

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE HANDBOOK

What does your new role entail
and what is expected from you?




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1. Samhällsvetarkåren: Organisational Structure

Samhällsvetarkåren is the student union for all social science students at Lund University. This means that you cannot choose which student union you want to be a part of - each student union is connected to their faculty. Of all student unions at Lund University, we have the widest-ranging faculty with 10 departments, 2 centres and 1 unit at the faculty - which means we also have many ways to become active and influence the educational and social environment for students just like you!



See the organisational map on next page.
It displays an overview of
how the responsibilities
are distributed.

**Have you spotted your
(new) role already?**

Members

As a member in Studentlund you are also a member in Samhällsretarkåren and are therefore allowed to vote and candidate in our elections as well as take part in our events.

Student Representatives

The RA appoints positions of trust which means that a student is elected to be the voice of all Social Science students in various department and faculty boards or groups.

Representative Assembly

The Representative Assembly (RA) consists of students elected by the Student Union's members and is the highest decision-making body.

Sections

Samhällsretarkåren has three sections which work with similar matters as the Student Union, but mostly in a smaller scale and towards a specific group of students.

- Interdisciplinary Section Pluto
- Helsingborgssektionen Agora
- Socionomsektionen

The Nominating Council

The Nominating Council interviews candidates and nominates a candidate per position.

The Election Committee

The Election Committee markets and organizes the election to the RA, presents the candidates and counts the votes.

The Board

The board is elected by and is preparatory for the RA. The board works closely with the fulltimers and deals with questions close to the student unions' operative work.

The Fulltimers

Five students elected by the RA work fulltime during one year at Samhällsretarkåren.

2. Departments

The faculty of social sciences consists of the following 12 sections:

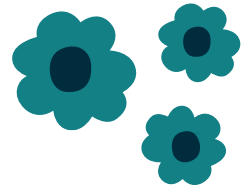
- 🌸 Gender studies
- 🌸 Graduate school
- 🌸 Human geography
- 🌸 LUCSUS
- 🌸 Media and communications
- 🌸 Political science
- 🌸 Psychology
- 🌸 Service management
- 🌸 Social work
- 🌸 Sociology of law
- 🌸 Sociology
- 🌸 Strategic communication

Committees and (Study) Councils

At Lund University, students have the opportunity to influence their education and are encouraged to do so. As a student representative, you can influence your course syllabi, literature lists, pedagogics, equality, work- and study environments, quality and a lot more.

There are different groups in the different departments but below you can read about the most common groups. At <https://www.samvetet.org/departments-2021> you can find all groups of each department.

Department board



All departments have a department board, which is the highest decision making body of a department. Among other things, the department board decides on guidelines for the department's activities and use of resources, analyses the results, and ensures that the resources are used efficiently and decides on matters submitted to the department board.

JLM-group/Equality group

Almost all departments have a group that discusses and works with matters related to equality, equal treatment, and diversity.

Although the name of the group varies at each department, all groups shall function as a preparatory body for the department board with the task of inventorying, monitoring, and informing about gender equality, equal treatment, and other related diversity issues that are relevant to the departments.

Course syllabus committee

The course syllabus group's task is to review and comment on all course syllabus that are to be submitted to the department board for decision. Course syllabi are a legal binding document and contain regulations regarding the specific course, and state what level the course is giving in, number of credits, objectives, specific entry requirements and how the course is examined.

