Student representation, engagement and their ability to make change within higher education institutions

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Aims

- Highlight effectiveness of student engagement within HEIs and provide examples
- Raising awareness of and participation in graduate attributes
- Discuss how to engage students and staff in process

Themes

- Developing graduate attributes
- Supporting success with student diversity
- Enhancing the curriculum
- Using technology to support learning

Glasgow University Students' Representative Council

- Over 125 years old
- All students are members
- 4 sabbatical officers, President + welfare, education and communication officers
- Increase of activities since early 2000s
- Largest amount of class reps in Scotland – c600
- Elected council of c45 members

GUSRC

2004 ELIR

- "the team would suggest that **enhancement of the partnership** between the University and its students might benefit from **establishing clear channels of communication** in the critical links between the University and the Students' Representative Council (SRC), and between the SRC and the student body that it represents"
- "the University and the SRC might wish to reflect upon how they could most effectively work together **to help sustain a partnership that actively contributes** to the development of **policy for the enhancement of student learning**."

2010 ELIR

- "**clear evidence of a strong and effective partnership** between the SRC and the University, which has developed significant developments in policy and provision, all of which **contribute positively** to the student experience at Glasgow"
- "It is evident that the partnership approach between the University and The SRC has been **productive in delivering a range of enhancements** to provision and practice. Examples of the successful outcomes of this partnership approach include: work on a Code of Practice on Student Representation and Guidance for the operation of staff; student liaison committees; the review of the Advisors of Studies system; the development of policies on a range of matters, including the late submission of coursework; a harassment policy and maternity, paternity and carer policy for students; and a student diary"

Why participate?

- Student engagement can benefit all

Previous successes

- Late submission policy

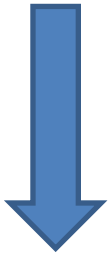
  -Widespread inconsistency around penalties for late submission

  -Ensures fairness, consistency and guidance

- Carers policy
  - Follows maternity policy, also developed by GUSRC.
  - Identifies how students with caring responsibilities should be supported
  - Unique in UK, now being adapted across other institutions

Challenges

- Variation in levels of candidates for SRC council positions
- Little connection between class reps and SRC council members
- Lack of PG representation



Problems being missed?

Restructuring

- University restructuring allowed SRC to produce more cohesive structure
- 4 UG and 4 PG convenors
- 19 school reps
- **Class Reps → School reps → Convenors → Sabbaticals**
- More communication, and awareness of who represents them

