



## Guidance for Schools regarding communication between student representatives and students

THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

### Purpose of Guidance

Following the conclusion of a recent Senate Quality Assurance Committee task group, one of the outcomes recommended that all Schools are expected to facilitate communication between Student Representatives and the students they represent. Schools should either share with Student Representatives the University student email address of the students they represent (following the guidelines below) or facilitate alternative ways for representatives to contact all classmates e.g. via m-list.

This guidance outlines the mechanisms by which Schools should share university student email addresses or facilitate alternative ways for representatives to contact students in compliance with data protection guidelines.

### Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

This guidance applies to all administrative staff who support Student Representation processes within their School.

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### Document control

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Approved:</b> 03.09.15	<b>Starts:</b> 01.09.15	<b>Equality impact assessment:</b> 10.09.15	<b>Amendments:</b> 12.04.17	<b>Next Review:</b> 2017/18
<b>Approving authority</b>	Senate Quality Assurance Committee				
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Records Management, Student Systems				
<b>Section responsible for guidance maintenance &amp; review</b>	Academic Services				
<b>Related policies, procedures, guidelines &amp; regulations</b>	<a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/progcoursehandbooks.pdf">http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/progcoursehandbooks.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentdisclosuresv13web_0.pdf">http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentdisclosuresv13web_0.pdf</a>				
<b>UK Quality Code</b>	UK Quality Code Chapter B5 Student Engagement <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b">http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b</a>				
<b>Guidance superseded by this guidance</b>	n/a				
<b>Alternative format</b>	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
<b>Keywords</b>	Student Representation				



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### **1. Mechanisms for facilitating communication**

- 1.1 All Schools are expected to facilitate communication between student representatives and the students they represent. Schools should either share with student representatives the University student email address of the students they represent (following the guidelines below) or facilitate alternative ways for representatives to contact all classmates e.g. via m-list.
- 1.2 Schools should confirm with Student Representatives which mechanism will be used.

### **2. Mechanisms for sharing email addresses**

- 2.1 If a School decides to facilitate this communication between the Student Representative and other students by sharing University email addresses directly with the Student Representative(s), the following instructions should be followed:
  - 2.1.1 Early on in the semester, the School Teaching Office/Graduate School or equivalent should inform students that they will be sharing university student email addresses with Student Representatives and that they have an option of opting out of this.
  - 2.1.2 If any student wishes to opt out from this, they should tell the School's Teaching Office/Graduate School or equivalent. The School is responsible for removing the relevant university student email address from the list before sharing the list with the Student Representative(s).
  - 2.1.3 The Student Representative should contact the School office to request the email addresses of the students they represent.
  - 2.1.4 The School office will ask the Student Representative to confirm by reply of an email that they will comply with the data protection guidelines before being given the email addresses. The template email is attached to the end of this document.
  - 2.1.5 All emails sent by Student Representatives to students and staff regarding their role must be sent from their University student email address.
  - 2.1.6 Student Representatives will be asked to confirm that they comply with the following data protection guidelines:



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- you should only use the university student email addresses for Student Representation purposes
- you should use your university email address to get in contact with students you represent (it is not appropriate to use your personal email address)
- you should store the email addresses securely in your university email account, not on a hard drive
- you should not pass other students' University student email addresses to anyone inside or outside the University
- when sending an email you should ensure that you use the 'bcc' function to ensure that the email addresses are not shared and to ensure that other students do not reply to all
- if a student who you represent opts out of receiving emails, the School will contact you and ask that you remove the email address from future circulations and you must delete promptly the details of any student who asks you to do so.
- You will delete the email addresses when you stop being the representative for the group. (usually at the end of the course or the academic year)

2.1.7 Once the School Office have received the compliance email they can release the email addresses to the Student Representative.

### 3. Relevant policies and training information

The following policies have been updated to include information about sharing student university email addresses:

#### 3.1 Programme and Course Handbooks Policy – approved by CSPC June 2015

Updated information on Student Representation in Course/ Programme Handbooks focusing on the purpose and operation of the Student Representation system, and indicating that Schools should share students' university email address with student representatives as a matter of course and that if any student wishes to opt out from this they should contact the School's Teaching Office/Graduate School or equivalent.

#### 3.2 Policy on Disclosure of Student Information- updated June 2015

A new paragraph has been inserted stating that 'Class, programme or similar Student Representatives should receive the University email addresses only of the cohort they represent; They may use this only in their role as a Student Representative, and must delete promptly the details of any student who asks them to do so'.



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### 3.3 Student Representative training

Edinburgh University Students' Association Student Representative training now includes information explaining to students their obligations under Data Protection.

### 4. Further information

Please contact Gillian Mackintosh, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services ([Gillian.Mackintosh@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Gillian.Mackintosh@ed.ac.uk)) if you have any queries concerning this guidance.

17 August 2016



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### 5. Template Email for Schools to use

Email subject heading: **Student Representation communication compliance**

Thank you for volunteering as a Student Representative, this is a great opportunity which allows you to gather and represent the views of your fellow classmates about their studies and University life in general.

You have requested the university student email addresses of the students that you represent and to allow you to be effective in your role; there are some responsibilities that come with access to this information.

The School will release this information to you once you have confirmed by reply to this email that you will comply with the following data protection guidelines:

I agree that I will

- use the university student email addresses for Student Representation purposes
- use my university email address to get in contact with students I represent and not use my personal email address
- store the email addresses securely in my university email account, not on a hard drive
- not pass other students' University student email addresses on to anyone inside or outside the University
- ensure that when sending an email I use the 'bcc' function to ensure that the email addresses are not shared and to ensure that other students do not reply to all
- immediately delete the university student email address of any student I represent who has requested to opt out of receiving emails and will remove the email address from future circulations immediately.
- ensure that I delete the email addresses when I stop being the representative for the group. (usually at the end of the course or the academic year)

Please reply to the School Office from your University student email address to confirm that you accept these responsibilities.