UCL

Staff-Student Consultative Committees (SSCC)

A GUIDE FOR CO-CHAIRS

STUDENTS' UNION UCL

Staff-student consultative committees (SSCC)

Whether you are a member of staff or a student, this guide is intended to help Co-Chairs develop an effective partnership so that you get the most out of your SSCC. These meetings are a great place to discuss what's working well as well as raise issues and ignite ideas. To be really effective, it is important to prepare for the meeting, identify actions and share outcomes with the wider community.

Using the departmental Annual Student Experience Review (ASER) as a tool to guide the conversation, the meetings can provide a useful forum to discuss priorities for the year ahead, with students and staff working together to achieve objectives.

Building a productive meeting culture can take time, but successful SSCCs can help all members to feel they are valued and part of a community and the outputs can create a better education experience for the whole department.

Before the meeting – how to prepare

Think about scheduling: If the SSCC is before a Departmental Teaching Committee you can take agreed actions straight to the DTC. Also think about when student reps are mostly likely to be able to attend, especially if you have a lot of part-time or commuter students.

Collaborate on the agenda: Each SSCC should be co-chaired by a staff member and the Lead Department Student Academic Representative. Meet beforehand to discuss the agenda (you could use the agenda template) and decide who will cover what. Read previous minutes, the ASER plan and prompt Student Academic Representatives (Student Reps) and other staff to submit agenda items.

Agree a format: Think specifically about items where student input would be valuable and the best way to get it. Using workshop-style exercises can be a useful way to explore ideas and set a collaborative tone.

Be prepared: Come with feedback and opinions from students or staff so that the meeting can focus on how to take action, rather than asking for more feedback. Make sure any negative feedback is as neutral as possible, removing names where necessary. Encourage Student Reps to canvass widely for opinions. They could use tools such as Moodle Hot Question, or Unitu, to find out what's most important to your cohort.

At the meeting – how to take action

Agree a change or outcome: You may be able to agree a change there and then. If it's not possible to make a change, make sure it's clear why and think about how to report back to staff and students.

What's working well? Don't forget to discuss the positives and what's working well. If someone has gone above and beyond to deliver a great educational experience, then this is a forum where is could be acknowledged. You may wish to add this as a regular agenda item and ask people to send in their suggestions beforehand.

Investigate further (it may help to form a task and finish group): Start by articulating the problem, assigning roles and authorising the members to act, agree the objective and how and when they will report back. Members may need to speak to relevant staff or students to gather more feedback (you could poll students in a lecture or set up a focus group).

Escalate the issue: Talk to the Faculty Student Rep to find out if the issue is experienced by other Departments or if solutions are already in place. If this is a widespread UCL problem they could take it to the Student Experience Committee (StEC) for further discussion. You may also want to speak to other staff members, if they weren't at the meeting, for example the Head of Department.

Scope a project and bid for UCL ChangeMakers funding to make it happen: Collaborate with staff as part of a project team working to make UCL education even better, through the UCL ChangeMakers initiative. See overleaf for more details.

After the meeting – how to follow up

Confirm and circulate minutes: Send the minutes to SSCC members, post them on a Moodle page and also email to **sscc@ucl.ac.uk**, within ten working days.

Track actions: You could summarise the main points/changes discussed in a table and use a Red/Amber/Green tracker for actions and post on Moodle, so that students and staff have access to a snapshot of what was raised, rather than reading through lengthy minutes.

Update ALL students: This includes students who provided feedback e.g. through focus groups or polls, plus the wider student community in your department. You could use lecture shout outs, social media channels or other tools such as Unitu.

Don't forget staff! Teaching staff can pass on key messages through their seminars and lectures, or administrators may be able to help spread messages about outcomes of the meeting by forwarding on a 'need to know' email.

Celebrate changes: Whether it's changes driven by the SSCC or just reinforcing the aspects of education that are going well and that students value, don't forget to share positive news. You could use run a 'You Shaped Your Department' campaign using the templates that are available on the Teaching and Learning portal (see link overleaf), post on departmental social media pages, or host an informal departmental coffee morning and announce any good news.

UCL Changemakers

Turn your idea into a reality with a UCL ChangeMakers project

UCL ChangeMakers supports students and staff to work in partnership on projects that improve the learning environment at UCL. Each department in UCL is guaranteed funding of £850 for one project per year. Proposals are generated via SSCCs and approved by Departmental Teaching Committees (DTC). ChangeMakers is underpinned by the ethos that both students and staff have an important contribution to make to education at UCL and working together harnesses the expertise of both to bring about change.

