

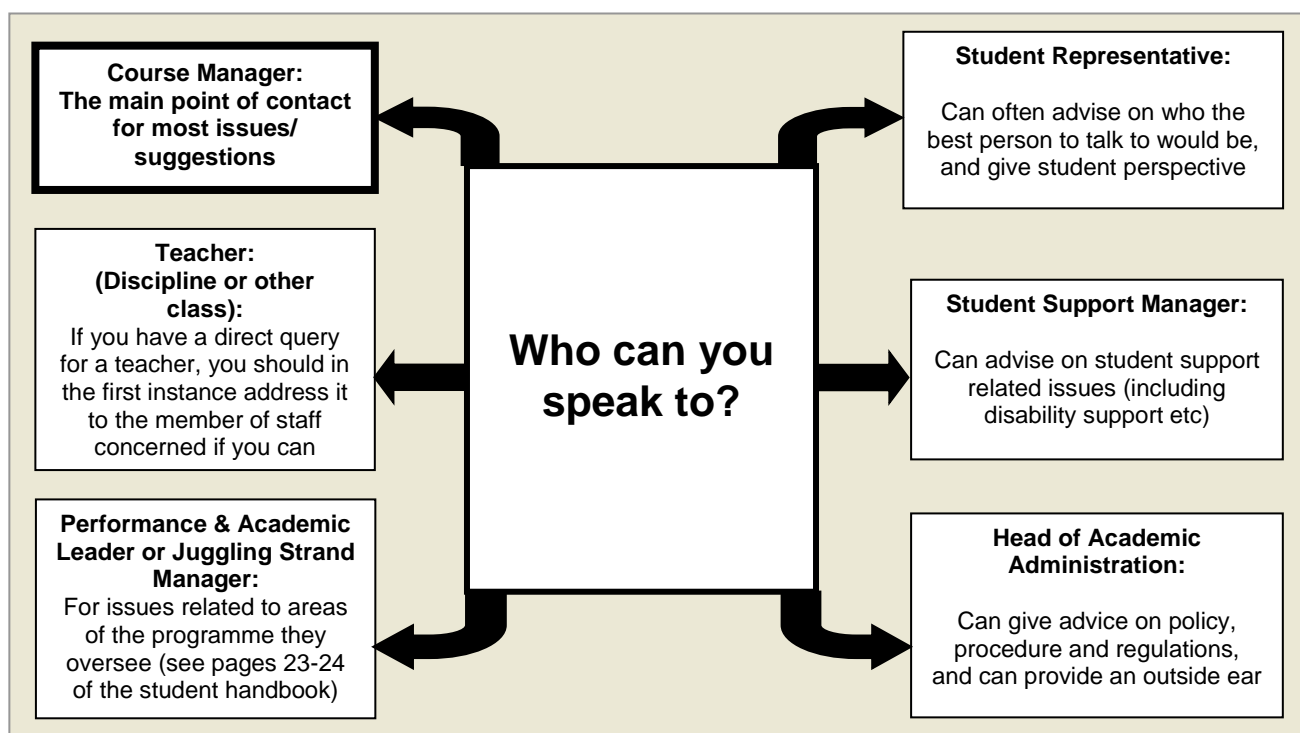
APPENDIX G: STUDENT FEEDBACK AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURES

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students in higher education are active participants in their own learning and are expected to make comments and suggestions, and also to engage with the development and delivery of higher education programmes. Often this happens informally, in discussion with your teachers or Year Managers, but there are also various ways of giving your views formally. This section deals with the ways of making your views known, and of engaging in the management and development of your course.

INFORMAL CHANNELS

Most issues which arise during your time at the National Centre can be dealt with informally through discussion with members of staff. You should ensure you have reflected fully on the issue and present it within the context of your wider learning experience.



FORMAL CHANNELS (1): STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

If you have feedback which you think affects a number of students, you may want to raise the issue with one of the student representatives nominated by your year group. Each year all year groups elect representatives ('reps') to be members of a range of committees that contribute to the running of the higher education programmes at the National Centre and the Conservatoire. This gives an opportunity for the student voice to be heard formally, and is an important mechanism that informs both day-to-day running and long-term planning.

Nomination of reps for new students will be held around the fourth week in the autumn term (or once you feel that you have all got to know one another). Students elect new reps at the

beginning of each year, although it is fine for current reps to continue if they are re-elected. Three students represent each year group in the undergraduate programmes; this is to ensure that at least one is available for each of the various meetings they sit on. Once the representatives have been elected, their photos and contact details are posted on the student noticeboard, on Moodle, and in the Student Portakabin. Their names and contact emails will also be emailed to all registered students by the HE Programme Administrator.

