

Guide for student representatives & student safety representatives



Linnaeus University is a large organization with around 2200 employees and approximately 160 different forums that develop and decide on matters which affects almost 22000 students and PhD students (who are also students). The Linnaeus Union is driven by students at Linnaeus university with approximately 4000 members, one board consisting of 11 students and 7 civil servants. The Linnaeus union represents all students at Linnaeus university and one of the main purposes of the union is education inspection and advocacy work.

Students have often needed to fight for the right to influence, but the Swedish higher education act states that we have the right to be represented in every developing and deciding forums that make decisions which affects the education or students' situation. The students' role is double – as participants of courses and programs, but also as critics and advancers of the educational development. To have student representatives is one of the largest, and perhaps most important, possibilities students have regarding student-influence and advocacy work!

The purpose of this guide is to provide knowledge regarding what it means to be a student representative and prepare you for the assignment.

We hope that you find it rewarding and wish you good luck in your important role as student representative!

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Student representation

The students that participate in the university's developing and deciding forums are called student representatives and are appointed by the student union since they represent their fellow students. The tasks are to, by mandate from the student union, lead the students' voice and assent to the students' interests in the discussions and decisions taken during the meeting.

The most common is for a student to choose to become a student representative in a forum connected to that which they study, e.g., a programme council or an employment board.

The forum, or organ, that the student representative participates in affects which questions that may be treated. It occurs that there is news regarding the students' education, for example that a course suddenly is removed. This is a manner of decision taken by a forum where the students could have had a student representative to argue for, or against, the decision but also inform fellow students, educational associations, or the union regarding what is going on. In such ways, the students can make a difference!

As a student you are both a co-actor in your education, but most importantly, you are responsible for your education—you have the right to affect it!

How do I become a student representative?

You who want to be a student representative fill in our application form on our website. Every month the board has a board meeting where they decide on appointing and dismissing student representatives. You who have applied will get notified, at the earliest, the same month or otherwise with a month's delay. When the board has decided, you who have applied will be contacted with an answer. If you are appointed, the convening person will also be contacted to confirm that there now is a student representative who needs to be invited to the meetings. You are appointed for the duration of a year and may apply again or resign your duties by contacting us.

How much work is it?

The workload may vary from assignment to assignment. It is common that a program advice meets two times per semester with minor preparations, a syllabus committee may have more requirements on preparations in the form of reading up on material, and a faculty board treat questions regarding the whole faculty och thus require more comprehensive knowledge of the faculty compared to a program advice. Our heads of educational matters can often give more detailed answers so do not hesitate to ask.

Do I need experience in working in a board?

