

How does your Student Council rate?

This **Student Council Audit** tool is intended for use by students, teachers, and schools. You can use it to examine your **Student Council's** practices in building student voice, agency and participation. Use it to **recognise** your existing practices (and to see what you are already doing well); use it to **challenge and extend** your practices.

This tool is based on the **Audit** tool that was originally included in the VicSRC's **Represent!** Kit. This Kit is available on-line and can be downloaded in sections at: <http://www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/represent>. The original **Audit** is **Section 1.7** in **Part 1** on pages 45 to 49. This specific **Audit** about **Student Councils** is also based on the more general and broader **Audit of School Practices** that was published in the previous issue of **Connect** (#236; April 2019).

In responding to the items, first think about **how often** each activity happens in your school: does it happen *'always', 'often', 'sometimes', 'seldom'* or *'never'*. Then secondly, think about **how important** it is to you that this activity **should** happen in your school: *'high', 'medium'* or *'low'*.

If you don't know what something means or it's not relevant to you, feel free to skip that item.

Ask different people to complete this **Audit** - **students from different levels and different groups, teachers, school leadership and so on**; they may have different views about what is happening or what is important. Compare their responses and see

what is agreed and what is different. Then ask *'why?'* This could start a conversation that helps to understand what is actually happening in your school: where your **strengths** are, and what you can **develop further**.

Look for patterns: eg the practices that are seldom or never occurring, but that you think are highly important.

For each item, a section of **Represent!** or an issue of **Connect** is suggested, where you will find some information and activities to help you address your needs.

(As with the **Audit of School Practices**, you can also calculate a **score** for each practice. For **'how often'**, score these as +2, +1, 0, -1 and -2; then for **'how important'**, score these as 3, 2 and 1. Multiply these together and write the **score** [from +6 to -6] against each example. The larger positive scores are the practices that you think are important and that are happening a lot; the larger negative scores are the important practices that are **not** happening as often as they should.)



How often does this happen?

How important is this?

<i>Practice</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Some- times</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	Represent! or Connect Reference
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1. The Student Council meets regularly:

1.1 The Student Council has a clear timetable for meeting									<i>Represent!</i> 2.5 pp 70-75; <i>Templates</i> T4 p 150
1.2 The Student Council lets all its members (and other students) know when the next meeting it to be held									<i>Represent!</i> 3.5 p 96
1.3 There is a good attendance of Student Council members									<i>Represent!</i> 3.1 pp 77-80
1.4 The Student Council meets in various groups and ways eg as a whole council, in subgroups etc									<i>Represent!</i> 1.4 pp 25-32 <i>Connect</i> 228 pp 23-24

2. The Student Council has clear structures and processes:

2.1 There is a clear and known process for a student to become a member of the Student Council through election or appointment									<i>Represent!</i> 1.5 pp 33-36
2.2 There is a written and known constitution describing how the Student Council works; this is reviewed regularly									<i>Represent!</i> 1.4 p 32; <i>Templates</i> T1 p 145 <i>Connect</i> 170 p 20 <i>Connect</i> 164-165 pp 18-19
2.3 The Student Council has internal structures and processes that are appropriate to its work (eg chairing, recording decisions, subcommittees etc)									<i>Represent!</i> 1.4 pp 25-32; <i>Templates</i> T6, 7 pp 153, 155 <i>Connect</i> 203 pp 22-23 <i>Connect</i> 170 pp 3-9
2.4 Student Council meetings are well run, effective (productive) and enjoyable									<i>Represent!</i> 3.5 pp 94-103 <i>Connect</i> 171 pp 16-19

How often does this happen?

How important is this?

Practice									Represent! or Connect Reference
	Always	Often	Some- times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	

3. The Student Council is broadly representative of students :

3.1 Students are elected or appointed through democratic and representative processes (by election, or from volunteers, or by other agreed processes)									<i>Represent!</i> 1.4 pp 35-40 <i>Connect</i> 220 p 3
3.2 There is a range of students on the Student Council – in age, ability, school engagement, ethnicity, gender etc – who are broadly representative of students in the school									<i>Represent!</i> 1.4 pp 37-40 <i>Connect</i> 218 pp 13-14 <i>Connect</i> 169 p 11
3.3 No significant group of students is, or feels, over-represented or under-represented on or by the Student Council									<i>Represent!</i> 1.4 p 40 <i>Connect</i> 213 pp 15-16 <i>Connect</i> 197 p 18
3.4 Being a member of the Student Council is a desirable outcome for a broad range of students									<i>Represent!</i> 1.1 pp 13-17; 1.5 pp 39-40

4. The Student Council reports to and gets advice from students:

4.1 The Student Council uses a variety of ways to report to students and others									<i>Represent!</i> 3.3 pp 83-86; <i>Template</i> T5 p 142 <i>Connect</i> 173 pp 18-21
4.2 Time and opportunities are available for Student Council members to report back to other students and to get advice from them									<i>Represent!</i> 3.2 pp 81-82; 3.3 pp 83-86 <i>Connect</i> 218 pp 10-11
4.3 Student Council representatives get advice and support from other students in different ways									<i>Represent!</i> 3.3 p 85; 3.4 pp 87-93 <i>Connect</i> 179 p 20 <i>Connect</i> 172 pp 14-17 <i>Connect</i> 169 p 9
4.4 The views of other students are considered and taken seriously by the Student Council									<i>Represent!</i> 3.3 pp 83-86 <i>Connect</i> 169 p 3

How often does this happen?

How important is this?