All student representatives sit on the Student Staff Liaison Committee. This meets around seven times a year during term time and normally deals with day-to-day matters which have been raised by students, and also looks at future planning and relevant information such as the External Examiner Reports and the Annual Programme Monitoring Report. Student representatives will be responsible for gathering student views/ issues prior to each meeting and sending agenda points to the Programme Administrator when requested. Minutes of the meeting are circulated to the representatives by the Programme Administrator and uploaded onto Moodle. Student reps are then responsible for passing on any resolutions to issues or relevant discussion to the rest of their respective year group.

The following committees also have student representation – please see the diagram on page 4 to see how these meetings fit together in the academic management of the programme.

- One nominated student representative from the each year group sits on Learning & Teaching Committee, which takes place three times a year, during term time. The Committee reviews academic aspects of the programme, developing changes and improvements where necessary and making recommendations to the Academic Board.
- One nominated student representative from each year group sits on Academic Board, which takes place three times a year, during term time. The Board oversees the academic management of the higher education programme.
- Two students, taken in rotation from the eight Conservatoire Schools, are members of the Academic Board of the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama. Their role is to give a student perspective on any issues discussed.

FORMAL CHANNELS (2): STUDENT SURVEYS AND GROUP FEEDBACK

Your opinions are sought on the content and delivery of all taught modules along with other aspects of the course. Regular opportunities for feedback give students the chance to communicate back to the Higher Education department on both good and less satisfactory experiences. This is primarily achieved in the form of student surveys and group feedback sessions, which students are asked to complete at several points during the year – usually towards the end of each term. Where possible, this will be done during class time in a specifically timetabled session.

GROUP FEEDBACK SESSIONS

Group feedback sessions take place at the end of each term. Student representatives will lead a group discussion and collect feedback for each element of the programme over the past term which is agreed by the group and submitted to the Programme Administrator. This feedback is then considered by the Higher Education team, and agreed responses are

documented by the Head of Academic Administration and brought back to the year group to discuss at the next term briefing.

SURVEYS

Surveys are anonymous and provide the opportunity to give your individual opinion. The feedback from surveys is a key part of the National Centre's short and long-term planning, helping it improve teaching and other academic provision. To achieve this, a high completion rate is needed and therefore it is hoped that every student will use the opportunities given to inform the National Centre of their views.

There are four types of survey you will be asked to complete whilst studying at the National Centre:

1. Module Evaluations – these will usually take place at the end of a module, but occasionally you'll be asked to evaluate a module part way through. Module Evaluations are completed on paper forms, usually at the end of your group feedback session
2. Exit or Programme Surveys – these are completed at the end of your programme when you can look back on the experience as a whole. These are also completed on paper at the end of your last group feedback session
3. The National Student Survey – completed by all students in the second year of the Foundation Degree, and by all undergraduate students in higher education nationally. This survey is completed online. The Head of Academic Administration usually books out some library time for students to complete it.
4. The University of Kent student survey – all students are asked to complete this each year by our validating university. This is completed online.

Remember: to make written feedback useful, we need your thoughtful, constructive comments, based on your experience as a whole, rather than a more superficial comment on what is uppermost in your mind when you complete the survey. Useful feedback is not just a specific comment on the teacher or another member of staff, but should take account of your own input to learning, and how well the aims of the module were achieved.

WHAT HAPPENS TO FEEDBACK?

The National Centre takes your views seriously and your comments are considered as part of the in-year and end-of-year monitoring of all of the Higher Education courses. Where appropriate, matters arising from student feedback are taken for discussion at HE Admin meetings, Learning & Teaching Committee and/or Academic Board. It will form part of an annual report on student feedback, and may be considered as part of the National Centre Learning and Teaching Strategy.

Some feedback – usually on simple practical issues – can lead to change quite quickly. Often, however, changes are made for future years, and do not directly benefit you – but you benefit from student comments made in previous years. Sometimes it is not possible to do what students want, for example because there is a limit to available resources. Sometimes some aspect of your training may seem problematic to you, but the Higher Education team will know from experience that change would be damaging: you are not always in a position

to recognise what you need. However, the Higher Education team will always respond to feedback and attempt to explain why changes are or are not being made.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CIRCUS ARTS ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