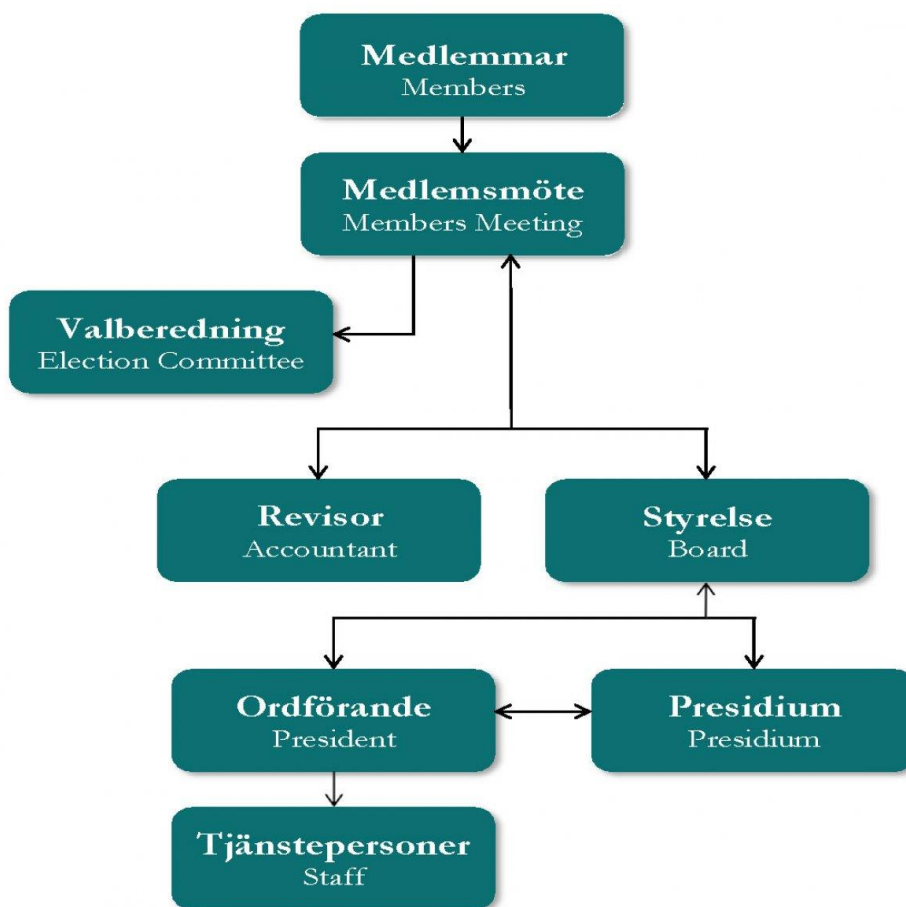
No, you do not. All students at the Linnaeus university can apply for student representative, it does not matter if you are a new student or a PhD student. What matters are the prerequisite knowledge or level of studies that are beneficial as student representatives for, e.g., supervising committees. Vi usually encourage the students to relate to the forum they are applying for.

Do I get paid?

Yes! To be a student representative is a remunerated assignment and the compensation is in accordance with a separate vice-chancellor decision. The compensation includes preparation work, meeting time and post-work. You must fill out a form for each month and hand it in to the university – this you can get help with from the convener or secretary of the body you are a representative in.

Travel allowance is paid for travel between the university's campus locations. Travel must be in accordance with the university's travel policy.

Linnaeus Union



The student union, Linnaeus Union, represents all approximately 33000 students at the Linnaeus university and work for the best possible education and study time for them as possible. As a student union, we are the students' voice in both the university board and towards society. Anyone can turn to us if they need advice, support or have been mistreated by the university.

A large part of our work consists of providing a student perspective on different questions regarding the students' education and other aspects of the student situation.

On our website (www.linnek.se) you can learn more about us, what we work with and our student politics. As a student, you can also read about your rights and obligations, aspects that can be beneficial to be aware of when working as a student representative.

Members

On a regular year, the Linnaeus union has approximately 4000 members which makes us one of the largest student unions in Sweden. The members use their power indirectly by voting in the union election where they appoint the board members for the upcoming operating year. They can also affect directly by participating in the members meetings.

Although, you do not have to be a member of the union to influence as a student representative, but it is highly appreciated to support the work we do by becoming a member.

The board

The Linnaeus union board consists of the presidium and part time board members. The presidium consists of the president, two heads of educational matters and two heads of student social matters, which are full-time employees. This work is full-time where the heads of educational matters focus on student representation. The part time board members are also encouraged to work as student representatives.

On questions regarding student politics and which questions that may be important to you as a student representative to be aware of and run, you can contact the full-time members.

Staff officials

Apart from the presidium and the board, Linnaeus union has employed staff officials responsible for the ongoing operations. The student representatives often have contact with our two student- and PhD student agents, one of which having large focus on administrating the registry of student representatives.

Student politics

Linnaeus union has an elaborate student politic that we manage in many ways. On our website, and in this guide, is our opinion document filled with a large amount of our opinions. As a student representative there is no need for you to learn all of these, but it can be beneficial to know how to find them. These are opinions that the union have and work for, some of them are implemented by the university, some are not.

The student politics permeate the unions work and we work for the students to have the best possible study time, both in and outside of their studies. It is about every student having the right to be treated equally and receive the education they are entitled to. A large quantity of the unions work is dedicated to affect the education and students' situation, hence the need for opinions and goals.

