**Identifying the educational development needs of elected sabbatical officers with a remit for supporting teaching and learning**

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Students’ unions are an established feature of the HE landscape. They are usually comprised of a combination of sabbatical officers elected to lead the union and represent the student body, and permanent staff which provide day-to-day delivery and strategic support. Traditionally, students’ unions operated alongside, or in parallel to the HE provider, however, following moves to enhance student engagement in HE, and the greater emphasis on student voice, closer working relationships are emerging between HE providers and their students’ unions. On matters relating to teaching and learning, often this collaborative working is centred on the Education Officer, the elected sabbatical officer who has the remit for academic representation, education and or student experience. The purpose of this study was to gain contemporary insights into the roles and responsibilities of education sabbatical officers in order to identify their educational development needs. Two national surveys were undertaken to capture data around roles and responsibilities of Education Officers, their prior experience, training and support, methods of communication they used, campaigning and project work Education Officers undertook. Survey 1 was targeted at Education Officers, and survey 2 designed to be completed by permanent students’ union staff.

The data demonstrates that Education Officers undertake a broad portfolio of activities working with a range of stakeholders across an institution. In particular the surveys provided valuable insights surrounding the training and support needs of Education Officers. Training appears to be led by the institutional students union with NUS activities also playing a significant role. However, increasingly the Education Officer is working in partnership with their university, and considerable time is dedicated to university-led committees, indicating the potential need for training to undertake this aspect of their role confidently. Mentoring and coaching appear to have been the most valuable source of training and support used. Ensuring such provision is maintained, and even extended, is a clear recommendation of this work, and identifying key players to undertake such work, who are also adequately prepared is essential.