

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR STUDENT INFLUENCE

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	<i>Includes previous <i>Rules for financial compensation of student representatives at first- and second-cycle levels at the University of Gothenburg (GU 2019/1908)</i> and the <i>Procedure for appointing student representatives at University level (GU 2020/1477)</i></i>
Period of validity	From 1 July 2023 until further notice. To be reviewed by 2026 at the latest to remain up to date.
Summary	This governing document regulates matters related to student influence at the University of Gothenburg in activities that have a bearing on their courses or study programmes or the situation of students. The document summarises how the ordinances concerning student influence are to be applied locally at the University of Gothenburg. The rules also contain information on financial compensation of student representatives as well as other measures which aim to promote student influence.

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1. Introduction

Student influence shall be assured in all preparatory/drafting and decision-making bodies and in the case of decisions made by the Vice-Chancellor, a Dean or Head of Department with a bearing on courses and study programmes.¹

The purpose of these Rules is to specify how work with student influence is to be carried out at the University of Gothenburg and to provide guidance on how the University's staff and students are to work together on matters that have a bearing on their courses or study programmes or the situation of students.

Where documents are regulated by statute and local governing documents, these are referenced in footnotes.

In support of these rules, the Staff Portal and the Student Portal provide additional support with more detailed information and guidance for how to interpret and comply with the rules.

2. Prerequisites for student influence and responsibilities

The University is to endeavour to enable students to play an active role in the continued development of its courses and study programmes. Furthermore, continuous quality improvement is a shared concern of the staff and students at the University.² To promote students' active participation and engagement, the University, in cooperation with the students' unions, is to inform new students about the nature and possibility of student influence during orientation and welcome days, for example at the start of courses or semesters at the departments.

The Vice-Chancellor has the overall responsibility for students having the right to exert influence over their courses and study programmes at the University. Within each faculty and department, the Dean and the Head of Department, respectively, are responsible for compliance with the students' right to have an influence. In general, the person who makes the decision is responsible for ensuring student influence in matters of importance to courses and study programmes or the situation of students.

Students' unions are responsible for appointing and dismissing student representatives in their respective areas of activity.

3. Definitions

'Student influence' means that students are entitled to exert influence over their courses and study programmes³ and other matters that have a bearing on the situation of students.⁴ Students also have the opportunity to exert influence through course evaluations for example, which are governed by *Rules for studies at first- and second-cycle levels*, *Rules and Regulations for Third-Cycle Studies at the University of Gothenburg - Doktorandreglerna*, and evaluations with external assessment are okay of courses and study programmes, which are governed by the *Policy for quality assurance and continuous quality improvement of education at the University of Gothenburg*.

'Students' union' means a union of students that by a decision of the University Board has been granted the status of a students' union for an organisational or geographically limited part of the University of Gothenburg.⁵

'Student representative' means a person appointed by a students' union to represent students at the University of Gothenburg. A student representative must also represent students who are not members of a students' union.⁶

¹ Rules of Procedure at the University of Gothenburg, p. 5

² The Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434) Chapter 1 Sections 4-4 a

³ The Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434) Chapter 1, Section 4 a

⁴ Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 2, Section 14

⁵ Sweden's Ordinance on Students' Unions (2009:769), Sections 3-4

⁶ Sweden's Ordinance on Students' Unions (2009:769) Section 8

‘Student’ means a person who has been admitted to and is pursuing higher education studies at first- and second-cycle levels as well as a person pursuing studies at third-cycle level (doctoral students).⁷

4. Students’ unions and student influence

If decisions are to be made or a matter prepared that has a bearing on courses and study programmes or the situation of students, the students have the right to be represented.⁸ Only students’ unions at the University are entitled to appoint and dismiss student representatives.⁹ Representatives of the University of Gothenburg can assist by informing students about the possibility of becoming a student representative, and inform the relevant students’ union about interested students who could be appointed in a formal decision by the students’ union.