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Represent! or Connect Reference
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5. The Student Council deals with a range of issues:

5.1 The Student Council is aware of the different things that a Student Council can do									<i>Represent!</i> 1.2 p 18 <i>Connect</i> 205 p 5 <i>Connect</i> 194-195 pp 20-21 <i>Connect</i> 169 pp 14-16
5.2 The Student Council actually does a range of things: putting forward student views (eg on curriculum, rules, uniforms, facilities etc); advocating for students; organising events; supporting agreed causes									<i>Represent!</i> 1.2 p 25; 2.2 pp 58-61; Template T3 p 149 <i>Connect</i> 234 pp 10-11 <i>Connect</i> 219 pp 3-6 <i>Connect</i> 191 p 31 <i>Connect</i> 169 p 7
5.3 The Student Council controls the time that it allocates to different issues and topics, making sure that one or two things don't dominate; it sets up appropriate internal structures to deal with different issues eg working groups									<i>Represent!</i> 3.5 p 98 <i>Connect</i> 174 pp 17-21 <i>Connect</i> 169 pp 5, 6 <i>Connect</i> 151 p 3
5.4 The Student Council is effective in implementing and working on a range of issues; it completes its plans and achieves what it sets out to do									<i>Represent!</i> 3.6 pp 104-105; 3.7 pp 106-108 <i>Connect</i> 224-225 p 12 <i>Connect</i> 217 p 25 <i>Connect</i> 211 pp 18-19

6. The Student Council is trained and networked to be effective:

6.1 Appropriate training events are organised within the school and made available to all members of the Student Council									<i>Represent!</i> 1.2 pp 21-22; 2.1 pp 51-57; 2.2 pp 58-61; 4.1 p 121; 4.4 pp 133-138; 4.5 pp 139-141
6.2 Members of the Student Council get follow-up support and informal training in the skills needed to do their work									<i>Represent!</i> 2.1 pp 51-57; 2.4 pp 64-69; Template T2 p 148 <i>Connect</i> 169 p 8
6.3 The Student Council has access to inter-school and statewide networking opportunities									<i>Represent!</i> 4.1 p 121; 3.10 pp 116-117 VicSRC web pages and <i>Workshops</i> <i>Connect</i> 169 p 10
6.4 The Student Council's school is a Partner School of the VicSRC									<i>Represent!</i> 4.6 p 142 VicSRC web pages <i>Connect</i> 168 p 12

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How important is this?

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Represent! or Connect Reference
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7. The Student Council has time to do its work and gets credit for its work:

7.1 The Student Council meets at a time that is convenient to all members									<i>Represent!</i> 3.5 pp 94-95
7.2 Time is provided, as part of the school's curriculum, for Student Council members to do their work									<i>Represent!</i> 4.3 p 129
7.3 Credit is provided for Student Council members in ways that recognise members own learning and their contribution to the school									<i>Represent!</i> 4.3 pp 129-132 <i>Connect</i> 174 pp 7-14
7.4 The Student Council is publicly recognised and acknowledged for its work									<i>Represent!</i> 4.3 pp 130, 132

8. The Student Council is connected to the school's decision-making:

8.1 Students are represented on the school's decision-making body (eg School Council); there are links between these representatives and the Student Council									<i>Represent!</i> 3.9 pp 111-114 <i>Connect</i> 229 pp 5-13 <i>Connect</i> 230 pp 9-13 <i>Connect</i> 231-232 pp 28-29
8.2 Students are represented on other committees within the school (eg uniform committee, canteen committee, curriculum committee, facilities committee etc)									<i>Represent!</i> 3.9 pp 113-114 <i>Connect</i> 211 pp 3-5
8.3 The Student Council is asked for its views on all important matters									<i>Represent!</i> 1.2 p 21 <i>VicSRC Principals Guide</i> (on website) <i>Connect</i> 169 p 4
8.4 Student views are heard and considered seriously in all school forums									<i>VicSRC Principals Guide</i> (on website) <i>Connect</i> 220 p 4 <i>Connect</i> 196 p 17

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9. The Student Council has teacher and principal support:

9.1 There is at least one Student Council support teacher who has time release to support the Council									<i>Represent!</i> 1.6 p 41 <i>Connect</i> 187 pp 8-9
9.2 This teacher supports and advises the Student Council without taking over									<i>Represent!</i> 2.1 p 56; 2.4 pp 68-69 <i>Connect</i> 184 pp 18-19
9.3 There are regular meetings of the Student Council with the principal and other appropriate members of the school administration/ leadership									VicSRC <i>Principals Guide</i> (on VicSRC website)
9.4 The views and suggestions of the Student Council are seriously considered and discussed									VicSRC <i>Principals Guide</i> (on website) <i>Connect</i> 236 pp 12-19 <i>Connect</i> 235 pp 17-21

10. The Student Council has the resources it needs:

10.1 The Student Council has a budget that it controls and allocates									<i>Represent!</i> 4.1 pp 120, 123-124; <i>Templates</i> T11 p 162 <i>Connect</i> 169 p 12
10.2 The Student Council has access to practical resources such as printing, photocopying, mailing, phones etc									<i>Represent!</i> 4.1 p 121; <i>Template</i> T10 p 161 <i>Connect</i> 201 p 23 <i>Connect</i> 172 p 17
10.3 The Student Council has a dedicated Council notice board that it controls									<i>Represent!</i> 4.1 p 121; <i>Template</i> T10 p 161
10.4 The Student Council has a space of its own eg an office, a filing cabinet etc									<i>Represent!</i> 4.1 p 120; <i>Template</i> T10 p 161