

# IMPACT REPORT

2018-19



# Introduction

Queen Mary Students' Union is a diverse, student-led organisation that strives to be at the heart of the Queen Mary student experience. It is our responsibility to ensure all Queen Mary students get the most out of their time at University, and we have been working hard throughout the second year of our Strategic Plan to achieve this.

This is the second Impact Report of our 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. It aims to highlight and celebrate how we have worked collaboratively with students, staff and community partners to achieve many successes that embrace our mission, vision and values. Our student-led activities have continued to see engagement

from thousands of students, several brand-new initiatives have been started and across all our work student feedback has been used to develop and improve what we and the University offer.

The stories spread across the following pages link to the five themes of our Strategic Plan. They demonstrate our commitment to achieving our ambitious targets and delivering the best experience for Queen Mary students. As we move into the third year of our Strategic Plan we will continue to ensure all our activities and services encapsulate our values and create an environment where together, we improve students' lives.



## President's introduction



**Talhah Atcha**  
President & Chair of the Board of Trustees  
2019/20

The second year of our current Strategic Plan is well under way, with some areas having already met their three year targets. We have delivered excellent results across education, welfare, student groups and in helping students to have the best experience they can whilst at University. The hours our student representatives and leaders have put in, supported by Students' Union staff, has had a visible impact.

We are certainly heading in the right direction but as well as challenging the University it is important we continue to challenge ourselves. We are ambitious about improving in areas where we can develop further. Much of our ongoing work as part of our Democracy Review is key to developing the Students' Union and the student voice at Queen Mary. We also want to do more to further improve the experience of our staff and student staff team and ensure they can develop through their work with us. I look forward to seeing the results of this work as we move into the third year of our Strategic Plan and look forward to developing our new strategy in 2021.

Our Mission  
**Together we improve students' lives**

Our Vision  
**We want to be at the heart of the student experience**

Our Values  
**Student-led  
Democratic  
Transparent  
Supportive**  
**Inclusive  
Accessible  
Welcoming  
Fun  
Committed**

# Highlights

We are really proud of everything we have achieved this year. Here are our favourite highlights from 2018-19. We look forward to building on these in the year ahead.

**3500**

members of our Facebook group for new students

**620**

students engaged in weekly social leagues

**7316**

students involved in student-led groups

**10,000**

attendees at our Welcome Fair



**<1.4%**

food waste in our shops and cafés



**1072**

volunteers engaged in the local community

**8279**

attendances at Get Active sessions

**£41,769**

distributed through the Campus Community Fund

**4000**

welcome packs posted to new students

**2,600,000**

website page views



# Theme 1

## We will make sure that students' voices are heard, valued and acted upon

### Highlights

**81%**

of Student Council policy aims implemented in a year

**£20,000**

additional funding secured for Liberation Campaigns.

**79%**

of students understand the Students' Union is student-led

**74%**

of students can identify at least 2 Executive Officers

**1119**

responses to our Big Change survey

### Big change on campus

Our 2019 Big Change survey focused on our campuses and how campus life and the student experience could be improved. Findings from the survey were used to establish student priorities for improvements to campus services, facilities, food & drink options, personal safety and investment in Sport. The survey also informed funding priorities for a new £250,000 annual fund specifically for on-campus improvements. This funded 20 new device charging stations, enhanced informal study spaces, improved campus lighting, outdoor furniture, secure bike storage, student lockers, study pods and water fountains.



### Feedback from members & leaders

We changed the way we collected feedback from student group members and committee members. Instead of running multiple surveys we ran one Members & Leaders survey across RAG, Societies, Sports Clubs, Student Media and Volunteering groups. The survey was run using a new platform that made the survey easier to complete on phones and mobile devices. It also enabled us to customise the survey to individual respondents. The survey was followed by a series of qualitative feedback sessions. As a result of the survey we are currently reviewing the promotional opportunities we provide to groups and some of our procedures as a direct result of student feedback.