The students’ union at each faculty is responsible for appointing student representatives.

When students have the right to be represented in a body at the University that covers areas of activity covered by a number of students’ unions, or otherwise in a decision or drafting that concerns a number of students’ unions, the unions are jointly responsible for appointing the student representatives. In the first instance this is done through the co-operation body of the students’ unions, or in a manner that the unions agree on.

The students’ unions themselves nominate the student representatives they appoint. Where it may be of benefit to distribute representatives based on their faculty or education level (first-, second- and third-cycle) or other prior knowledge, this should be stated in the request for nominations.

If one or more consultation bodies are to be asked to submit comments in a case and the case is deemed to have a bearing on their courses and study programmes or the situation of students, the students’ unions whose areas of activity are affected shall be the consultation bodies. If the areas of activity of multiple students’ unions are affected, the unions’ co-operation body shall also be a consultation body.

4.1 If the students’ unions do not agree

In the event that the unions do not agree on how student representatives are to be appointed, the University of Gothenburg may, after having heard the unions, decide how the student representatives are to be appointed.¹⁰ Student representative assignments that cover the areas of activity of multiple students’ unions are then distributed according to the principle that preference is given to the students’ union(s) with the most students in their area of activity.¹¹

5. Student representation

5.1 Student influence when a matter is prepared or when a decision is made in a body

Students are entitled to be represented in both permanent and temporary bodies that prepare or decide on matters that have a bearing on their courses and study programmes or the situation of students.¹²

A student representative in a body or group has the same rights and obligations as the other members unless specifically stipulated otherwise. The chair is responsible for ensuring that new student representatives are given a relevant

introduction to the work, and that the student representative, like the other members, has access to documentation for the meetings in good time.

⁷ Sweden’s Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 1 Section 4

⁸ The Swedish Higher Education Act Chapter 2 Section 7

⁹ Sweden’s Ordinance on Students’ Unions (2009:769) Section 7

¹⁰ Sweden’s Ordinance on Students’ Unions (2009:769) Section 7, third paragraph

¹¹ Calculated in full-time equivalents (FTEs) the previous full year. If a number of students’ unions choose to submit a joint nomination, the total number of students they represent is counted.

¹² The Swedish Higher Education Act Chapter 2 Section 7

To make it easier for student representatives to attend meetings, meeting times should be planned well in advance. A student representative is expected to attend the meetings of the body. If they are unable to attend, they are expected to inform the body and their substitute, where applicable, as soon as possible.

5.2 Student influence when decisions are to be made or a matter prepared by a single person

The students are entitled to representation when decisions or preparations are made that have a bearing on their courses or programmes or the situation of students.¹³ Decision data is to be provided and consultation is to take place in good time before the decision is made or the preparation is concluded.¹⁴

When decisions are made by the Vice-Chancellor, Dean¹⁵ and Head of Department¹⁶ the student representative shall be given the opportunity to attend meetings where decisions are made on matters related to courses and study programmes. In addition, the decision-making official is responsible for informing and consulting with students on important matters well in advance of the decision.¹⁷

Consultation with the student representative should be seen as a natural part of preparation work on matters that are important for the courses and study programmes or the situation of students, and can be done via e-mail, advisory meetings or decision-making meetings.

The decision must state that the student representative has been given the opportunity to express an opinion, how the consultation has been conducted, and whether the student representative has been involved in consultations in connection with the decision.

5.3 Occasions when students are not to participate

Student participation should not depend on the matters that are dealt with in a body at various times.¹⁸

Under Chapter 2, Section 7 of the Swedish Higher Education Act, students are entitled to representation when decisions or preparations are made that have bearing on their courses or programmes or the situation of students, but this does not mean that student representatives should participate in all types of matters that are dealt with by a preparatory or decision-making body.

