



**BEDS SU STUDENT REP  
HANDBOOK 2023/24**

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# Welcome !

Welcome to your Student Rep Handbook! This handbook includes everything you could possibly need during your time as a rep. However, it is not the only thing we have set up for you!

Representation is at the core of everything we do at Beds SU. And we are so grateful that you are helping us to keep it that why by becoming an SU Course Rep. In return, we are here to train, support and develop you and your skills, so that you earn an experience which you can take outside of university.

As a student, you get a unique insight into course level issues and feedback, which is why it is so important that you collect feedback on our behalf. You are our eyes and ears on the ground and with your help we can continue to ensure that the student experience at the University of Bedfordshire is the best it can be.

## Contacting the SU

There are two main ways to contact the SU:

**Via email**  
**[help@bedssu.co.uk](mailto:help@bedssu.co.uk)**

**Red button on the website**

 Get Help



# Roles & Responsibilities

## Why Become a Rep?

By becoming a rep, you play a crucial role in shaping and improving the university experience of all students. By collecting feedback, you highlight issues and possible solutions that will improve not only your experience, but of future students too. It also looks incredible on your CV and with our rep programme, we will ensure you know how to utilise the skills you gain as a rep, outside of University.

## What do we expect of you?

We expect our reps to:

- Collect feedback from their coursemates on a regular basis
- Represent the entire course and not just a few people
- Act in a way that represents the SU well
- Attend relevant meetings
- Keep the SU in the loop about feedback and actions

## What Will You Do?

SU Course Reps collect feedback on the experiences of students inside and outside of lectures – we want to hear a well-rounded view of what student life is really like!

You may also be asked to attend course or school specific meetings with staff to talk about feedback.

## What you can expect from us

We want our reps to know how much we appreciate their work.

We will:

- Send out regular newsletters to keep reps up to date
- Celebrate their #BedsSUWins
- Host socials and celebration events
- Celebrate Rep of the Month
  - Run skills workshops (dependant on demand)
- Be available to support or reps at all times

# Feedback

## The Three Methods to Feedback



### Online..

at a time that is suitable for you, via an online feedback form



### Talk to your Course Rep..

if you prefer to share one to one



### Join a meeting..

if you'd like to join a group discussion

# Feedback

## Ways of Collecting Feedback

Below are just a few examples of different ways of collecting feedback using each of the Three Methods. There will be benefits and risks to each of them, so ensure that you pick a method most appropriate to the topic and your cohort!

### Online

- Petition
- Survey
- Email
- WhatsApp
- Beds SU Helpdesk
- Social Media
- SiD Online
- Student Surveys, i.e. NSS

### Talk to a Rep

- Course Reps
- Campus Reps
- Society Reps
- Student Experience Leaders (SELs)
- SU Sabbatical Officers

