

Role and Responsibilities of Student Members

UTS Organisational & Committee Structure

The [UTS organisational structure](#) and [UTS committee structure](#) provide the legal and administrative context within which the University's committees and boards operate.

Each committee or board has its own Terms of Reference or Charter, which outlines the committee or board's role, responsibilities, composition, and how it discharges its functions on behalf of UTS.

Further information can be found on the relevant committee or board webpage, including contact details for the committee officer who will be your primary point of contact.

Student members have a responsibility to:

- Read meeting papers in advance and bring your own copy to meetings (printed copies are generally not provided).
- Attend meetings and participate in discussions.
- Sign the attendance register where required.
- Be prepared to consider options and vote on motions.
- Consider the implications of decisions on the effectiveness, efficiency and reputation of the University.
- Consult with relevant student cohorts, where appropriate and within any confidentiality requirements.
- Respect confidential information and discussions.
- Do not distribute committee papers outside approved channels.
- Inform the Committee Officer if you are unable to attend a meeting, expect to arrive late or leave early, are unable to meet a deadline, are taking extended leave, or wish to resign from your position.
- Declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest to the Chair.
- Follow up on any action items assigned to you.
- Participate in occasional working groups or other committee-related activities where required.

Students should note:

All student representative positions are voluntary and unpaid. However, serving on a committee or board provides an opportunity to:

- Contribute a student perspective to decision-making at UTS.
- Work closely with students, academics and professional staff.
- Participate in strategic planning, policy development and governance activities.
- Develop confidence in public speaking and presentation skills.
- Gain valuable experience in board and committee service.
- Build professional networks across the UTS community.
- Make a meaningful contribution to the University.

- Gain leadership experience that may be recognised on your Curriculum Vitae and, where applicable, through the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS).

The time commitment and term of office vary across committees and boards.

Committee/Board	Term of Office	Meetings per Year	Typical Meeting Time	Further Information
UTS Council	2 years (commencing 1 November)	6	Wednesdays, from 9.00am to 12:30pm	UTS Council website
Student/Council Liaison Group	Ex-officio (see note below)	3	Tuesdays, from 4.00pm to 6.00pm	Student Council Liaison Group
Academic Board	1 year (commencing 1 January)	6	Wednesdays, from 9.00am to 11:00am	Academic Board website
Courses Accreditation Committee	1 year (commencing 1 January)	At least 8	Thursdays, from 1.00pm to 3.00pm	Courses Accreditation Committee website
Graduate Research Board	1 year (commencing 1 January)	6	Tuesdays, from 10.00am to 12:00pm	Graduate Research School website
Teaching and Learning Committee	1 year (commencing 1 January)	6	Mondays, from 10.00am to 12:00pm	Teaching and Learning Committee website
Research Committee	1 year (commencing 1 January)	4	Mondays or Wednesdays, from 10.00am to 12:00pm	Research Committee website
Faculty Boards	1 year (commencing 1 January)	At least 4	Varies by Faculty	Contact your Faculty

Ex Officio Membership

Some positions on the [Student/Council Liaison Group](#) (S/CLG) are held ex officio, meaning membership is automatically granted by virtue of holding another office.

Students elected to UTS Council or Academic Board, together with the Presidents of UTSSA and ActivateUTS, automatically become members of the S/CLG by virtue of holding those positions.

Reflections from Past and Current Representatives

Key Takeaways

1. Most of the real work happens between meetings, not in them

- Turning up, reading papers and asking a question in the room is the visible part of the role — the real influence usually comes from the preparation, informal conversations and follow-up that happen around each meeting.
- Raising something effectively usually means socialising it before the meeting, asking a pointed question in the meeting, and then tracking the response — not raising it once and hoping it sticks.

2. The time commitment can be heavier than it looks

- These are voluntary, unpaid positions — but it's worth knowing the time commitment can become more than it first appears; once meeting prep, informal conversations and follow-up are counted alongside the meetings themselves.
- The learning curve can be steep early on, particularly at more senior levels, where issues may have been in motion for months or years before you joined.

3. Find a way of reading papers that works for you

- Meeting papers can run to hundreds of pages. Find the way to read them that works for you — it's normal to prioritise, or read in more detail, the sections that actually concern you and the students you represent, rather than reading cover to cover and trying to digest absolutely everything.

4. Start early and build relationships before you need them

- A one-year term moves faster than expected. Big ideas raised late rarely have time to land — start pushing on anything significant in the first few months.
- Building a relationship with the Chair, committee officers, and relevant staff early. Rather than only interacting through the meeting, it makes it much easier to get things properly considered.

5. Asking for help is not a burden

- Committee staff, chairs and fellow student leaders are generally glad to help — you don't need to figure it all out alone. Past student representatives are often keen to be asked too, so don't hesitate to reach out to those who've come before you.

6. Come prepared to contribute, not just to attend

- Being elected carries real standing in the room, even as one of the youngest or least experienced people present. Stay anchored to the interests of the students you represent, while feeling free to contribute to any issue you care about, not just the obviously student-facing ones.