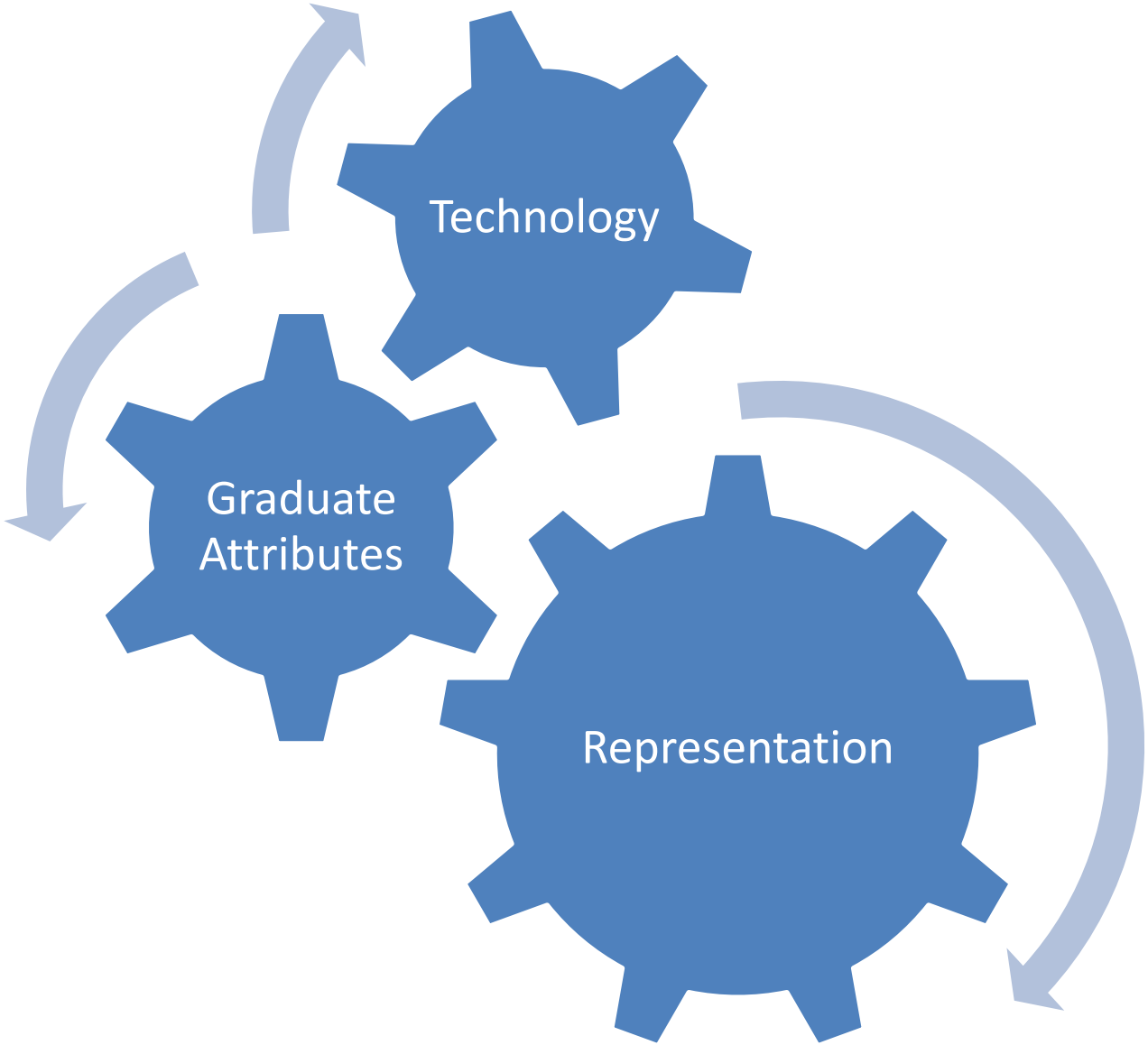
Impact 2011/12

- More information on areas of university not following guidelines
- Lecture recording
- Increased awareness of areas where class reps not being supported
- More peer support – facebook discussion etc
- More people putting themselves forward for election
- More informed class reps, spreading information amongst classmates
- **Snowball effect – more engagement and awareness**