Normally, student representatives are not to participate in:

- matters relating to individual students. An exception is made for the Disciplinary Board, where students are entitled to representation on the board by two members.¹⁹
- human resources matters that are not considered to have a bearing on their courses and study programmes or the situation of students.
- decisions on who is appointed to assignments that are not deemed to have a bearing on their courses and study programmes or the situation of the students, or that concern tasks in bodies where the students are already entitled to participate.²⁰

5.4 Annual process for student representation at University level

The Educational Affairs unit is responsible for the preparation of an annual university-wide request for nominations for student representative assignments at the University-wide level.

¹³ The Swedish Higher Education Act Chapter 2 Section 7

¹⁴ Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 2 Section 14

¹⁵ Rules of Procedure at the University of Gothenburg, p. 21

¹⁶ Rules of Procedure at the University of Gothenburg, p. 24

¹⁷ Govt Bill *Studentinflytande och kvalitetsutveckling i högskolan* (1999/2000:28) (*Student influence and CQI in higher education*), p. 28

¹⁸ Govt Bill *En akademi i tiden – ökad frihet för universitet och högskolor* (2009/10:149) (*An academy of the times – increased freedom for universities and University colleges*), p. 39

¹⁹ Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 10 Section 4

²⁰ Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ). *Studentinflytande när en enda person bereder eller fattar beslut – UKÄ:s bedömning av 20 olika typer av beslut (Student influence when a single person prepares or makes decisions – the Swedish Higher Education Authority's assessment of 20 different types of decisions)*, p. 25

The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for establishing a list of University-wide bodies and other bodies and groups in which students are to be invited to participate each year.

The University Director is responsible for establishing a list each year of working groups and development projects emanating from the University Administration where students are to be invited to participate.

The University-wide student representative assignments are compiled in a request for nominations sent to the students' unions and their co-operation body by 15 March. The students' unions are responsible for notifying the relevant bodies of the appointed student representatives by 31 May.

Unless stated otherwise in the request for nominations, the term of office for student representative assignments on University-wide bodies is from 1 July in the current year to 30 June the following year.

5.5 Annual process for student representation at the faculty and department

At the faculty and department, the Dean and Head of Department are responsible for ensuring that there is a list of bodies and working groups in which student representatives are invited to participate. The list is to include permanent and temporary bodies and groups that are relevant for the coming year, and also include information on the number of places and whether the assignment is remunerated.

The list must be reviewed annually in consultation with the students' unions, and is to be established before the end of the spring semester.

5.6 Student representation in new bodies or groups

If a new body or group is established during a financial year whose activities are deemed to have a bearing on their courses or study programmes or the situation of students, students are to be invited to participate.

For assignments at the faculty or department, this is done by sending a request for nominations to the relevant students' union. For assignments that cover the areas of activity of multiple students' unions, in the first instance the request is sent to the co-operation body of the students' unions.

5.7 Vacant student representative assignments

If a student representative is dismissed or leaves their assignment before its term is up, the students' union or the co-operation body of the students' unions that appointed the student representative is responsible for informing the body or group concerned as soon as possible. The students' unions are also responsible for informing substitutes where they exist, and appointing a new student representative.

5.8 Training of student representatives

In order to create good conditions for student influence, the University provides online training on student influence that is available on the Student Portal.

In addition, the University Administration offers training for student representatives in how the University of Gothenburg operates and what rules govern its activities.

5.9 Compensation of student representatives

The University is to strive for fair and equal compensation to student representatives, regardless of the level or part of the University. Decisions on compensation other than that applicable to the bodies named below are made by the cost unit.

The following compensation shall be paid to student representatives in the bodies named below, which, in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure at the University of Gothenburg*, exist at all faculties, departments or equivalent. A local health and safety committee, which is regulated in the *Local work environment agreement of the University of Gothenburg* has been added to the list, since this is a body that also exists at all faculties of the University or equivalent.

For other bodies and groups that prepare or decide on activities that have a bearing on their courses and

study programmes or the situation of students, the Vice-Chancellor, Dean and Head of Department are responsible for their inclusion in the relevant list, including information on any compensation payable, in accordance with what is stated in Sections 5.4 and 5.5.