Following is a summary of the most important questions, all student politics, however, can be found in the Linnaeus union's opinion document located on our website. The Linnaeus union demands:

Education

- That the university should have a well-functioning quality review system as a complement to the national review system.
- That students should be active and participating in the quality work.
- That every education holds the same high standard regardless of if it is given at full- or half speed or on distance.
- That teachers and PhD students hold a high pedagogical competence and have received pedagogical education.
- That a formal university education or experience ought to be prioritized and meritorious when hiring teachers.
- That the university pursues a varied gender distribution and diversity in the teacher staff.
- That students studying full speed should have at least 15 hours of teacher contact per week and corresponding for part-time studies.
- That students have the right for feedback on submissions and examinations within 15 working days.
- That the university should work for integration between foreign exchange students and Swedish students.
- To actively work for students having access to exchange studies.
- That the degree certificates are internationally available.
- That potential preparatory tests in connection to exchange studies are free of charge.
- That the university, when following up on a student caught cheating, examine why and in potential problems help the student as far as possible.
- That the university handles errands regarding cheating urgently.
- That the personal at the Linnaeus university reports to the disciplinary board when suspecting cheating.
- That the university upholds a sustainability certificate within its organization.
- That the university has existing routines regarding managing digitally sharing material.

Student influence

- To, based on course evaluations and course plan, make sure that every course is evaluated and followed up as foundation for future development of the education.
- That course evaluations are made anonymously.
- That prior course evaluations for the current course are made available for the students no later than the course start date.
- That every course responsible partakes in an education regarding course evaluations.
- That all course evaluations are made available in connection to the course plan.
- That course evaluations are made in every course, and that every participant in a course is given the opportunity to fill in the course evaluation.
- That students have the right to have their examination and grade re-examined by an independent examiner.

- That there are clear, binding, grade criteria.
- That the students' influence must be guaranteed by the university.
- That the university has a responsibility to inform the student union of what student representative assignments are available.
- That the students are represented in every deciding and preparatory forum.
- That student representatives should have clear information regarding whom to contact with questions regarding their assignment.
- That there is at least one student protection representative per faculty.
- That the university takes responsibility over the students' physical and psychosocial work environment.
- That students and personal are given the opportunity to participate in the work environment work on equal terms.

Everyone's equal value

- That equality and diversity are embedded in every function of the university.
- That all students have the same terms to be able to finish their degree.
- That no student is discriminated during their studies at the university.
- That the university actively works with equal terms.
- That the university has accessible premises.
- That students, because of disabilities, in need of accompaniment, translator, or similar aid are to receive it.
- That there is easily accessible and free help for those students in need of it during their study time.
- That the university continuously work with improving their methods for expanded recruitment.
- That the university clearly communicates where the students should turn to if they need advice and support.

An including student life

- That the student health office is granted the resources needed to guarantee students' wellbeing.
- That the staffing of the student health office is proportional against the demanded need.
- That there are student-based gatherings for study social purposes.
- That drug-free activities are a given within the study social activities.
- That a well-functioning student life presumes good possibilities for students to engage and organize.
- That the climate on the study locations should be open, welcoming and including to promote cooperation between associations, but also to the student union.
- That the student union enables good contact between associations and the university.