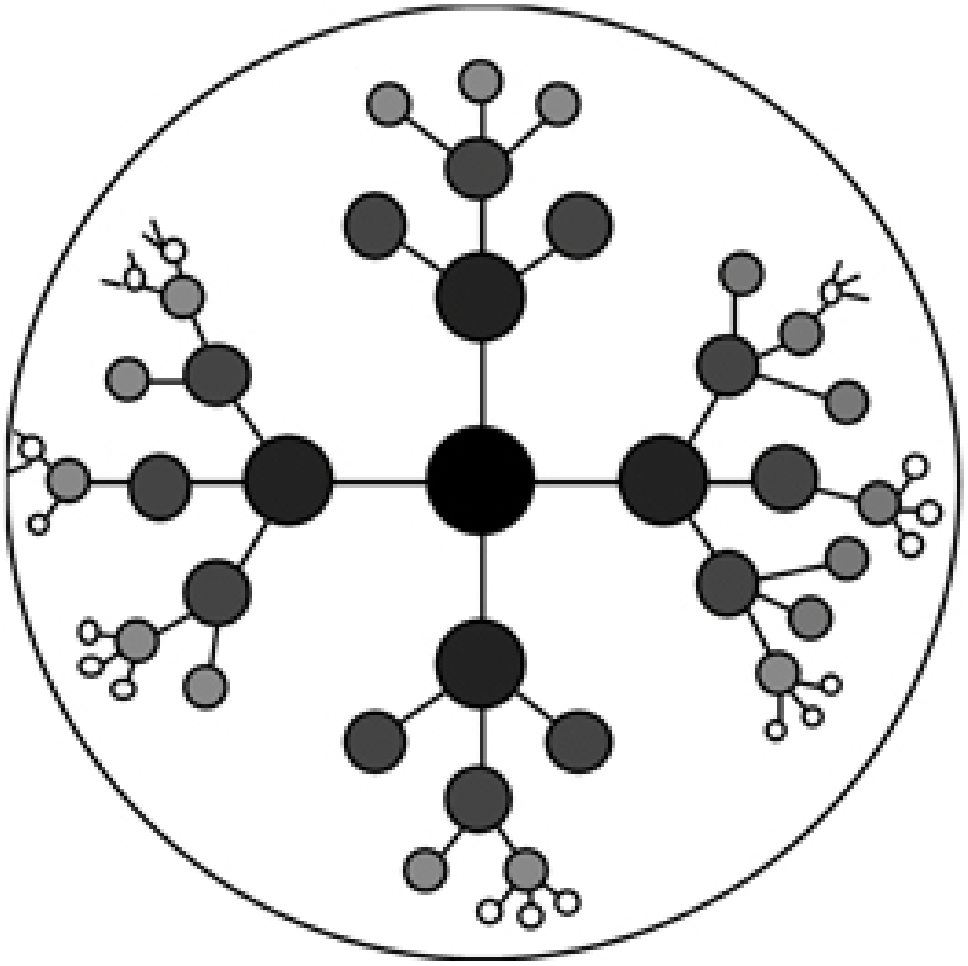
Graduate Attributes

- More representatives are gaining skills and attributes that will help them in life after university
- SRC reps also engaged in spreading information on graduate attributes, working in partnership with university
- Website, class rep training, HEAR

Hera – College of Social Sciences



Representation



Senate

College

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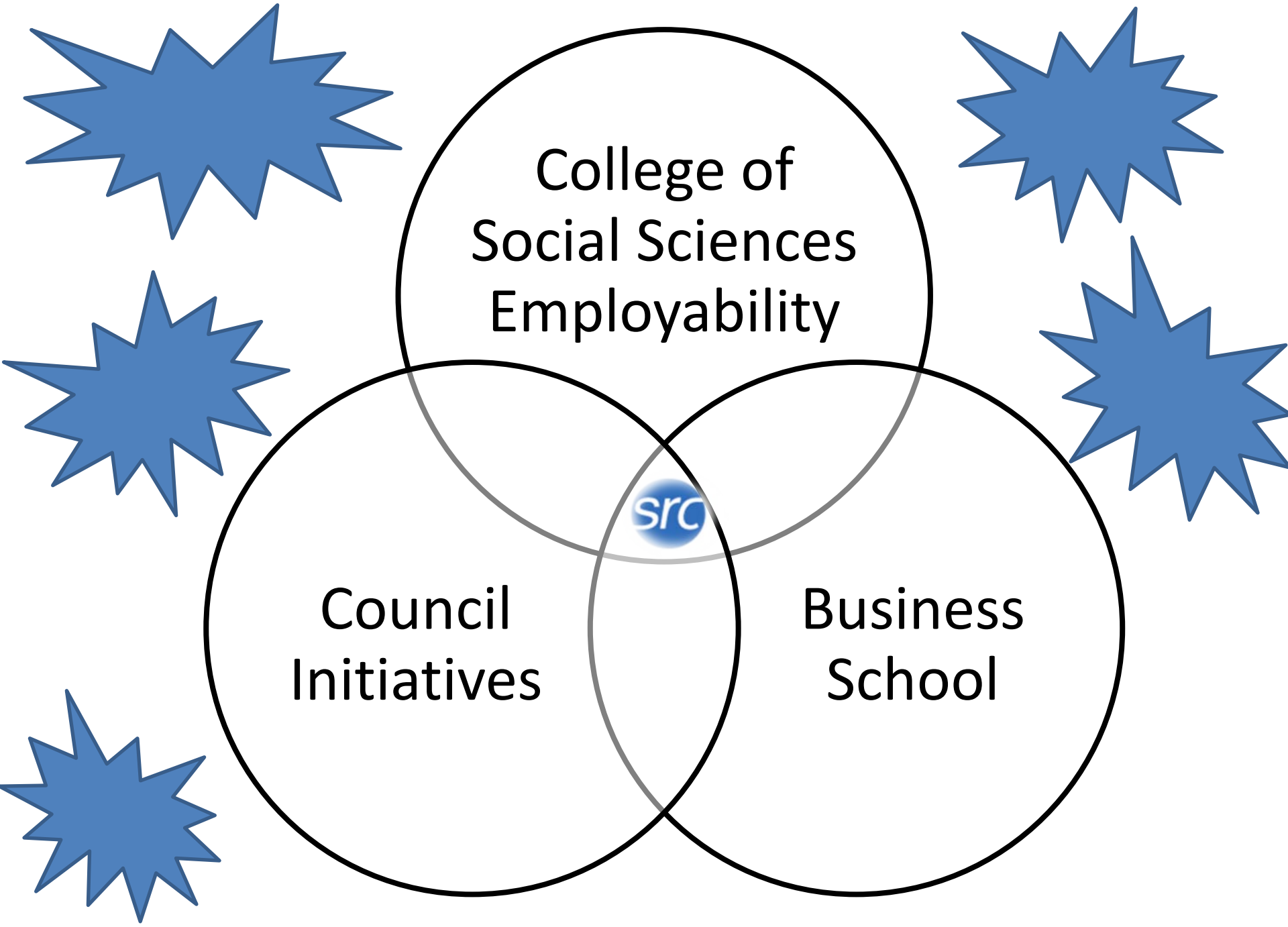
Graduate Attributes