Compensation paid to student representatives on the University Board is regulated in a separate government decision. Compensation for student representatives who receive monthly fees from the students' union or the co-operation body of the students' unions is paid to the students' union concerned or the co-operation body. Compensation for student representatives at third-cycle level is regulated in the *Rules for third cycle studies at the University of Gothenburg – Doktorandreglerna*. They are therefore not covered by that decision.

Compensation for student representatives in the bodies named in the list below is paid per meeting day of a body or group, for meetings that are scheduled in advance and last for at least one hour. Attendance at meetings is to be documented in the minutes of meetings or memorandums. The allowance includes compensation for work done both before and after the meeting, including any preparatory meetings.

Substitutes are only paid a meeting allowance when they replace the ordinary member.

Student representative assignments at University level

Bodies	Compensation per meeting (minimum 1h)
University-wide bodies ²¹	SEK 1000

Student representative assignments at faculty, department or equivalent level

Bodies	Compensation per meeting (minimum 1h)
Faculty Board	SEK 1000
Heads of Department Council	SEK 1000
Local Health and Safety Committee	SEK 1000
Academic Appointments Board	SEK 1000
Department Council	SEK 1000

For other student representative assignments, information about compensation being payable, including information about the compensation that is paid, must be established before the request to appoint a student representative is communicated to the students' union or the co-operation body of the students' unions.

The student representative is responsible for submitting accounts at the end of the semester or after the student representative assignment has been completed prior to payment of the fees.

The cost of student representation burdens each respective activity where the body or group operates.

5.10 Testimonials

Students are to be able to receive, on request, a written testimonial listing the positions of trust that they have held as a student representative at the University of Gothenburg.

5.11 Follow-up of student representation

The faculty-wide specification of student representation in the bodies named in this document is to be communicated to the University Administration annually in connection with the overall annual follow-up.

²¹ University-wide bodies are established by an annual decision of the Vice-Chancellor.

The Dean and Head of Department are responsible for follow-up of student influence in local bodies and groups that not named in this document being done in connection with the annual review of the local list (see Section 5.5).

The Educational Affairs unit is responsible for compiling a University-wide follow-up of student influence for the overall annual follow-up.

6. Notification of non-compliance with the rules for student influence

Students who wish to submit complaints about clients the rules for student influence should in the first instance contact the head of department and then the dean in accordance with the procedure decided by the Vice-Chancellor.²²

7. Regulation of student influence at national level and local policy documents at the University of Gothenburg

Student influence at the University of Gothenburg is governed by legislation as well as local decisions. The legislation and policy documents to which reference is made in this document are listed below. However, there are additional rules that have a bearing on student influence.

7.1 Legislation to which reference is made in this document

- Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100). An unofficial translation is available on the website uhr.se
- The Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434). An unofficial translation is available on the website uhr.se
- Sweden's Ordinance on Students' Unions (2009:769). An unofficial translation is available on the website uhr.se

7.2 Legislative history and commissions of inquiry

- Govt Bill 2009/10:149. *En akademi i tiden ökad frihet för universitet och högskolor*
- Govt Bill 1999/2000:28. *Studentinflytande och kvalitetsutveckling i högskolan*
- Swedish Higher Education Authority (2020). *Studentinflytande när en enda person bereder eller fattar beslut UKÄ:s bedömning av 20 olika typer av beslut* (Report 2020:19).

7.3 Governing documents at the University of Gothenburg to which reference is made in this document

This document is supplemented by the Procedure for handling complaints from students.

- Policy for quality assurance and continuous quality improvement of education at the University of Gothenburg
- Rules for studies at first- and second-cycle levels
- Rules and Regulations for Third-Cycle Studies at the University of Gothenburg – Doktorandreglerna

Governing documents are published here: <http://www.medarbetarportalen.gu.se/styrdokument>

²² Procedure for handling complaints from students