

Definition of a Friend and Representative in Student Governance Procedures

Relevant to:

All LJMU Students

**Responsibility for
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Student Governance

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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Student Governance Procedures

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

Student Governance Procedures

Definition of a Friend and Representative in Student Governance Procedures

Student Governance procedures (e.g. Disciplinary, Academic Misconduct, Fitness to Practise/Study and Complaints procedures) follow the principles of natural justice and include the right for students to be accompanied by one 'friend' at all stages of the relevant procedure, including meetings, formal investigations and hearings.

In this context, LJMU defines a 'friend' as a person who accompanies a student to provide support, for example, an adviser from the John Moores Students' Union, a relative or a personal friend, who is with the student during proceedings. Students are responsible for making their own arrangements to have an appropriate 'friend' in attendance at proceedings.

The friend does not act as advocate for the student and the student is expected to speak on their own behalf. A friend may speak for the student without prior agreement where this would support the provision of reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010, for example, where a student may need an English Sign Language interpreter.

A person cannot act as a friend or attend a meeting in the following scenarios:

1. Where they are subject to the same complaints, allegations or related breach of University Rules and will be required to attend their own investigation meeting
2. Where it can be demonstrated that they have the potential to gain personal advantage by them being party to the matters discussed
3. Where they have the potential to be invited as an independent witness as part of the investigation process
4. Or where there is any other conflict of interest.

Students have the right to seek legal advice and may request to be accompanied at a meeting or hearing by a legal adviser such as a solicitor or other legal professional. The University asserts that these meetings or hearings are internal proceedings and while the attendance of a legal professional is not prohibited, their attendance must be in the capacity of friend as defined above.

Definition of a Trade Union Representative

The Trade Union representative is a Union member who represents or gives advice to colleagues when they have problems at work. This may include attending formal meetings or hearings with staff. If a Trade Union Representative attends a meeting with staff then they do so in the capacity of supporter and adviser to the member of staff.

<https://www.gov.uk/join-trade-union/role-of-your-trade-union-rep> .

Definition of a Student Union Representative.

The Student Union representative may be a full time Adviser or other suitably qualified Students' Union paid staff (John Moores Students' Union: <https://www.jmsu.co.uk/new-website-home/advice-at-jmsu>

They will provide help and support on a range of student related matters. This may include attending formal meetings or hearings with students. If a JMSU attends a meeting with students then they do so in the capacity as supporter and adviser to the student.

Further advice can be obtained from StudentGovernance@ljmu.ac.uk or John Moores Students' Union at JMSUadvice@ljmu.ac.uk