How does it work?

- A project proposal should be discussed at the SSCC and a proposal submitted to Departmental Teaching Committee

- Project teams are identified at the SSCC (team members don't necessarily need to be members of SSCC) and should have at least one staff lead and around 2–4 students

- Funding of £850 is available for project costs and reward / recognition for students

- You can apply for this funding as early in the academic year as you like and the sooner you apply, the more time you have to carry out your projects (typically, a project spans 10–15 weeks across 2 terms).

Support

For more information visit our website: **www.ucl.ac.uk/changemakers**

Helpful resources

www.studentsunionucl.org/reps/staff

- SSCC Benchmarking Tool
- SSCC Agenda and Minutes Templates
- InEDITA Effective Staff Student Consultative Committees

www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/student-engagement/templates-guides

- You Shaped UCL templates
- Student engagement case studies
- Tracking actions guidance and tools

Tip

You don't need to wait until the next SSCC to discuss ongoing matters. It might help if co-chairs schedule monthly catch ups to keep each other in the loop on any developments.
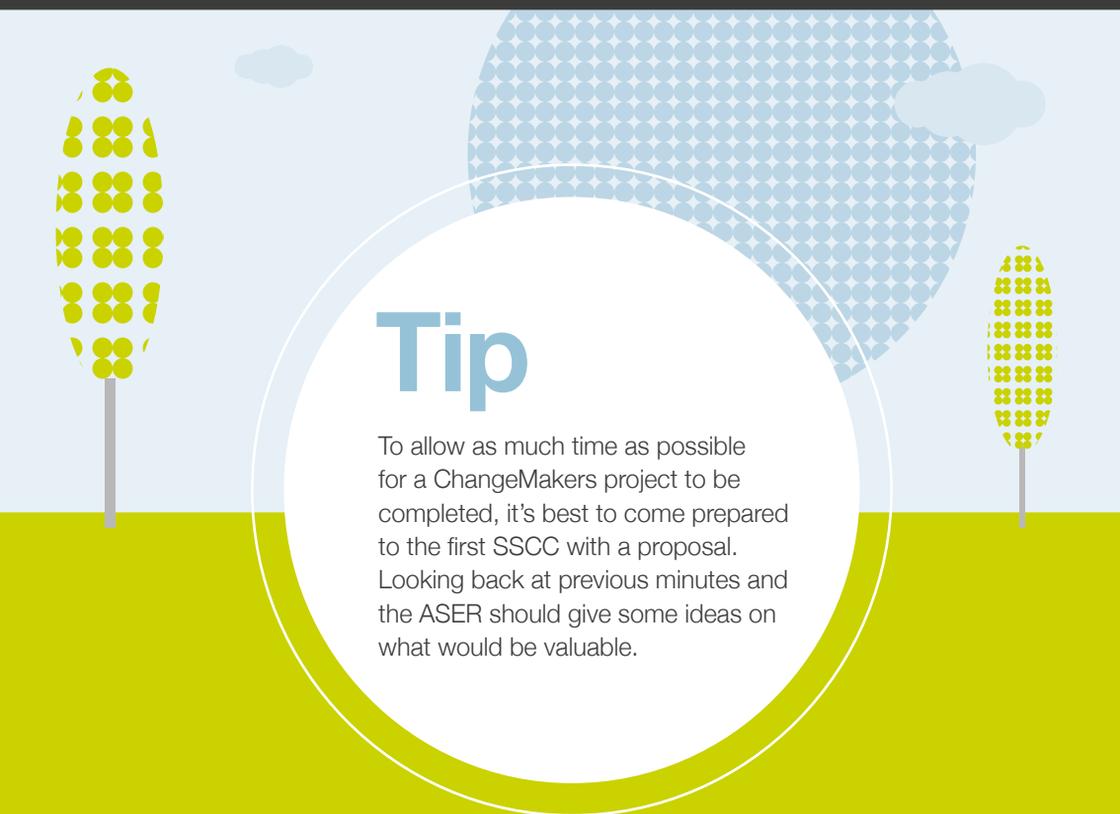
Tip

To allow as much time as possible for a ChangeMakers project to be completed, it's best to come prepared to the first SSCC with a proposal. Looking back at previous minutes and the ASER should give some ideas on what would be valuable.

www.studentsunionucl.org/reps/**staff**