

Student Panel Adviser: Guidance for Applicants

These guidance notes provide information on the role of the Student Panel Adviser and how you can apply to become one. These notes also include some information on the process for the re-validation of courses at Westminster.

These notes have been written to support students interested in becoming involved in the course re-validation process as a member of a re-validation panel, and should be read before completing an application form.

WHO CAN BE A STUDENT PANEL ADVISER?

To be considered for the role of Student Panel Adviser, you must meet at least one of the criteria listed below:

- Serve as a course representative
- Serve as a representative on a College or University committee
- Be involved with [‘Students as Co-Creators’](#)

If you are currently serving as a course representative or as a representative on a College or University committee, you should be an active representative and – at a minimum – have attended a UWSU course representative training session.

The role is open to all Westminster students who meet the criteria above, including undergraduate and postgraduate students, and full-time and part-time students.¹

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in applying for the role of Student Panel Adviser, and meet the above criteria, please complete the application form and submit it to the Quality and Standards Office. The application form can be found on the [Student Panel Adviser](#) page on the University website.

All completed application forms should be submitted to the Quality and Standards Office by email: student-engagement@westminster.ac.uk. If you have any queries about the application process or are unsure if you are eligible, please contact the same email address.

¹ This does not include students on courses at partner institutions.

Student Panel Advisers will be selected by the Quality and Standards Office and the University of Westminster Students' Union jointly and will normally serve for the duration of their studies.

YOUR ROLE

A full list of the responsibilities and expectations of Student Panel Advisers is included at the end of this document, but the main things you will be expected to do are to:

- Attend an initial briefing with staff from the University's Quality and Standards Office and UWSU to learn more about the role and the re-validation process, and ask any questions you might have.
- Complete the online training module to prepare you for the role and the work involved.
- Once allocated to a re-validation panel – read the re-validation documents and identify any particular questions, issues or concerns that you wish to raise at the panel meeting.
- Attend the panel meeting and actively contribute to the discussions with students, the course team, and the other panel members.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Being a Student Panel Adviser will provide you with a unique opportunity to be directly involved in the enhancement of courses at Westminster. By representing the student perspective in the re-validation process, you will be playing an important part in making sure the academic experience of all students is continually improving.

In addition you will gain an understanding of how the course development and design process works at Westminster and you will develop your employability skills. The main employability skills you will strengthen include: critical thinking, time management, presentation, networking and communication.

Student Panel Advisers will receive a standard fee of £200 per re-validation meeting in recognition of their contribution to the re-validation process.² The Chair of the Panel and the Quality and Standards Office will be required to confirm you have attended and contributed as a Panel member before any payment is made.

WHAT IS A COURSE RE-VALIDATION?

The aim of course re-validation is to ensure that all existing courses go through a process of scrutiny to check that the course is being delivered to appropriate standards and quality, and within the University's approved regulations.

² This fee may be subject to HMRC deductions.

Course re-validation also allows the University to assure itself that the existing course will be supported by adequate resources and that the quality of the student experience will be as good as possible. Course re-validations normally happen every six years for a single course, or a group of related courses. There are three possible outcomes for a re-validation event. These are as follows:

- Course approved without time limit (i.e. course to be re-validated again in 6 years)
- Course approved for a specific period of time (less than 6 years)
- Course not approved

WHO MAKES UP THE RE-VALIDATION PANEL?

Panel Chairs are nominated by the Quality and Standards Office and must be independent of the course(s) under re-validation. They will normally be a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, or a senior member of staff from another College. Panel Chairs lead the panel, setting the context and tone for the meeting in their introduction.

Learning Teaching and Quality Representatives (LTQ) contribute to the peer scrutiny of course validation and review by providing teaching and learning expertise and are drawn from other Colleges.

Secretary/Quality and Standards Advisers are members of the Quality and Standards Office and they provide advice and guidance on a number of areas to both the course team and the panel. The Quality and Standards Adviser will also have responsibility for any meeting arrangements including confirming dates, booking a room and circulating documents.

Student Panel Advisers bring the student perspective to the process. Student Panel Advisers will be independent of the course(s) under review (i.e. you wouldn't review your own course or any course from the same College). Student Panel Advisers are expected to contribute constructively and meaningfully to the quality assurances processes by attending the panel meeting and commenting on documents.

External Advisers provide current subject specialist expertise. External Advisers receive a standard fee in recognition of their contribution to the review process.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT AS A MEMBER OF THE RE-VALIDATION PANEL?

At the course re-validation meeting the panel will first meet privately, and then will meet with the current students and/or recent graduates, as well as the course team, and where relevant may undertake a tour of the resources. They will then come to a decision about whether to approve the re-validation or not, and may also set conditions to the approval, which the course team will need to meet.

The panel meeting is attended by the Panel Chair, Secretary/Quality and Standards Adviser, LTQ Representatives, Student Panel Adviser and External Advisers. You will have an equal right as all other panel members to contribute your comments, feedback and questions.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The re-validation panel meeting will focus on a document prepared in advance called the Reflective Document. The Reflective Document will include evaluation, reflection and action planning based around the following pieces of evidence, which will normally be included in the set of papers submitted to the panel:

- Annual Monitoring reports
- Student Surveys (e.g. National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES))
- Student Feedback (including records of course committee meetings or equivalent)
- External Examiner reports

It is expected that student representatives from the course will have contributed to the Reflective Document.

The panel will also receive a copy of the programme specification, module proformas and an outline of any proposed changes. The documentation is normally submitted to the panel by the Secretary/Quality and Standards Adviser three to four weeks before the meeting takes place.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like any further information, guidance or support on the re-validation process and your role in it, please visit the [Student Panel Adviser](#) page on the website or contact student-engagement@westminster.ac.uk

Student Panel Adviser: Expectations

This document provides a summary of the responsibilities of students serving as Student Panel Advisers on course re-validation panels, and an outline of what support students can expect to receive from the University and UWSU.

THE STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO...

- Attend an initial briefing with staff from the University's Quality and Standards Office and UWSU to learn more about the role and the re-validation process, and ask any questions they might have.
- Ensure they have read the *Student Panel Adviser's Guide to Re-validation*.
- Complete the online training module to prepare them for the role and the work involved.
- Respond to any 'call for advisers' emails from the Quality and Standards Office to indicate their availability and preference to serve on a panel.
- Once allocated to a re-validation panel – read the re-validation documents and identify any particular questions, issues or concerns that they wish to raise at the panel meeting.
- Attend a pre-meeting with staff from the Quality and Standards Office (including, where possible, the panel secretary) and UWSU to discuss the documents and prepare for the panel meeting.
- Attend the panel meeting and actively contribute to the discussions with students, the course team, and the other panel members.
- Submit the fee claim form after the panel meeting takes place and complete the anonymous feedback survey.

THE UNIVERSITY AND UWSU ARE EXPECTED TO...

- Arrange an initial briefing to introduce the role and the re-validation process.
- Ensure that students are provided with a copy of/link to the *Student Panel Adviser's Guide to Re-validation*.
- Ensure that students are directed to the online training module.
- Provide prompt and clear advice to students in response to any questions they may have about the role or the re-validation process.
- Arrange a pre-meeting with the student to discuss the documents and prepare for the panel meeting.
- Process the fee claim form promptly, once received.