**Minute-Taking Guidance for Student Staff Panels**

If you have decided that you would like to take on the role of Secretary during a Student Staff Panel, we have some guidance outlined below which will help you to understand the role and navigate minute-taking.

The Role of Secretary

As a Secretary of a Student Staff Panel, you will be working closely with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel to record the feedback from the meeting. Your role will involve recording minutes during the panel and meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair following the meeting to clarify any actions or feedback raised.

Each Student Staff Panel will have an agenda for the meeting which will provide information on what will be discussed during the panel. The Chair and Vice Chair may ask you, as Secretary, to help create the agenda before the meeting.

The following points are useful tips for you to remember for the role:

* Arrive a bit earlier to Student Staff Panels so that you can prepare.
* Discuss the agenda before the meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair.
* When recording minutes, highlight any parts that you were unclear of so that you can follow this up after the meeting.
* Record the attendees and any apologies from the panel members.
* Share the minutes with the Chair, Vice Chair and the Student Rep Coordinator following the meeting.
* Do not fill in the Student Staff Panel Summary Sheet (this is a document that Staff must fill in before submitting the minutes to the University & Students’ Union).

Minute-Taking

It’s important that minutes taken during the panel are an accurate reflection of the conversation. The following points will provide some helpful minute-taking guidance.

1. Summarise the discussion

You should not write every discussion word for word – you should paraphrase and summarise. Aim to capture the main points of the discussion, but you do not need to write everything.

For example, this feedback point:

“We have been given a lot of online lectures and recorded lectures recently for this module. There has been lots of issues with the recordings, I noticed that one was blurry and then lots of the videos were cut short. I’m not sure if it’s the Wi-Fi because that’s been dropping in and out a bit lately. It’s a bit frustrating because then we miss some of the lecture”.

Could have been shortened to:

“Students raised the issue of lecture recordings cutting out and mentioned that this may be due to WiFi issues.”

1. Capturing who raised the feedback

Ideally, the minutes would note who raised each discussion item, and the main contributors to each conversation. If the panel occurs online, this may not always be easy to do as the names do not always appear on the screen. In most cases, you will be able to deduce who has been invited to raise an item by cross-referencing the discussion with the attendance list provided by the Student Rep Coordinator or the Chair and Vice Chair.

Examples of how to start discussion items are included below. You can choose to use whichever method works best for you, but make sure this is consistent throughout the whole document.

Example 1:

Tom Evans raised some feedback students have provided about the Centre for Student Life, as many have said they would like to see it have longer opening hours.

Example 2:

Jane (Module Lead) asked the Student Academic Reps to provide feedback on

Example 3:

RK (BIOSI) reported that students in the school want to see student staff panel notes uploaded to learning central.

1. Use full titles

Minutes should be formal, so try to use the full name for role titles or locations, etc. If these are used frequently, you can use abbreviations after the first instance. For example, after using ‘Centre for Student Life (CSL)’ once, you can refer to it as ‘CSL’ for the remainder of the minutes if appropriate. This can also apply to names of people or modules.

1. Be accurate

It is essential that the minutes are accurate, as the minutes will form part of ongoing discussions and work within your school and the university. If you are unsure if a section is accurate, highlight it to the Student Rep Coordinator or Chair and Vice-Chair of the panel so that they can have a look at this with you.

1. Record the key actions

Within each discussion item, there will usually be an action for an individual to go away from the meeting and complete. You should record this accurately, noting **who** will complete the action, **what** the action is, and **when** it should be completed by. If you are unsure of what the due date on the action should be, you can note for it to be done by the next meeting or as soon as possible ‘ASAP’.

Sometimes there will be multiple actions coming out of a discussion item. It is important that you note each one separately for clarity. If there are no actions coming out of a discussion item (such as a Student Academic Rep gave an update and there was no action), you can put ‘N/A.

1. Font and Organisation

The minutes need to be accessible for all staff and students who want to read them, so make sure they are readable. Try to avoid overly long sentences and make the notes as clear and concise as possible whilst still capturing the discussions.

This extends to font and font size. You should avoid fonts that are faded or cursive. Fonts like Arial, Verdana and Calibri are good options to choose from as they are clear to read. It is important that the font size is also accessible so try to keep it to a minimum of size 10pt.

1. Online Meetings

If the panel was held online, there may have been comments left in the chat box. You should try to add these to the minutes where necessary. If a comment is not essential to the discussion, you do not need to include it in the minutes, but if it sparks a talking point, you should note it down.

1. Review

It is very important that you read back through the minutes to check their accuracy, and to check them for spelling and punctuation corrections. The Student Rep Coordinator and Chair and Vice Chair can also help to review these with you.

1. Share

When completed, send the minutes as a word document to the Chair and Vice Chair and the Student Rep Coordinator so that they can be passed on to the attendees.

**If you have any questions, please email us @studentreps@cardiff.ac.uk or contact your Student Rep Coordinator.**