College of
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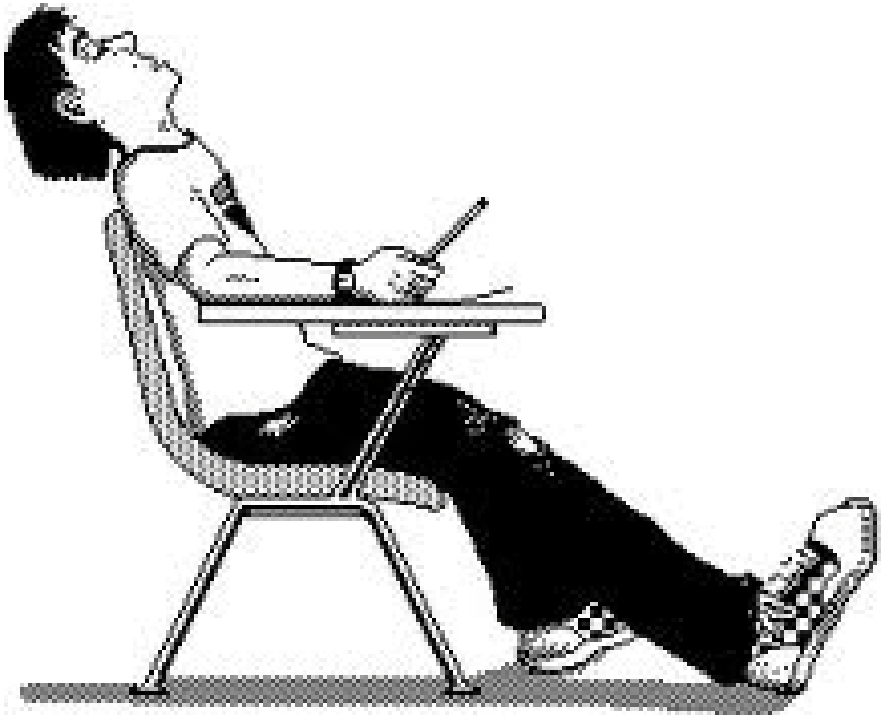
Why Technology?

