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| **1: Formal**  The departmental council takes place in a meeting room and is formally minuted so that there is a clear record of what’s been discussed and what action points have been agreed. Papers are called for and circulated in advance so people can prepare for the meeting thoroughly. There is a chair elected at the first meeting of each academic year. |

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| **1: Informal**  The departmental council meets in a common room or social space, with lunch or light snacks provided. Although there is one person to facilitate the meeting, conversation tends to be relaxed with no real structure to the deliberations other than the issues brought forward on the day by those who turn up. |

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| **2: Staff-led**  The chair and minute clerk of the departmental council are members of staff. This spares students the responsibility and means that continuity is provided in the way the council operates. |

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| **2: Student-led**  The departmental council’s chair is the departmental representative or another senior student officer, and the minute clerk is another class rep. It’s the students’ meeting so they alone are responsible for its conduct and success. |

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| **3: Reactive**  The departmental council is a useful “focus group” for the teaching staff and management in the department to get a snapshot of what reps think of key issues. Sometimes group work is used to allow reps to think deeply about the issues the staff want to ask them about. Ultimately, though, the real decision-making power lies in the course and departmental committees, and this is only a sounding board. |

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| **3: Proactive**  Class reps have not only a right but a responsibility to steer the agenda of the departmental council. They’re not just there to pass comment on issues the staff ask them about, but to get the staff to pass comment on issues and suggestions they as students want to raise. Decisions that come out of the meetings inform the agenda and priorities of other formal committees and the school’s operational plan. |

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| **4: Issue-led**  Departmental council agendas are shaped purely by the issues that are raised by those attending. That means that meetings are very responsive and could end up discussing a whole range of issues all at once, time-permitting, that can’t be predicted beforehand. |

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| **4: Themed**  Departmental council meetings are themed – so each meeting explores only one particular topic in depth, for instance the library and IT; the curriculum and timetabling; assessment, and so on. Relevant staff make introductory presentations to spark debate. |

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| **5: Student-led**  The departmental council is all about the class reps – they must have the space and freedom to talk about what they want. A very small number of staff are there only to answer specific questions, and only at the invitation of the students. |

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| **5: Partnership**  The departmental council exists to foster partnership. Therefore a wide range of management, teaching and administrative staff attend, so that reps can learn more about their work, and can inform lots of staff at once about student views. |

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| **6: Limited**  The departmental council is for class reps and the departmental representative to share their views with each other and with staff, and attendance is in the reps’ job descriptions. No other students need (or are expected) to attend. |

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| **6: Inclusive**  The departmental council is for anyone. All students have valid views and it doesn’t even matter whether the class reps turn up – just as long as there are plenty students there and the discussions are informative and engaging. |

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| **7: Frequent**  The departmental council should meet at least monthly. It is important for there to be regular exchange about the learning experience in the department, and it helps everyone to get to know each other and build good relationships. |

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| **7: Infrequent**  The departmental council only needs to meet once a term. That way there is less time commitment, and discussions can be deep and rich. In any case, course committees exist besides this, so it’s important not to overload students. |

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| **8: Uniform**  The departmental council should have a single model across the institution. It is important to get a consistent and comparable quality of student views from across the institution. |

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| **8: Flexible**  Each department has its own culture and dynamic, so should run its council however it chooses. There should even be devolved choice as to whether a department ought to have one at all. |