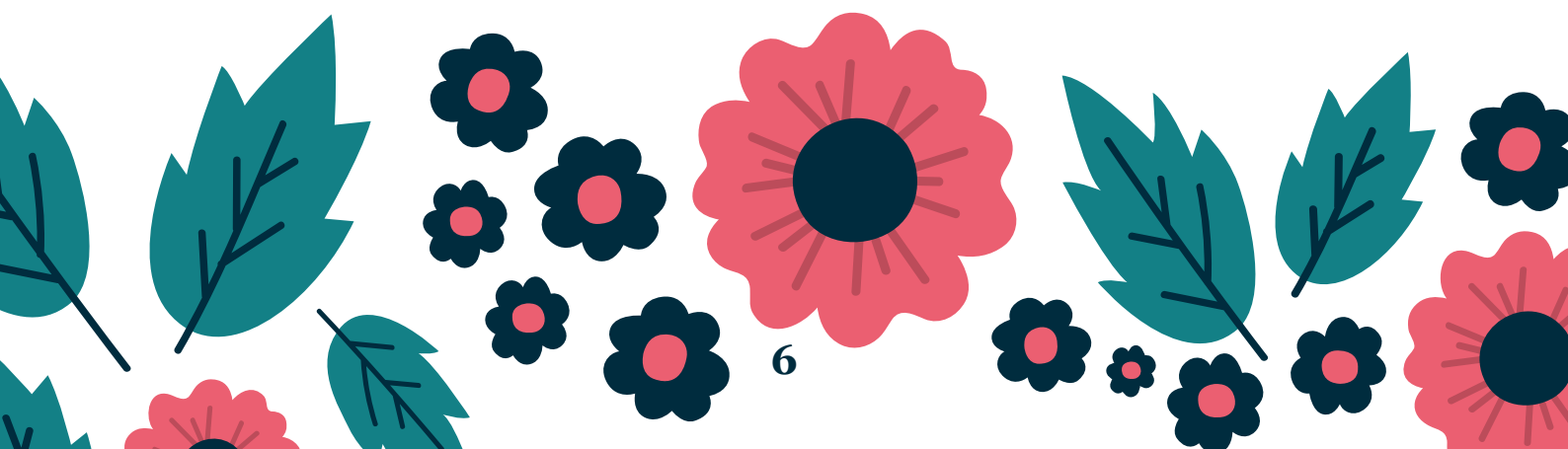
Steering group for program

All interdisciplinary programs have a steering group, in which you discuss matters that are relevant to the program. It can range from questions regarding admissions, credits of previous studies, establishing of program-specific syllabus or course literature to matters regarding the quality of the program or specific courses of the program.

Study council

All departments (including centres and unites) should have a study council. A study council gathers all student representatives at that department to discuss what is happening at the department and what you and your fellow peers wish to see done differently. Since the study councils are a big part of anchoring issues, it is important that you as a student representative, are attending these study councils meetings.

The study council is a great place to seek answers if you or your peers have any study related questions or issues. If it happens to be so that your department does not have a study council, you should contact the presidial responsible for general faculty matters in order to help with starting one.





3. Importance

Why do we have student representatives?

The short answer is that we are ought to have student representatives according to the law. It obliges us to be a student union, but this goes hand in hand with what we believe in. Namely, that the Social Sciences Student Union believes in the fact that student influence is not only a right, but it is also vital for the quality of the student environment and education, but also for it to be democratic.

“A student union must have as primary motive to monitor and take part in the development of the education and the prerequisites for studies at the university.”

(Chapter 4, §9 Högskolelagen)

“The students have the right to be represented when decisions that matter for the education or the situation of the student are taken or prepared.”

(Chapter 2, §7 Högskolelagen)

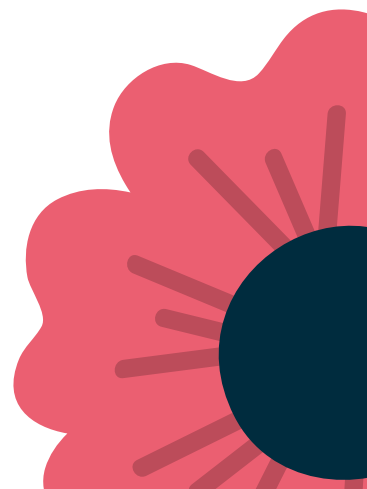
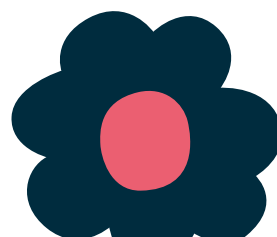
4. What is Expected From a Student Representative?

4.1 Main responsibilities

Your responsibility is to represent the students opinions and perspectives when decisions are made or prepared in the body that you are elected in. You are expected to speak for your peers and defend their interests, which should be in accordance with the student union's opinion programme. Also, you are expected to attend the meetings for your study council, which consists of the student representatives at your department and are led by a chairperson.

4.2 How to prepare for a meeting

You will receive the meeting documents around five days before the meeting takes place. It is important that you read the documents and think about how the different suggestions affect the students. A recommendation is that you read the meeting documents as soon as possible so you have time to ask your fellow students, your study council or the presidial responsible for general faculty matters about their opinions or advice. If you have something you want to bring up on the meeting it is important that you send it in on forehand so that the other members have a chance to read and think about your topic.

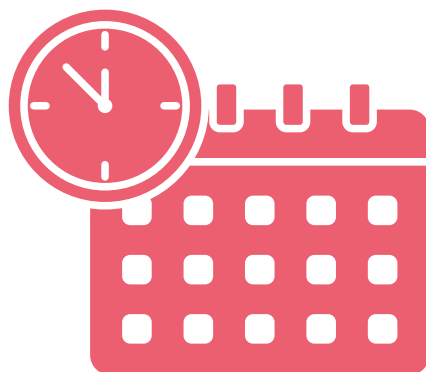


You are advised to consult with your fellow students in order to find out what topics and/or issues they would like to have addressed. You are also advised to collect their input, which can be done through whatever means you find suitable (e.g., your class Facebook page).






