



UNM Student Staff Forums Procedure

**Introduction**

Student Staff Forums (SSFs) represent a key avenue by which course and/or School representative(s) are able and expected to engage with the School in the feedback process at the University of Nottingham Malaysia. The purposes of the SSF are to ensure that the views of students are given proper weight in the processes of course and module review, and that the concerns of students about their courses of study are represented to the academic staff throughout the academic year. SSF is expected to have a minimum of three meetings per academic cycle1 with at least one meeting each Autumn Semester. School and Chair can call for extra meetings on needs basis.

This procedure sets out to provide further guidance and clarification on the conduct of SSF and its associated processes applicable for Foundation, Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate Taught Course (PGT) students only. It aims to serve as a reference guide for SA Education Officer, SA PG Officer, Course and Student Representatives, Senior Tutors, Director of Teaching and Learning, Programme Directors, and Heads of School for developing clear lines of communication, consistent student-staff expectation, and meaningful feedback experience.

When devising this procedure, the key principles of accessibility, transparency and flexibility are adhered to. This is to ensure that students and staff can address queries or points raised by working together with a common understanding of the SSF process.

**Overview of Approach**

1.0 SSF Membership:

* Course representative(s) and/or Student representatives (required)
* School Senior Tutor (required)
* Director of Teaching and Learning or Director of Studies and/or Programme Director(s) (required)
* Head of School (Optional)
* Key staff members from the relevant department, faculty, or school (where applicable) including SA Representatives (e.g. Education Officer) may be invited to join when necessary
* Ideally, the number of staff attending will normally not be significantly more than the number of student representatives.

2.0 Chair & Support

Course or School representative will chair the meeting, facilitated by School Senior Tutor.

3.0 Responsibility of the School

* The school, department or division -must display minutes of SSF meetings, external examiner reports and school responses to those reports on an appropriate forum that is clear and readily available to students (such as Moodle)
* Each school, department or division will normally decide on the number and composition of its SSFs, appropriate to its size, range of courses, and student mix.
* Schools, departments and divisions often via Senior Tutor must facilitate SSF by providing a mechanism for students to email or contact in some other way their fellow students.
* School shall ultimately account for their students’ learning and overall experience in their respective school
* SSF minutes must be taken into consideration in the school's annual monitoring processes and reporting

4.0 Fulfilling SSF Meeting Requirements per Academic Cycle

A Student Staff Forum (SSF) must meet at least three times per academic cycle1, with at least one meeting each Autumn Semester. School and Chair can call for extra meetings on needs basis.

* Foundation unit(s) must have one SSF meeting in each semester per academic year
* It is recommended that undergraduate and/or postgraduate taught course students hold two SSF meetings during each of the autumn and spring semesters

5.0 Appointment of Course and School Representatives

* The call for course and student representative(s) appointment can take place before the start of the Autumn semester. Course representative(s) will normally be appointed by teaching week 2. If the appointment of course representative(s) is delayed, schools can opt to have one SSF meeting in that semester for UG and/or PGT.
* SA Education Officer together with the SA PG Officer are responsible for the management of the training and development activities for course and student representatives aimed to prepare and provide guidance related to SSF purposes, structure and processes with support from the Campus Senior Tutor. Training for Foundation course and student representatives shall be conducted separately from UG and PGT due to different timings. All training will normally be conducted by teaching week 3 of the Autumn Semester.
* Upon the request of SA Education Officer and/or SA PG Officer, Senior Tutor can help facilitate the appointment of Course and/or School Representative(s) for Foundation, UG and PGT by way of identifying a class slot for approximately 15 minutes in teaching week 2 of the Autumn semester for Course and/ or School Representative(s) election process to take place. Senior Tutor must ensure the venue consists of only students and the SA representative(s) during the process to provide a bias-free environment and leading to a valid appointment.

6.0 Gathering Feedback

* SSF process starts by having Course or School representative gather feedback or comments from students using a set of standardised survey questions
* Students’ input for course or module review is encouraged, and the need for this will be relayed by the Senior Tutor to the Course or School representative so that it can be included in the gathering feedback/comments exercise by Course or School representative
* Course and/or School representative are to be mindful of representation of the feedback.
* A good practice in dealing with minor issues2 is to encourage students to directly approach the faculty concerned or through the course representative for immediate attention. However, if issues persist over two teaching weeks, course representative may raise it as an agenda item for SSF meeting.
* It is encouraged that students take this as an opportunity to thank and highlight deserving faculty including personal tutor(s) who have gone the extra mile for students

7.0 Preparing the Agenda

* Course and/or School representative work with guidance from the Senior Tutor to prepare and finalise the SSF meeting agenda using the standardised agenda template upon receiving feedback from students.
* Meeting agenda must always begin by reviewing past issues raised particularly the ones which remain unresolved followed by current issues for continuation purpose.
* Once the meeting agenda is set, the Senior Tutor is to publish it on the School’s Moodle page (or any equivalent platform where students can access to) and notify the Director of Teaching and Learning and/or Programme Director of the SSF meeting date
* Upon notification from the Senior Tutor, the Director of Teaching and Learning or Programme Director starts collecting responses from the relevant staff member in preparation for SSF meeting.
* With reference to the SSF membership section invitations will be sent by Course and/or School representative with oversight by the Senior Tutor to relevant members at least 7 working days prior to the meeting.

8.0 During SSF Meeting

* Members with conflict of interest shall declare it before the start of the meeting
* Members to share responses and seek clarification and attempt to address issues raised in the best way possible.
* If a particular issue requires more time, it will be brought forward to the next SSF meeting with the expectation that the issue will normally be resolved by then.
* A hybrid meeting mode is encouraged for meetings involving PGT student representative(s) considering the time and location constraints for them to attend a physical meeting on campus.

9.0 Preparing SSF Minutes

* Meeting minutes must be prepared at the end of each SSF meeting using the standardised meeting report template.
* Course and/or student representative(s) prepare the SSF meeting minutes with support from the Senior Tutor
* Upon finalisation of SSF meeting minutes, it is then disseminated to students and staff within the same semester.

10.0 SSF Process Flow

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11.0 Post SSF meeting

* While the repository administrative process may vary by faculty, all SSF minutes must be made available and accessible to all staff and students at the UNM central SSF repository for good governance practice at the end of each semester.
* Issue(s) raised for a second time in SSF meetings that remain unresolved by the School will be escalated to the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee by the School’s Director Teaching and Learning. The outcome of the escalation shall be communicated to the Senior Tutor and Course and/or student representative(s).

Additional Information

A course with less than five students may approach SSF differently at the discretion of their respective School without denying the avenue for students to provide feedback and to have their concerns addressed

Foundation usually has a programme representative and intake representative(s) involved in SSF. However, larger Schools with more programmes in UG and PGT tend to involve course representatives and student representatives made up of year and school representatives in SSF.

Glossary

Academic cycle1 refers to the commencement of the first semester to the last semester in a twelve-month period. Foundation academic cycle starts in April and ends in March the next year. UG and PGT academic cycles start in September and end in August the next year.

Minor issues2 refer to issues that can be addressed immediately. For example, slides provision, font size, speaking too fast in class, cannot hear the lecturer, etc.

Please direct any questions relating to the contents of this paper to:

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