### Join a Meeting

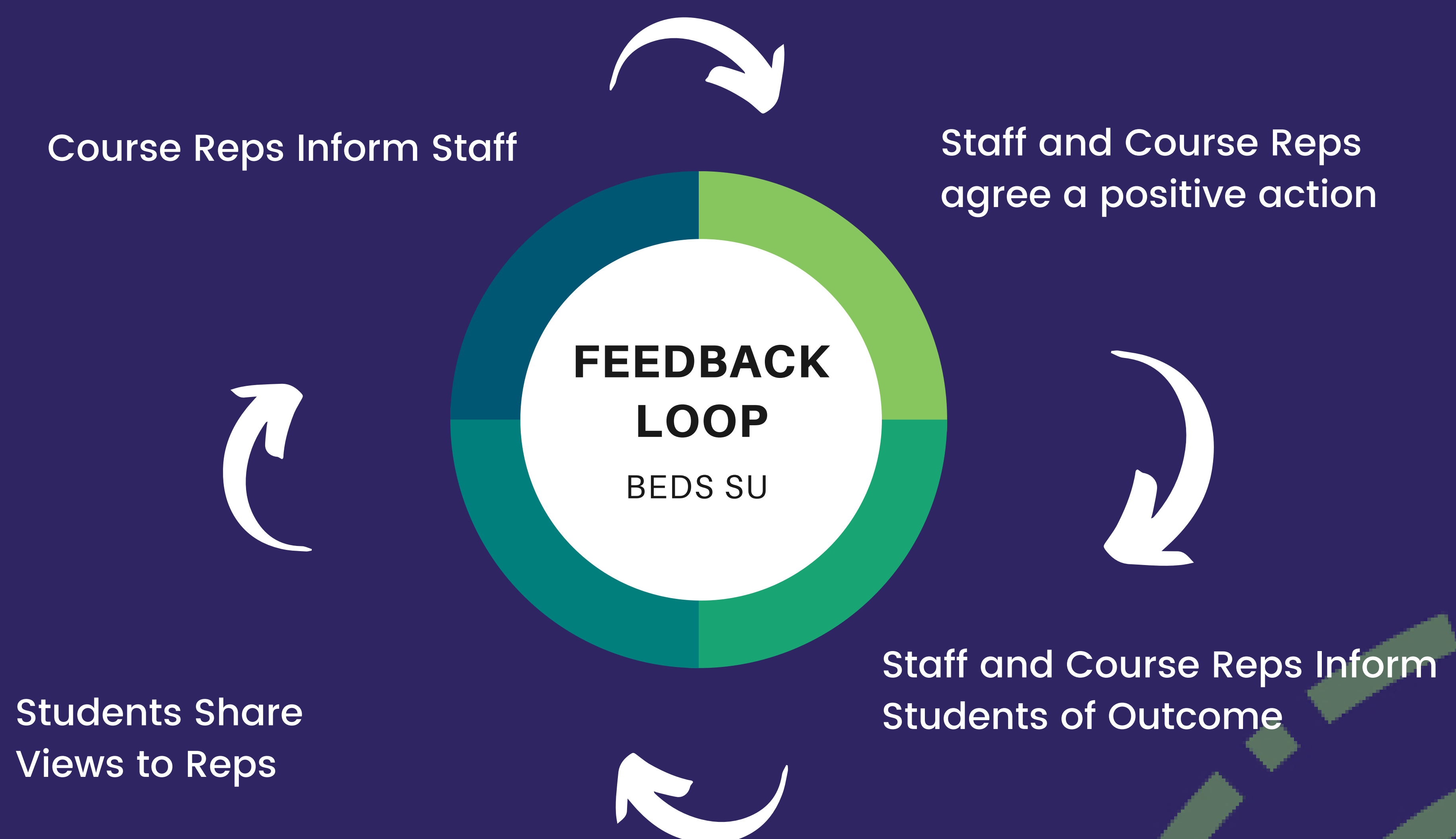
- Focus Groups
- Course Meetings
- Beds SU Forums
- Coffee drop-ins
- Chat for Change
- PAT Sessions
- 1-2-1 with SU



# Feedback

## FEEDBACK LOOP

This is the life cycle of feedback. As you can see, reps play a vital role! Think of the loop as a water mill, if you don't put any water (feedback) into it, it won't spin.



# Feedback

## What is Feedback?

Feedback (noun):

Effective feedback assists the learner to reflect on their learning and student experience so that the institution can adjust and improve student experiences in the future.

Feedback is a reflection on your university experience.

- What is and what isn't working for you?
- How can things be changed so that you feel better equipped to do well?



**Good**

My lecturer puts in an extra hour after a lecture for us to come and ask any questions. I think it is useful because I can get help immediately instead of emailing.



**Average**

I can't access my timetable through the app. I have a paper copy so I know when my lessons are, but I wish I could have it on my phone.



**Bad**

I still haven't got my student ID! I have to rely on other people to let me into the building, security always question me, and I can't register in classes. It's inconvenient, I wish we could just pick up our ID on campus.



# Feedback

## What is GOOD Feedback?

Below you will find some advice on how to frame your feedback, especially when reporting it or discussing it with staff. It is important that feedback is constructive and contains the right amount of detail in order to make the feedback loop as efficient as possible.

A

### Accurate

Avoid making sweeping generalizations and try to be as specific as possible

B

### Balanced

Look at things that need improving, but also those that are already working well

C

### Constructive

Try to propose solutions or improvements, what is going to work for the students?

