6. STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND FEEDBACK

6.1 YOUR REPRESENTATION IN THE SCHOOL

The Head of School is advised directly by the School Board (which meets regularly during semester time) and by several specialist committees. Students are represented on some of these committees. The committees of most relevance to undergraduate students are the School Board, the Undergraduate Teaching Committee, the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and the Programme Committees.

The **School Board** is the official body for monitoring academic activities. It is responsible for advising the Head of School on academic matters such as changes to degree programmes. A range of other matters affecting life in the School is also discussed and there are several statutory items which must be discussed each time. The School Board usually meets four times a year.

The **Teaching Committee** oversees the provision of undergraduate and postgraduate lecture courses (course units). It is responsible for deciding which course units should be offered and monitors the content of the individual course units. The Teaching Committee meets when required, usually five times a year.

The **Staff-Student Liaison Committee** meets to discuss day-to-day problems concerning degree programmes and course units, and advise the School Board on student-related matters. The issues raised are intended to be resolved between the students and staff concerned, or by the staff representatives taking them up with members of staff not present. The Staff-Student Liaison Committee usually meets once or twice each Semester.

Feedback from students on course units and teaching has always been valued by the School, particularly for the role it plays in ensuring and enhancing the overall quality of degree provision. Staff-Student Liaison Committees provide a forum for staff and students to discuss issues relating to a degree programme or the School. They are important because:

- they provide a unique forum of staff and students for the discussion of new ideas and for solving problems;
- they form the basis for the representation of students’ views within the School;
- they are a formal means of gauging student opinion on academic matters including degree programmes and syllabuses and form part of the School’s quality assurance and enhancement procedures;
- they provide an opportunity for students to learn about and contribute to the development of quality assurance and enhancement procedures in the School.
Each degree programme has a **Programme Committee** which oversees the degree programme. The Programme Committee meets at least once each year and one of its main functions is to review the degree programme, taking into account student feedback on the organisation and functioning of the programme. The membership of each Programme Committee always includes the Programme Director.

Undergraduate student representatives sit on the School Board, the Teaching Committee and the Staff-Student Liaison Committee. The representatives are elected each year by the students. An election is usually held early in the First Semester. Details of the constituencies for this election will be announced when the election is called. Students are encouraged to contact their representatives if they have matters they wish to have raised at any of these committees.

There is usually no difficulty in getting students prepared to act in this capacity; however, there are always those who, once elected, fail to attend meetings or are unable to attend. (Meetings of the School Board are usually held on Wednesday afternoon, clashing with sporting and other commitments.) If students are to have a voice in the affairs of the School, it is essential that representatives do attend, speak and report back.

### 6.2 STUDENT FEEDBACK

We aim to offer teaching of high quality. Your views on the teaching and learning process that you have experienced are important to us, as they help us to identify areas where improvements could be made to meet the needs of our students.

All members of staff are required to distribute **student questionnaires** during the third week of lectures for each course unit. The main purpose of the Week 3 Questionnaires is to identify any serious problems with the lecture courses and put them right before it is too late.

The University issues questionnaires for each course unit and the lecturers encourage students to complete these. The results of the University questionnaires are available on the web, and are considered by the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and the Programme Committees, as well as the Quality Management Panel and the Teaching Committee. Each course unit is reviewed each year. The end of course questionnaires are included in the material used in the review of the course unit.

As mentioned in Section 2.10, if you find that a course unit is causing problems not only to you but also to your fellow students then you should first approach the lecturer concerned and discuss the problem with him/her. If this does not overcome the problem then you should inform your Academic Advisor of the difficulties and he/she will then discuss the problem with the lecturer concerned and other members of staff. If you remain unhappy with the outcome you can seek advice from your Programme Director or the Senior Tutor (Dr. R. M. Thomas, Room 1.108, Alan Turing Building), or the Director of Teaching (Dr. M. D. Coleman, Room 1.109, Alan Turing Building), or the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Dr. L. A. Walker, Room 2.243, Alan Turing Building). You can
also ask your student representative to raise the issue at the next meeting of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee.

The **National Student Survey (NSS)** is an annual survey of over 400,000 Final Year students across the UK. The School encourages students to take part in this influential survey and make their opinions heard. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete and runs from March to April each year.

Feedback from students to the NSS is important as the results from the survey are published and help prospective students to decide what and where to study. The results are also used by Universities, Colleges and Students’ Unions to identify areas for improvement. By completing the survey you will be helping future students who are thinking of applying, and contributing to improvements.

The students’ individual responses to the survey are kept strictly confidential, and all responses are anonymous to ensure individuals cannot be identified from the results.

The NSS is conducted by Ipsos MORI, an independent market research agency, and commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England on behalf of all the funding bodies.

Further information can be found on the NSS website: [http://www.thestudentsurvey.com/](http://www.thestudentsurvey.com/)