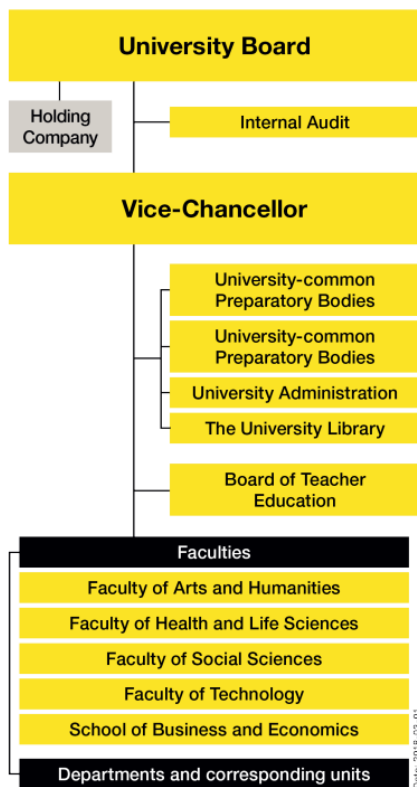
Students social status

- That students should be offered student housing within a month of the semester's start.
- That the municipalities of each study location are responsible for the number of student accommodations is proportional to the demand and need.
- That an extensive and well-functioning housing guarantee is available on every study location.
- That the rent of a student accommodation does not exceed a third of the Swedish student finance, i.e. grants and loans for studies (provided by CSN)
- That every student accommodation offers a reasonable living standard.
- That the rules regarding the study grant and its design should be generous and show consideration for students varying living situations.
- That there ought to be a fair balance between the grant- and loan part of the study grant.
- That the study grant should provide every student with a reasonable living situation by covering their actual expenses.
- That the students should have equal social rights and protection as gainful workers.
- That the working environment at the university as a study location ad home holds a good standard.

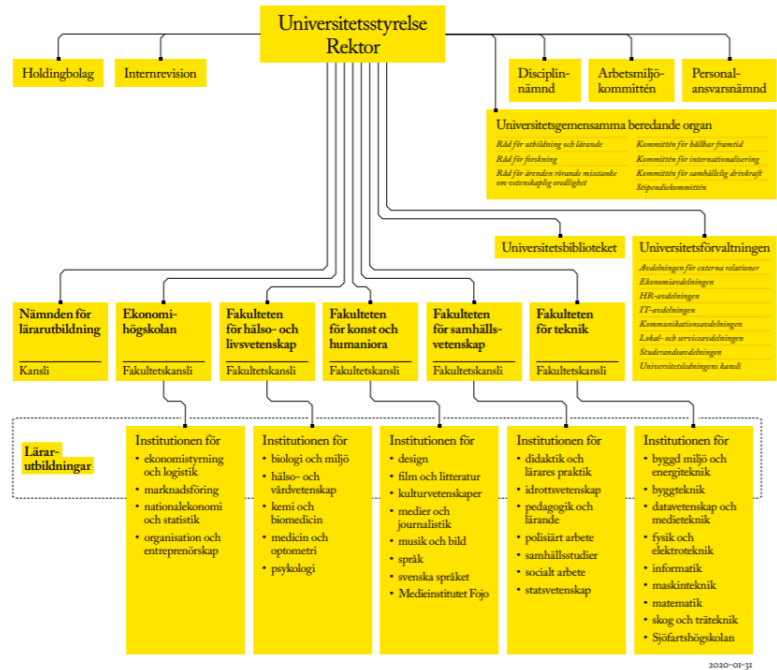
PhD education

- That PhD students can influence the choice of head- and assistant supervisor.
- That a PhD student who wishes to change supervisor has a real possibility to do so.
- That every supervisor has completed a tutoring education.
- That PhD students whose studies are funded through scholarships or educational grants should have rights to the same social insurance system as employed PhD students.
- That every PhD student should have the possibility to finish their education within a predetermined time frame. Extending the education should be provided in cases with lacking research environments or tutoring.

Linnaeus university



Linnéuniversitetets organisation



At the university, there are numerous preparing and deciding forums where students, through the higher education act and higher education regulation, have the right to give their influence and participate in as members. A forum is an umbrella term for groups, committees, councils etc.

The university's organization is built in different levels. The Linnaeus union is often more acquainted with the higher levels such as university comprehensive forums and faculties. Therefore, it is important that students representing the lower levels provide feedback to the union for us to gain insight and be able to affect every level of the university. Following is a summarized and comprehensive information map of the levels of most interest for a student representative to be aware of.

Programme council

The majority of those working as student representatives are located in *programme councils*. At the university, there are no regulations regarding how a programme council is supposed to be built up and can therefore differ greatly from council to council. The programme councils often focus on a program and to ensure the quality of that program. Although, it is on a program level that you often notice the university's quality system in practice.

