

## How to use this toolkit

### Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a learner representative, and welcome to this toolkit.

Your views and the views of other learners on your programme are very valuable to your organisation in order to help improve their services to learners. As a learner representative, you can:

- help your organisation to become better at meeting learners' needs
- influence what, how and when you learn
- influence other aspects of life as a learner – such as information and guidance services and the facilities on offer such as the canteen.

This toolkit aims to help you be more effective in your role as a learner representative. Committed learner representatives are vital to the future of our further education system. All education and training providers need learners' views to succeed, and that's where you come in. In return, you can develop your skills and knowledge and get access to training. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that you are making a real difference.

### Contents

You can jump to any parts of the toolkit by clicking on the different sections on this website.

The toolkit has four main sections:

#### 1. The basics

You are reading part of this section now. It looks at what you can gain from being a learner representative, and gives an introduction to what learner representatives do and what makes a good learning experience.

#### 2. How to be an effective learner rep

This section looks at how you can represent your whole group, how to plan a calendar for your duties and how to gather and take forward learners' views.

#### 3. Developing the skills

This section helps you improve the skills you need to act effectively, and gives you tips on giving a presentation and on writing a report. You will learn how to deal with issues of confidentiality and how to get the best out of committees.

## 4. Knowing the system

This section looks at how the system works. Whatever the type of provider you are involved with, a further education (FE) or sixth form college, a school sixth form, a community college, a training provider or a prison, you will look at the system both within your organisation and outside it. It also explains some of the jargon you might come across, and contains online links to useful places.

### Tools

The toolkit also contains a Tools section. This has downloadable resources to help you in your role. It includes:

- a poster you can put on your noticeboard to let people know you are the learner representative
- a checklist of things that learner representatives do
- a learner feedback sheet for individual learners to give their views
- a task planning sheet to help you get organised.

It also contains three questionnaires for you to complete and hand to your tutor or student leader; one if you have a one-to-one when you first start being a learner representative, one to complete when you have been a representative for a while, and another to complete when you stop being a representative. Your feedback in these questionnaires will help the staff who run the learner representatives system. If they know your views about being a learner representative they will be able to:

- improve the experience of learner representatives in future
- look at the effect of the learner representative system throughout the organisation.

### Training for course representatives

You may be provided with training to help you in your role of learner representative.

A training session for tutors to deliver to learner representatives is available. This two-hour session helps tutors to give you the knowledge that you need to be a successful learner representative. It will include information on how your organisation works and how you can get involved.

The training session can be found on the Quality Improvement Agency's Excellence Gateway at <http://excellence.qia.org.uk/>.