D

### Diplomatic

It is not about what one person is doing wrong, but how your university experience is being affected and how it can be improved

# Feedback

## What to do if you have feedback?

Just like there are Three Methods to Feedback, we also have Three Methods to Report back for Reps.

### Online

The SU has made a special form for Course Reps to submit feedback. You may want to use it when:

- You're not sure what to do with feedback
- You are busy
- You can't attend a meeting
- You got feedback in a meeting



### Talk to your SEL

Student Experience Leaders or SELs fulfill the role of a School Rep this year. This essentially means that they are a Rep for you! They will:

- Escalate issues within Schools and faculties
- Have a close relationship with important staff, such as Academic Deans for Student Experience
- Have regular meetings with staff from across the faculty, such as School Meetings

### Join a Meeting

Throughout the year, you will be invited to various meetings:

- Course Meetings (with University staff)
- Chat for Change (organized by the SU)

You may also want to hold your own meetings to find out or discuss feedback. You could hold meetings with:

- Your classmates
- Your SEL
- Nat and Georgina (Beds SU)
- Course Staff

# Meetings

## Dos and Don'ts!

### DO

1. Arrive on time (or early!)
2. Send apologies if you cannot attend
3. If you can't go, make sure you have still passed on your feedback
4. Respect the room

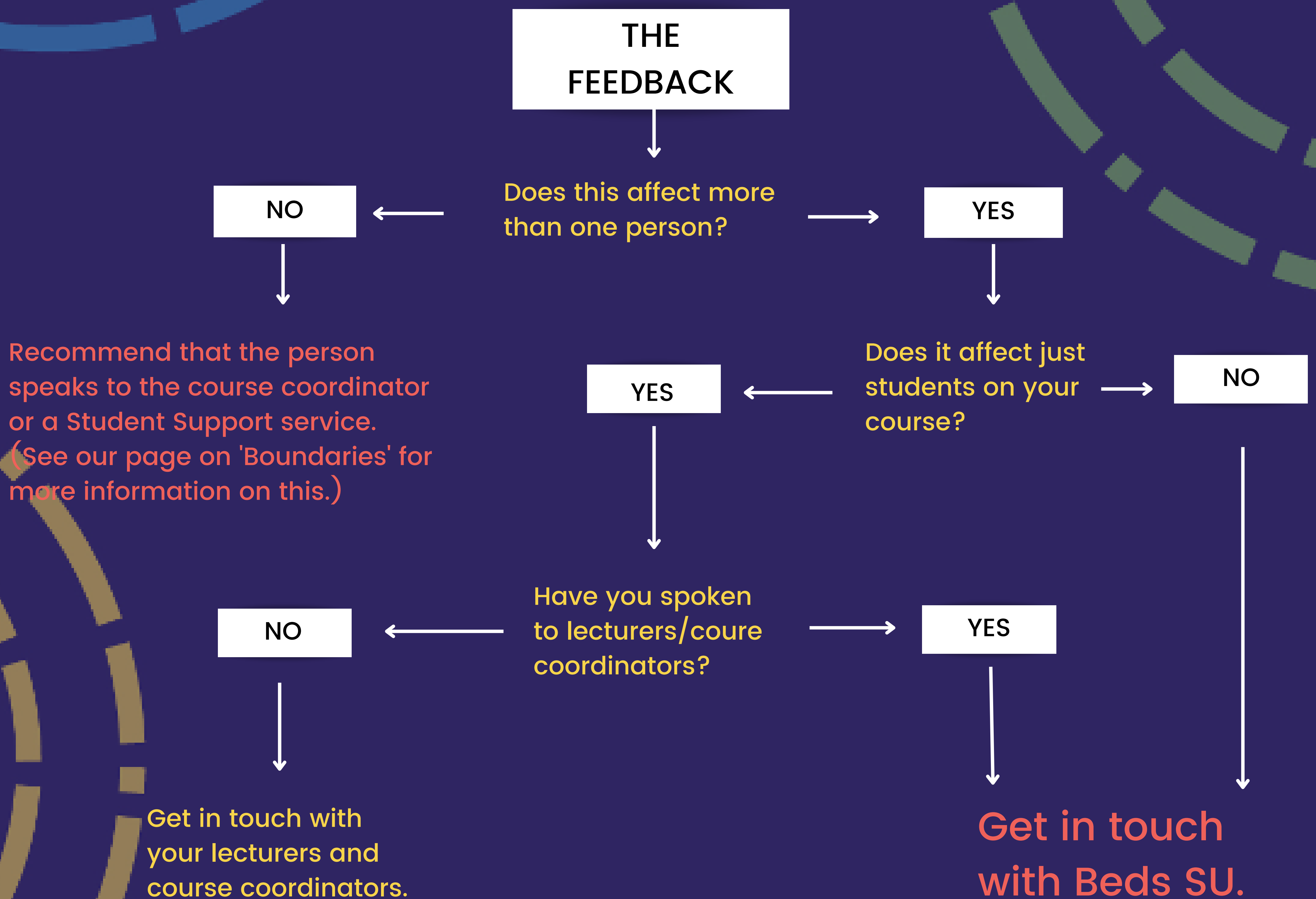
### DON'T

1. Burn any bridges – the people in that room work hard to ensure a good student experience
2. Only talk about your own opinions – remember you are representing others



# Decision Making

This decision-tree is designed to help you make decisions about who you talk to about certain issues and who to escalate feedback with.



If you don't know what to do... Get in touch!

If you are ever in doubt about what you should do about feedback or would like to hold a discussion on a certain topic, pop it in our WhatsApp group! These groups will include other Course Reps, SELs and the SU.



# Rep Community

## How we plan to build our SU Course Rep community...

**Course Rep Socials:** Held at least once a term, these will be spaces for SU Course Reps to come together to network and to hear any University or SU updates.

**School Specific Gatherings:** An opportunity for SU Course Reps to chat to others in their School to compare feedback.

**Chat for Change:** Small focus-groups with Reps from across the University on specific issues affecting the Student Experience. Feel free to share what you think should be discussed.

**WhatsApp Groups:** An informal and immediate way for communicating with other Reps and the SU. During the year, we will be starting plenty of discussions on there and sending articles of interest!