4.3 Time commitment

Depending on what group you are a representative in, you will attend a different amount of meetings. For the department boards you should expect to attend around 3 meetings per semester that will each take around 3 hours. The study councils meet approximately once per month for a total of two hours.

In addition, you will need to take the time to read the meeting documents sent out prior to each meeting and prepare for the meeting (i.e., consult with peers, see 4.2). The time commitment for the latter can vary and depends on the person, however, you can expect this to be approximately 2 hours.



4.4 Good things to know

-  Student representatives are the only ones who have the mandate to speak on behalf of their fellow students.
-  You can find the student union's opinions on different matters in the Opinion programme, available at our website www.samvetet.org/documents.
-  Student representatives are elected at the spring Representative Assembly meeting for a full school year (July to June). If a position is not filled, it could be by-elected later on by the student union board. If you are elected as a student representative and wish to resign, you should email pres.fak@samvetet.lu.se.
-  In order to stay a student representative for another school year, you need to apply for the position when it is re-announced in the spring.
-  As a student representative you will receive the call for meetings and other information to your email through a function email, for example: instrep.svet@samvetet.lu.se. The function email reaches all the student representatives in the same body, as well as the presidial responsible for general faculty matters.



What is the difference between an ordinary member and an alternate member?

Normally, only the ordinary student representatives have the right to attend the meetings with the department or faculty. The alternates only go in their place. However, some groups work differently and you will have to ask when beginning the work how it works in your group.

Depending if you are an ordinary or alternate member, you should always read the meeting documents and be prepared to discuss the matters with the other student representatives and attend the meeting if needed. You should also attend the meetings with your study council, if you are a student representative at department level, and the education council meetings, if you are a student representative at faculty level.



What is a mandate period?

The mandate period runs from 1st July - 30th June. However, the work doesn't start until the fall semester begins and ends at the end of the spring semester. Normally, you get elected at the Representative Assembly meeting in May, but if there are vacant positions you can be by-elected by the student union's board during the year. Regardless, when you are elected the mandate period is always the same. So even if you were by-elected in January the mandate period ends last of June.



4.5 Where to seek support

The presidial responsible for general faculty matters is responsible for coordinating the student representatives and supporting them, you could always contact this person for help. You can also turn to your study council and/or its chairperson for support, especially when it comes to specific questions regarding your department.

The members of the student union have also agreed on an Opinion Programme, in which you find the student unions on different matters, the Opinion Programme can be found on www.samvetet.org/documents. For guidance on student matters, you can find support in the Student list of rights (i.e., Rättighetslistan).

There's a specific Facebook group that gathers all of the student representatives across the departments, where events and general information relevant for your position will be posted. Meaning that you can also ask questions or discuss different matters in this group. Please join it by following this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2256493614674904/>

Additionally, there's a Facebook group for all active members at the student union, which means everyone holding an internal position of trust and/or is active within the labour market and event committee is able to join and is encouraged to do so. You are able to find it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/139140793402777/>



4.6 Tips from those previously in the role

- 🌸 It's okay not to say so much at your first meetings.
- 🌸 Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- 🌸 Make sure to read the meeting documents that are sent out beforehand. Write to the one in charge for the meeting if they have not been sent to you.

4.7 Expectations

The expectation of you as a student representative is that you go to the meetings, read the student union's steering documents and opinion program, read the meeting documents, and communicate with the other student representatives.

If you are an ordinary member and can't attend a meeting we expect you to contact the alternate member in good advance. Always remember that you represent all the students at your department, and not yourself.



4.8 What do you get back?

As a student representative you are responsible for a very important task of the student union; to monitor and improve the education. Throughout the year, you will continuously get information and education from the student union about how to work in your group, strengthen student rights and create change.

For example, we organise brunches a few times per semester where you will meet other student representatives and listen to an interesting speaker. These educations are formed based on the interests and needs of the student representatives.



As a token of our gratitude, you are counted as an active member of the Social Sciences Student Union. You'll be invited to our thank-you activities such as sittningar, parties, Christmas dinners, and more. You'll get access to Samvetet (i.e., club house) and can come there whenever you feel like it. For example, during the day to eat lunch, study, hang out or work on your tasks as a student representative. By becoming a student representative, you become part of the student union community, meet and get to know other involved people.

As an active member, you will receive an active kit, which includes a golden pin, a notebook, a pen, a songbook and a tote bag. You get this kit at your first thank-you gesture for joining us. At the end of your mandate period, you will also receive a medal and an invitation to our annual ball 'Samhällsvetarbalen'.

4.9 Consequences for not doing the role well

If a student representative fails to fulfill the requirements above, then they may not be reelected and lose their status and privileges as an active member.