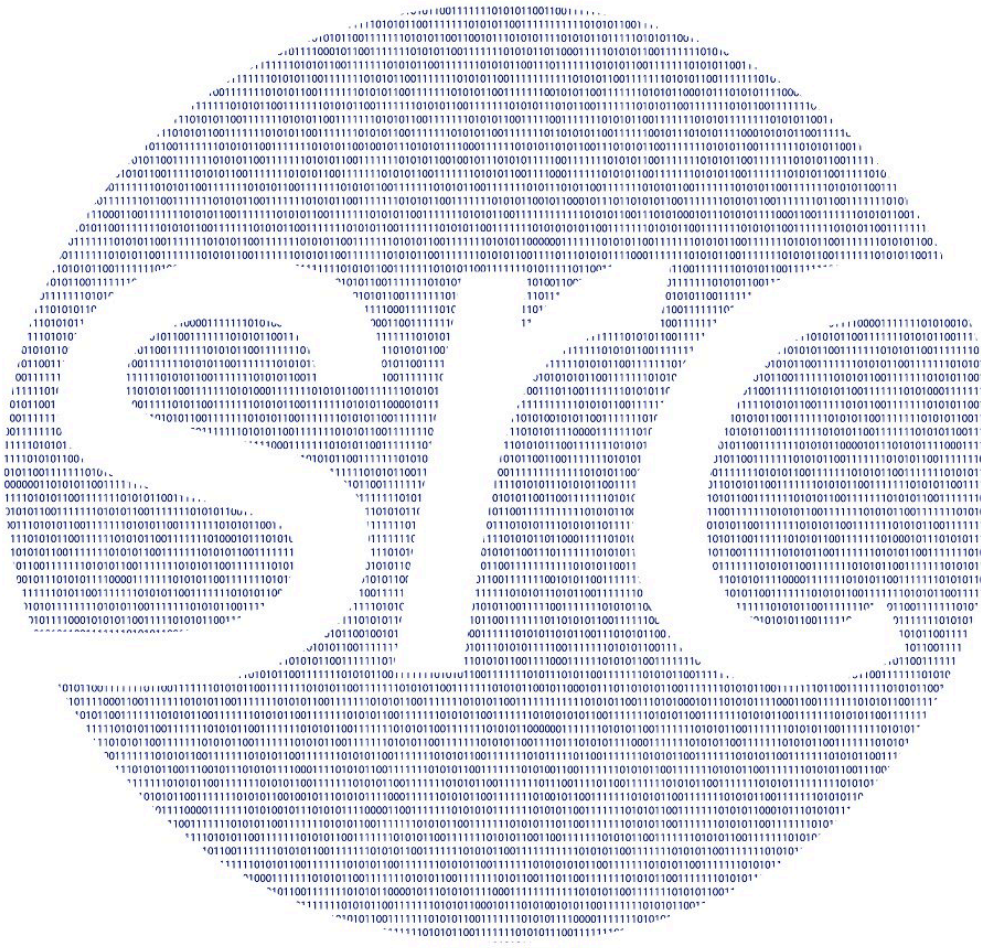
Technology and Learning

- Podcasts
- Alternative routes to job hunting
- Building online resources for students
- Communicating with students through social media



Dave Walker

School of Life Sciences Representative



Representation

- Academic representative – attend GUSRC meetings for Life Sciences
- Responsible for liaising with Class Representatives – first point of contact; CV writing, Careers Fair, laser pointer/background
- Feed information back to College Convenors/GUSRC

Curriculum Enhancement

- Attend School-level Education Committees five times per year - “valuable insight from students” on new courses, changes, feedback

- Staff-Student Liaison Committees – for each course, class reps & course co-ordinator, feedback

Curriculum Enhancement

- Periodic Subject Review – student representative, focus mainly on student-centred issues, recommendations

- Programme Approval Groups – looking at proposals as sole student. Students are co-creators

Discussion

- www.glasgowstudent.net
- www.twitter.com/gusrc
- www.facebook.com/glasgowuniversitysrc