**Celebration Events:** We come together to celebrate you! The time you give to the SU and the University is invaluable and this is our way of saying 'thank you!'

**Office Hours:** Nat and Georgina will both have an office hour, where you can come and discuss anything you would like, feedback, support, time management, just to name a few!

**Meeting Prep:** A meeting before a meeting! We look over any papers and get you prepped for meetings you might be asked to attend. This is the space for all questions!

## Something for everyone...how we are making our events accessible

- Distance is no excuse! We are planning on bringing in-person events to every campus!
- However if you can't attend, we will also be running events online, so that you can participate wherever you may be.
- We know that our students are often juggling more than their studies. We will therefore ensure to hold events at different times of day (incl. evenings)

## These events are for you! Please tell us if something isn't working!

If you feel like we should have more of specific events, they should be held at a different time or have fresh ideas for what we could do, please let us know at [help@bedssu.co.uk](mailto:help@bedssu.co.uk)



# Different Reps

Campus Reps - Ensure that the student experience across all our campus is represented. Every Campus will have one!

Student Experience Leads (SELs) - Lead on projects about Student Voice, there will be a few in each faculty.

Liberation Network Reps - Lead the network and represent their views to the Union and University.

Society Reps - Run societies including organising membership, events and admin.

Sabbs - 4 Officers (2 Co-Presidents and 2 Co-Vice Presidents) who represent the entire student body to the University.



# Training

It is vital that you complete training so that you are prepared to carry out your role and ready to take on anything that may come your way!

Everyone who completes mandatory Course Rep training and gives us feedback on it will receive some Course Rep essentials and a personalised certificate (more information on pages 17–20)!

## Mandatory Training

These sessions are compulsory and we expect all reps to make their best efforts to attend. We will cover:

- What is feedback?
- How to collect feedback?
- The Feedback Loop
- Role of the SU

## Optional Training

These sessions are recommended but not compulsory. They will provide extra information and practise that you may find useful in your role. They include:

- Communicating effectively
- What to do about meetings
- Student services
- Setting boundaries as a Rep

## Training formats

### In-Person

These sessions will be held on each campus.