They are often led by a *program coordinator*; it is also common that some active teachers partake in the council as well as external parts interested in further developing a program.

Faculties

A faculty consists of several departments whose courses, programmes and research share similarities with each other. At Linnaeus university, there are five faculties¹ and then also the Board of Teacher Education.

The faculty is led by the *dean* who can be seen as the chief of the faculty. The faculty level is the second highest level (the highest is the vice-chancellor) meaning that the questions are very large to cover every subject area. You can, however, affect a great number of educations if you choose to get involved with the questions.

Forums on faculty level are, amongst others, dean decisions, faculty board, employment board, syllabus committee, and education board. Linnaeus union is often more involved in faculty questions since that is where we make the most impact. Linnaeus union also encourage the education association's board members to get involved on this level to get a better view of the educations within their association.

Departments

One or several similar subjects together form a department. A department is often led by a head of department who has a personnel responsibility, budget responsibility, and work environment responsibility. The heads of department have a head of department council where it is important to have student representatives. Some of the faculties have separate heads of department councils and some have jointly. The ones that are separated are difficult for Linnaeus union to gain insight. The questions are larger than the ones at a programme council but with it comes a larger opportunity to affect larger aspects of the education or the students' situation.

There are head of department councils, department councils, educational councils (etc.) that all operate under the head of department and the department.

Vice chancellor

The vice-chancellor of the university is the deans' boss but also the other teachers' highest boss. The vice-chancellor, however, seldom focus on individual since many aspects are delegated to the faculties who then delegate further working tasks.

Strategic questions regarding the university's long-term operation are often times decided by the *University Board*. This group is led by an external chairperson appointed by the government, as are the *external board members* from the business life. Additionally, the vice-chancellor, three teacher representatives, and three student representatives appointed by the student union are also part of the university board.

¹ School of Business and Economics = FEH
The Faculty of Health and Life sciences = FHL
The Faculty of Arts and Humanities = FKH
The Faculty of Social Sciences = FSV
The Faculty of Technology = FTK

Syllabus committee

Each faculty has a syllabus committee where they prepare new- or revised syllabi. A syllabus is a legally binding document, making it even more important that they follow local- and national rules and regulations. After being prepared by the committee, the syllabi are returned to the department to be approved on a head of department council or dean decision.

Education board

Within each faculty, there is also an educational board consisting of three teachers and public employees who discuss different educational questions such as educational plans, Treklövern and other questions regarding the quality system.

Some faculties also have educational boards on a department level, meaning that the questions focus more on that specific subject area.

Good to know

Protocols and decisions from Linnaeus University's various bodies can be found on the body's website, on the website of the respective faculty office or requested via the faculty or the archive/diary.

Meeting formalities

In formal meetings, many terms are used that are useful to know in order to feel comfortable on the meeting:

Co-option – to provide someone with rights of presence and expression but not the right to vote.

Adjournment – to postpone the meeting to a later date.

Motion to table – to postpone a decision to a later meeting

Agenda – a list over the points a certain meeting means to deal with. Often sent together with the invite.

Rapporteur – the person that presents an errand and potentially suggests a decision.

Adjustment – a meeting protocol is adjusted by one or several adjusters who sign it to verify that the protocol corresponds to what was discussed on the meeting. Protocols must be adjusted before the decisions are carried out.

Conflict of interest – when a person in a deciding role themselves, or because of close relation to the one referred to, is not seen as objective enough. If there is a conflict of interest, the person is to leave the room and not partake in the decision of the errand.

Calling – an invitation to a meeting. Should contain information regarding date, time, place, participants, and potential agenda. Needs to be sent well in advance for the participants to be able to prepare for the meeting.

Point of order – something that refers to the meetings implementation rather than the topics on the agenda, e.g., taking a break or drawing a line in the debate.

Protocol – the meeting secretary's summarized notes from the meeting, who participated, what has happened, which decisions were made, potential reservations, changes in the protocol, etc.

Protocol note – when a member wants something important to thoroughly appear- and be explained in the protocol, e.g., an opinion, argument, or explanation for an action.

