	93%	88%	▼

			HWB		2018 to 2019	SBS		2018 to 2019	SSH		2018 to 2019	STA		2018 to 2019
			2018	2019	Comparison									
<b>Course Reps</b>	Thinking about SSCMs, to what extent do you agree with the following statements: "I am satisfied with...	... the time of the meetings."	57%	71%	▲	60%	73%	▲	71%	71%	▼	79%	77%	▼
		... the quality (i.e. the right people were in the room) of the meetings."	61%	84%	▲	68%	63%	▼	80%	79%	▼	87%	77%	▼
		... the efficiency (i.e. time was used effectively) of the meetings."	57%	85%	▲	64%	78%	▲	78%	72%	▼	79%	83%	▲
		... the productivity (i.e. decision were made) of the meetings."	55%	81%	▲	52%	73%	▲	80%	74%	▼	82%	72%	▼
<b>Course Reps</b>	To what extent do you agree with the following statements: "I feel my opinions and input were...	..respected."	80%	90%	▲	92%	88%	▼	95%	89%	▼	90%	89%	▼
		..listened to."	78%	89%	▲	88%	88%	▼	95%	85%	▼	85%	89%	▲
		..acted upon."	65%	65%	▼	42%	59%	▲	78%	74%	▼	64%	63%	▼
<b>General Experience</b>	To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	"I enjoyed being a Rep"	85%	86%	▲	85%	83%	▼	86%	90%	▲	95%	82%	▼
		"I have learned and developed new skills in my role"	82%	81%	▼	81%	69%	▼	83%	79%	▼	87%	79%	▼
		"I feel more belonging to the university because of my role"	71%	80%	▲	81%	64%	▼	77%	79%	▲	85%	76%	▼
		"I feel my role has had a clear purpose"	77%	83%	▲	85%	79%	▼	88%	88%	▼	90%	78%	▼
		"I identify my work as a Rep with the Students' Union"	38%	55%	▲	59%	57%	▼	53%	53%	▼	51%	51%	▼
		"I have faced significant challenges in my role"	30%	45%	▲	59%	43%	▼	41%	50%	▲	46%	42%	▼