### Online

Held on Zoom, but still requiring your full participation! We are going to hold these at different times of day, including evenings in order to offer flexibility to our reps with extra responsibilities at home.

### LearnWorlds Training

A walkthrough of our mandatory PowerPoint. This will be released later than the other two options, as we encourage you to use this as a last resort.



## Dates for your diary!

Monday 23rd October 2023 – Training Begins!

# #BedsSUWins

**Your voice counts! Here are just a few of our  
#BedsSUWins**

Replaced out of use vending machines with new hot drink and snack ones at LSC Birmingham and London Bridge Campuses as well as introduce microwaves at Milton Keynes Campus.

New 'cohort hours' to be trialed in the School of Computer Science and Technology.

An extra £3000 to spend on books for the library for the School of Life Sciences.

All students in the Creative Arts, Technology and Science (CATS) faculty will be provided with general feedback after exams.

Less assessment bunching in the School of English and Education

More culturally diverse events in the Metro and the Hub



# Rep Rewards

## COURSE REP AWARD SCHEME

The Course Rep Award Scheme is our new way to recognise the hard work you do as Course Reps. There are four levels, from Bronze to Platinum, and you complete certain tasks to complete one level and move onto the next. The Bronze level, which includes Course Rep training, is mandatory. You can complete as many levels as you like, however we encourage that to get the most out of your time as a Course Rep, you aim to complete all four levels!

WHEN YOU COMPLETE EACH LEVEL, YOU GET PRIZES! ON COMPLETION OF THE BRONZE LEVEL, WHICH IS MANDATORY, YOU GET SOME COURSE REP ESSENTIALS AND A PERSONALISED TRAINING CERTIFICATE FROM BEDS SU.

SEE BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR NEW COURSE REP AWARD SCHEME AND WHAT YOU CAN WIN!

## VOLUNTEERING AWARD

Being a Course Rep is a voluntary role, therefore you can log the hours you do with the Careers & Employability Service towards a Volunteering Award.

The award is a tiered system and you will receive a different level of award depending on the number of hours you have volunteered.

RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEERING AWARD:

UNDER 50 HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING

BRONZE AWARD: 50 HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING

SILVER AWARD: 100 HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING

GOLD AWARD: 200 HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING

PLATINUM AWARD: 250+ HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING

## SU AWARDS

The SU Awards are celebrated at the end of each academic year in May. There are many different categories, including Rep of the Year. This is open to all SU Course Reps who can nominate themselves or be nominated by peers or staff. A winner is chosen for each category by a panel of student judges. There is one reward for each faculty.

WINNING AN SU AWARD GUARANTEES YOU A SHOUTOUT ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA, REP NEWSLETTER AS WELL AS A FANTASTIC EVENING OF FOOD, DRINK AND LAUGHS! OH, DID WE MENTION THERE IS A TROPHY TOO?



# Course Rep Award Scheme

The Course Rep Award Scheme aims to recognise and celebrate the work you do as a Course Rep, while encouraging good practice.

It offers Reps and opportunity to gain and develop valuable skills which can be included on your CV and referenced in job applications.

There are four levels, you can move across these through the completion of all tasks in each one. Find out more detailed information about each level in the next couple of pages.

## **BRONZE (mandatory).**

Complete a personal information form

Complete Course Rep training (if a returning Course Rep, complete and pass the online refresher course)

Provide feedback on the Course Rep training

### **PRIZE**

Personalised certificate  
Course Rep essentials

## **GOLD**

Attend a meeting with each of the following: the SU, University, AND peers

Submit five feedback forms

Complete two 'Rate your Term' forms

Attend an Academic Society event

### **PRIZE**

A letter of recognition from the CEO of Beds SU for your CV

## **SILVER**

Submit a feedback form

Complete a 'Rate your Term' form

Attend a Rep social

Join an Academic Society

### **PRIZE**

Goody bag  
Shout-out

## **PLATINUM**

Write a report or prepare a Feedback table

Attend two meetings with SELs

Write a reflection of your biggest achievement as a Course Rep

Contribute in a University meeting

Help lead a student event

### **PRIZE**

Lunch with our Sabbatical Officers  
Recognition at SU awards

# Course Rep Award Scheme

## BRONZE (mandatory)

The Bronze level is mandatory. We expect all Course Reps to complete all the tasks at this level. These tasks are:

- Complete a **personal information form**. This includes things like your preferred name, your pronouns, and your interests.
- Complete **Course Rep-training**, either in-person, on Zoom, or online on LearnWorlds. If you were a Course Rep last year and have already completed the training, then there will be an online refresher course for you to complete, along with a mandatory quiz that you are expected to pass.
- **Provide feedback** on the Course Rep training by completing our online form.

When you complete all of these tasks, you'll receive some Course Rep essentials along with a personalised certificate of completion for your Course Rep training.

## SILVER

To complete the Silver level, we expect you to give us some feedback you've collected as well as get involved with events and academic societies.

The tasks you must do are:

- Submit at least **one feedback form** online by giving good, detailed feedback.
- Complete at least **one 'Rate your Term' form** online about how you found your semester overall.
- Attend a **Course Rep social**, whether it be online or in-person.
- Join an **Academic Society**.

When you complete all of these tasks, you'll receive a Goody Bag as well as a shout-out on our main communications.



# Course Rep Award Scheme

## GOLD

To complete the Gold level, we expect you to get involved in meetings to raise feedback and help create positive change, as well as submit more feedback which you've collected from your peers.

The tasks you must complete are:

- **Attend a meeting** with each of the following: Beds SU, the University/committee, and peers.
- **Submit at least five feedback forms** online by giving good, detailed feedback.
- **Complete at least two 'Rate your Term' online forms.**
- **Attend an Academic Society event.**

When you do all of these tasks, you will get a letter of recognition for your great work from the CEO of Beds SU.

## PLATINUM

This is the final level of the award scheme, and so we're asking big things of you that will help make you an amazing Course Rep and really be part of creating positive change and enhancing the experience of students on your course.

The tasks you must do are:

- **Write a report/prepare a feedback table** with the feedback you've collected from your peers throughout your time as a Course Rep.
- **Attend at least two meetings** with the Student Experience Lead in your School.
- **Write a small reflection** of your biggest achievement as a Course Rep. For example, you can include what feedback you collected, how you raised it with the University, and how you made sure that this led to change which helped your peers.
- **Contribute in a University/committee meeting.**
- **Contribute to or lead a student event** – this can include an Academic Society event.

When you've completed all these tasks and therefore have completed the award scheme, you will get a chance to have dinner with our Sabbatical officers, plus you will get recognition at our annual Beds SU Awards!



# Employability

## Why is being a rep good for your CV?

### Skills of a Rep:

- Communication
  - Negotiating
  - Organisation
  - Project Management
- Public Speaking
  - Meeting Confidence
  - Networking
  - Time Management
- Interpersonal Skills
  - Problem Solving
  - Team-Work
  - Leadership
  - Presentation

By representing a group of students in this way you show that you are actively engaged with your studies, and that you feel confident in being an advocate for others. As being a SU Course Rep is a voluntary role, this shows that you are someone who is willing to put their own time into helping others. The role is a particularly good way to show your commitment to the University.

It is also a fantastic way of having a meaningful impact on your and your peers' student experience! You have the power to make real changes to your course or campus, and get to find out what happens behind the scenes!

## Need more help?

If you would like more help in writing your CV, cover letter or application, please get in touch with the Careers & Employability Service. You can find out how to contact them, and what other services they provide on their webpage, [here](https://www.beds.ac.uk/careers/):

<https://www.beds.ac.uk/careers/>

# Other Opportunities

## Want MORE?

There is always lots to get involved in with Beds SU! Below are just a few examples:

### Campus Reps

Working on a part-time voluntary basis, the Campus Rep key focus is to ensure that the student experience across all our campus is represented. Each University approved Campus will have a Campus Rep, and these positions are open to all current University of Bedfordshire students at that campus.