Reservation – when a member clearly wants to point out that they are against, and does not support, the decision. A powerful way to resign the otherwise solidary responsibility for the decision. Reservations are always noted in the protocol.

Line – a line in the list of speakers means that no additional speakers may sign up. Is often used in order for a certain point in the agenda to not consume far too much time.

List of speakers – the chairperson's list of people asking to speak

Vote – voting where the votes are counted and noted in the protocol. Can happen open by raising hands or closed through notes or ballots.

Motion – a proposed decision.

Remittance – to send back an errand for further inquiry.

Request – to request or demand something, often money or other resources.

What faculty am I part of?

Here we will help you navigate what faculty you belong to through your association. Several associations include education on different faculties. E-mail us on representant@linnek.se if you want more information or talk to your education association.

Education associations in Växjö

Champs – the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSV)

EHVS – School of Business and Economics (FEH)

Klubb – the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FKH)

Lips – the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHL)

Pax – the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSV)

Pedal – You study to become a teacher and therefore belong to the Board of Teacher Education (NLU) but likely also other faculties depending on your subject, e.g., the Faculty of Social Sciences

S.M.I.S.K – Either the faculty of Social Sciences (FSV) or the faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHL)

Viska – the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSV) or the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FKH)

Wädur – the Faculty of Technology (FTK)

Samvete – the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSV)

Växt – the Faculty of Technology (FTK)

Education associations in Kalmar

CNaS – the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHL)

Humanus – Either the faculty of Social Sciences (FSV) or the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHL)

Kalmar ESS – School of Business and Economics (FEH)

Karolin – You study to become a teacher and therefore belong to the Board of Teacher Education (NLU) but likely also other faculties depending on your subject, e.g., the Faculty of Social Sciences
Lambda – fakulteten för teknik (FTK)

Lambda—the Faculty of Technology (FTK)

LiK – Either the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FKH) or the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSV)

Meskalin – the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FKH)

SPIIK – the Faculty of Technology (FTK)

Useful websites

Through these links you should be able to find most of what you are looking for. Feel free to contact us if you need help!

- Linnaeus Unions website about student representatives
<https://linnek.se/eng/studentrepresentant/>
- The Archive – Order copies of documents, for example course evaluations – arkiv@lnu.se
- Records/Register at LNU– <http://diariesok.lnu.se/>
- Discrimination, harassment, and violations – description of routines and reporting
<https://lnu.se/en/student/service-and-support/Student-rights-and-responsibilities/discrimination-or-sexual-harassment/>
- Course and education syllabi – in Swedish and English - <https://kursplan.lnu.se/search>
- Linnaeus Unions list of decision making and preparatory bodies at LNU
<https://linnek.se/eng/studentrepresentant/>
- Governing documents and protocols from the student union
<https://linnek.se/eng/dokument/>
- LNU staff page, is often more useful than LNU.se, try it! <https://lnu.se/en/medarbetare/>
- Dictionary - <https://www.uhr.se/publikationer/svensk-engelsk-ordbok>

- Rights and obligations as a student – a really useful website contains (among other things) <https://lnu.se/en/student/service-and-support/Student-rights-and-responsibilities/discrimination-or-sexual-harassment/>
- Find booked physical classroom exams - <https://salstentamen.lnu.se/en/schedule>
- TimeEdit - <https://cloud.timeedit.net/Linnéuniversitetet/web/schema1/>
- The Swedish Higher Education Authority (Universitetskanslerämbetet (UKÄ)) – <https://english.uka.se/>
- The Appeals Board for the University (ÖNH) – find examples of decisions and information on how to appeal decisions - <https://www.onh.se/higher-education-appeals-board>
- The Swedish Higher Education Act <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/>
- LNU's page about *Student representatives*. <https://lnu.se/en/medarbetare/support-and-service/teaching/att-na-studenter/studentrepresentant/>
- Linnaeus University's Local rules for student representation <https://lnu.se/globalassets/dokument---gemensamma/studerandeavdelningen/local-regulations-for-student-representation.pdf>