



STEP

Scotland's Tertiary
Enhancement Programme

Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) - STEP Topic Lead

Session 2025-26



Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) is the national enhancement programme for Scotland's colleges and universities. STEP is a sector-owned programme of activity that supports enhancement across the tertiary sector in Scotland. The programme is jointly managed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and College Development Network (CDN).

STEP Topic Leads: overview

A core team of four individuals – two staff and two student STEP Topic Leads, with both colleges and universities represented in these roles – act as key sector-level leads for STEP. They champion the STEP topic across Scotland and beyond, driving the ambitions of the sector. Their insights on the sector and topic support the operational delivery of the STEP topic, working closely with QAA and CDN, and through the STEP governance groups.

The STEP Topic Leads chair the STEP Topic Leadership Group, which provides operational leadership for STEP. The Topic Leadership Group provides guidance and expertise for project teams around project development and evaluation.

Our College Student STEP Topic Lead has completed her term of office. We are therefore seeking a new Lead for session 2025-26.

Why should you be interested in this role?

One of our current Student STEP Topic Leads, Adelayo Adebayo, from the University of Stirling Student's Union shares what inspired them to take on the role.



Adelayo Adebayo

“Being a Student STEP Topic Lead has been incredibly rewarding. The role has allowed me to contribute strategically to sector-wide enhancement work, collaborate meaningfully with staff and students across institutions, and ensure that the student voice shapes key priorities. It’s also been a valuable opportunity for personal development, building confidence, leadership skills, and a deeper understanding of quality assurance and enhancement across the tertiary sector.”

STEP Topic Leads: expectations

- The STEP Topic Leads attend meetings of the STEP Steering Group, the group that determines the overall direction of STEP and identifies key priorities. Meetings of the Steering Group take place four times per year and are typically online.
- The STEP Topic Leads co-chair the STEP Topic Leadership Group, the group that helps to lead, support and evaluate the work undertaken for the current STEP topic. Meetings take place at least four times per year and are typically online.
- The STEP Topic Leads attend meetings of the STEP Network. This comprises academic and student representatives from each institution in Scotland, as well as representatives from some sector agencies. It meets four times per year and meetings are typically an in-person event, including networking and workshop activities. As members of the Topic Leadership Group, the STEP Topic Student Leads have a key role in setting the agenda and planning activities for the STEP Network meetings.
- The STEP Topic Leads engage with STEP evaluation activity. The approach to evaluation is agreed by the STEP Steering Group during the first year of the STEP cycle.
- The STEP Topic Leads also engage with major STEP-related events, including conferences, at which they may be required to present on any student-led work.

Nomination and appointment of STEP Topic Leads

- Student STEP Topic Leads are appointed for a one-year term, which may be extended to a second term with agreement from the STEP Steering Group.
- Student STEP Topic Leads receive an honorarium of £3000 (per annum).

- It is not necessary for student STEP Topic Leads to be sabbatical officers. However, they will be expected to demonstrate experience and involvement beyond their immediate programme and department/school. Ideally, nominees will have experience of student engagement or representation matters (or otherwise working towards enhancement of the student experience) from beyond their institution.
- Nominations for STEP Topic Leads should be made through self-nomination and supported by a member of senior management.
- It is expected that all nominees for student STEP Topic Lead will inform their Students' Association/Union prior to submitting their nomination.
- Nominations must include the following information:
 - a. Nominee's name and email address
 - b. A statement of no more than 200 words indicating why they are suitable and what their skills and experience will allow them to bring to the role
 - c. Support for the nomination from a senior manager (or appropriate alternative) within their institution.

Nominations timeline

- All nominations should be received by **1200 on Friday 12 September 2025**.
- The STEP Steering Group will consider all nominations by either email correspondence or an extraordinary meeting.
- In the event of there being more nominations than roles, there will be a ballot of Steering Group members.
- All nominees will be informed of the outcome by **Friday 26 September 2025**.

25 June 2025