### Liberation Network

The purpose of Student Networks is to represent the diverse characteristics of the Membership and advance the representation of student communities that are widely acknowledged to experience or have experienced oppression, exclusion, or disadvantage. will seek change.

### Societies

- run the society
- organise the events & admin
- fab on the CV
- Society grant

### NUS Delegate

Conference delegates represent our Students' Union at the annual NUS conferences. Delegates can vote on our behalf and take part in discussions.

### Sabbatical Officers

- represent the student population in big uni meetings
  - make decisions which will impact all students
  - run your own campaign
  - be part of the SU family



# Jargon – Buster

## SVFs

Student Voice Forums

## MEMs

Membership  
Engagement Meeting

## SVWG

Student Voice  
Working Group

## FEG

Faculty Executive  
Group

## PATs

Personal Academic  
Tutors

## PGR

Post Graduate  
Research

## SEL

Student Experience  
Leaders

## Society Reps

Reps for specific  
societies

## CES

Careers and  
Employability  
Service

## IO

International Office

## Course/Academic Reps

Course/Academic reps get feedback  
about their specific course

## NSS

National Student  
Survey

## Postgraduate

Someone who already  
has a bachelor's degree  
and is now studying for  
a qualification at a  
higher level

If you want our Jargon  
Buster PDF, please reach  
out and we can send it  
to you.

## Campus Reps

Reps that get feedback for the whole  
campus

## QAA

Quality Assurance  
Agency – safeguards  
academic standards  
and improves the  
quality of UK Higher  
Education

## Ofs

Regulate English  
Higher Education  
providers on behalf  
of all students

## Academic Board

Reps for specific  
societies

## UBBS

University of Bedfordshire  
Business School includes the  
following departments:

- Business Systems
- Accounting & Finance
- HR
- Tourism and Events
- International Business & Marketing
- Law

## HSS

Faculty of Health & Social  
Sciences, includes the  
following Schools:

- Nursing, Midwifery and Health Education
- Applied Social Sciences
- Society, Community and Health

## CATS

Faculty of Creative Arts,  
Technology and Science,  
includes the following Schools:

- Computer Science and Technology
- Art and Creative Industries
- Life Sciences
- Psychology

## EES

Faculty of Education and  
Sport, which includes the  
following Schools:

- Sport Science & Physical Activity
- Education and English Language
- Teacher Education



# Student Services

FACING COMPLEX PROBLEMS, HAVING DIFFICULTIES  
ATTENDING CLASSES OR THINKING OF INTERRUPTING OR  
WITHDRAWING FROM YOUR STUDY

[student.engagement@beds.ac.uk](mailto:student.engagement@beds.ac.uk)

NEED AN EXTENSION ON ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

[mitigation@beds.ac.uk](mailto:mitigation@beds.ac.uk)

SUPPORT WITH A RANGE OF DISABILITIES

[disability@beds.ac.uk](mailto:disability@beds.ac.uk)

NEW AND ON-GOING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

[mentalhealth@beds.ac.uk](mailto:mentalhealth@beds.ac.uk)

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND BUDGETING ADVICE

[studentmoney@beds.ac.uk](mailto:studentmoney@beds.ac.uk)

PASTORAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

[chaplaincy@beds.ac.uk](mailto:chaplaincy@beds.ac.uk)

PROFESSIONAL ONE-TO-ONE COUNSELLING  
SUPPORT

[counselling@beds.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@beds.ac.uk)

ISSUES OR QUESTIONS REGARDING TUITION  
FEES

[sortmyfinance@beds.ac.uk](mailto:sortmyfinance@beds.ac.uk)

HELP WITH WRITING ASSESSMENTS AND  
IMPROVING GRADES

[studyhub@beds.ac.uk](mailto:studyhub@beds.ac.uk)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT  
ENQUIRIES

[international@beds.ac.uk](mailto:international@beds.ac.uk)

OTHER ENQUIRES PLEASE CONTACT  
STUDENT INFORMATION DESK (SID)

[sid@beds.ac.uk](mailto:sid@beds.ac.uk)

BEDS SU ADVICE TEAM

[help@bedssu.co.uk](mailto:help@bedssu.co.uk)