In Their Own Words

Student Representative, UTS Faculty Board for Health — 2026

Student Representative, UTS Academic Board — 2026

Member, Student Council Liaison Group — 2026

“Only now am I starting to understand the vast complexities that policy roles have, and how many stakeholders are required for the adaptation of numerous initiatives. This complexity was genuinely surprising — especially upon seeing the first set of papers I had to read were around 300 pages, which I had initially found quite overwhelming.”

“If I could provide a piece of advice for my past self, it would be to selectively read the meeting papers (especially Academic Board papers; Faculty Board papers not so much). Some parts of the paper do not concern you nor the students you represent — it is okay to not read it. This is advice I got from someone in the latter half of my term, and had I known it earlier, it would have made being on the board a lot less stressful.”

Student Representative, UTS Faculty Board for Business — 2014

Business Student Representative, UTS Academic Board — 2014

Student Representative, UTS Teaching and Learning Committee — 2014, 2018

Member / Deputy Chair, Student Council Liaison Group — 2013–2016, 2018–2020

UTS Council Member (undergraduate & postgraduate terms) — 2014–2016, 2018–2020

“Before I started, I wish I had known just how much information I would be able to access — reports, budgets, accounts and program plans. Understanding what was available would have helped me ask much better questions.”

“That the staff supporting these committees genuinely wanted to help me as a student representative — asking for help was not bothering people or being a burden. I went in feeling I had to figure everything out myself.”

“A one-year term goes very quickly. If I waited for the next meeting, and then the next, pretty soon my term was over and I had not accomplished very much. Do not go into a large meeting simply to complain about an issue — ask a pointed question that requires a response, and follow up when somebody promises one.”

Student Representative for Engineering, Faculty Board (Faculty of Engineering and IT) — 2026

“There is real power in the role, provided you use it well. The more initiative you take to figure out how the board works and how to raise issues, the more change you can actually make on behalf of students. That flexibility does come with a lot of unanswered questions though, since there is no formal job description.”

“Advice for incoming students: arrange a meeting with the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) early in the term to understand how they see the role and what is needed. Beyond that, it comes down to initiative — what you get out of the role depends entirely on what you put in.”

Student Representative, UTS Faculty Board for Business — 2024–2025

Business Student Representative, UTS Academic Board – 2025

Member, Student Council Liaison Group – 2025

“The work required to table a suggestion in any of these committees was the one thing I wish I'd known beforehand. There is a difference between merely being given a template for submitting a proposal and actually going through a step-by-step process with student representatives who have successfully done so before.”

“If you have any big ideas, work on them early in your term, seek the advice of successful student representatives past and present, and consult widely. Everyone likes the status quo — to effect change; you need to substantiate your case. Change also takes a long time, so do not wait until your term is nearing its end.”

“Keep asking: how are student interests affected? If you have questions, ask. If you think something is wrong, speak up.”

Student Representative, UTS Council — 2024 – 2026

Member / Deputy Chair, Student Council Liaison Group – 2024 – 2026

Student Representative on various UTS committees — Mar 2023–present

“You truly get out of the role what you put into it — and that certainly extends beyond just reading papers and showing up to meetings. I probably spend a minimum of 15 hours most weeks preparing for meetings, being in meetings (formal and informal), meeting with stakeholders, and working on projects to review policy and procedure. Most of the real change I've contributed to was not made sitting in a larger, official board meeting.”

“The learning curve can be quite intense — especially at the higher levels like UTS Council. Things have been in motion for months or years before you apply,

the level of experience and conversation is different, the papers can be dense, long and unfamiliar etc. I've found mentors along the way, asked a lot of questions, learnt a lot and am still learning a lot."

"Know that despite being one of the youngest in the room, or with the least formal experience, you were elected and have a role that is important, valued and meaningful. You represent students, but you are also equally able to contribute to any issue of interest to you, even if it isn't immediately student-centered. Talk to your fellow student leaders, the chair and people more experienced than you to figure out where's the right place to raise an issue, in what way, and whether someone might already be working on it."

Practical Advice at a Glance

- Read meeting papers in the way that works for you — focus in more detail on the sections that affect students and interest you.
- Meet the relevant Chair, Associate Dean, or committee officer early in your term, not just at the first meeting.
- Ask board secretaries, chairs and staff for access to background information (budgets, prior papers, program plans) — understanding what exists helps you ask better questions.
- If you have big goals in mind, start early in your term — change takes longer than a one-year term allows if you wait.
- Ask a specific, pointed question rather than raising a general complaint, keep a note of who owes you a follow-up, and follow it through.
- Consult and coordinate with other student representatives, especially during periods of major change.
- Reach out to committee staff and past student representatives — most are glad to help.
- Keep track of your time commitment expectations — they vary by committee and role.
- If you have questions, ask. If you think something is wrong, speak up.