### Improved safety at the Whitechapel campus

In response to a Student Council motion and student feedback we worked with the University to improve student safety at our Whitechapel campus. New LED street lights were installed outside the Garrod Building and we successfully lobbied the local authorities to improve the lighting opposite the building and along Stepney Way. We also successfully lobbied for more secure bike facilities, with key card scanners being installed. Further lobbying resulted in funding being secured to re-configure the Garrod Building entrance area to provide enhanced access control and to increase visibility of security staff.

### Liberation Fund

The Students' Union understands that forms of structural oppression marginalise some groups of students, such as LGBT+, BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), disabled and women students. In response to a motion at Student Council, the Executive Officers wrote to Queen Mary's Principal requesting for additional funding to be allocated for liberation campaigns. After discussions, £20,000 was secured to support our student-led projects, campaigns and events relating to liberation. Further funding was also used to create a Liberation Fund, open to any student group or elected representative to apply to.

The funding also allowed for a Student Engagement intern to be introduced. The intern (a current Queen Mary student) will support student groups involved in liberation campaigns, cultural society events, and other Student Engagement events and activities.



### BLSA Building improvements

Investment in the Barts and The London Students' Association building, based on student feedback, saw the creation of a new Multi-Faith Centre, Fitness Room and Societies store area. Equipment was also added in existing spaces including projectors, TV screens and anatomy equipment which are available in bookable spaces for students to use.

### Improved multi-faith provision

Following the refurbishment of the Nest in 2018 to provide additional Friday Prayer space we expanded the space available for Prayer & Contemplation at the Whitechapel Campus through the creation of a new additional Multi-Faith space in the BLSA Building.

### Removal of minimum card spend

In direct response to student feedback we removed the £2 minimum card charge in our cafés. As well as helping students it has also helped to improve the speed of service, and the general experience in our cafés.

### Policy success

Students' Union policy is made by debating and passing motions through Student Council, the Annual Student Meeting or referendum. A number of policies passed during the 2018-19 academic year were implemented in year including: introducing a Black History Month fund, supporting the People's Vote campaign, prohibit playing artists accused of rape, paedophilia and other illegal forms of sexual violence, placing recycling facilities in all Students' Union buildings and improving lighting around the Whitechapel campus.

### New space for the Executive Officers

The Students' Union worked with the University to provide a new visible office space for the full-time Executive Officers. The new space provides the Officers with their own area to work in, meet with students and staff and develop ideas and projects together. The new space is prominent in the Students' Union Hub building, enhancing the visibility of the Executive Officers.

### Your Ideas

You wanted to be able to store your belongings during the day.

### Our Changes

We worked with the University to install lockers, enhancing the facilities for commuting students.

## Theme 2

# We will support students' education and welfare so that each student has the opportunity to fulfil their potential

### Highlights

**85%**

of students feel the Students' Union takes their wellbeing seriously

**188**

mentors trained through the Buddy Scheme

**418**

Buddy Scheme sign-ups (mentees)

**82%**

of Course Reps feel recognised as partners

**76%**

of Get Active sessions full

**440**

Course Reps in post across the University

### Student Partnership Conference

The Student Partnership Conference was a new one day conference exclusively for Course Reps. The event featured opportunities for students to develop skills and participate in networking with other students and staff. Topics covered included; the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the Queen Mary Going for Gold programme, tackling the BAME attainment gap, Women in Leadership, employability, equity training, effective chair training and co-creating an inclusive curriculum. 100% of attendees felt the Conference made them more equipped to undertake their role as a Course Rep. The Conference also featured faculty networking sessions. These sessions allowed Course Reps to meet and discuss ideas, issues and solutions with staff representatives from their faculties. This helped to enhance partnership working with the University to create opportunities and overcome challenges.



### Going for Gold

The Executive Officers led core workstreams as part of the University Going for Gold initiative. The initiative aimed to provide the best – a gold standard – in student experience and education. It saw the Executive Officers leading on a number of topics including the BAME attainment gap, student safety and security, campus improvements and developing a more inclusive curriculum. As a result of this work £250,000 annual funding was secured to improve the University campuses and facilities and a research project was undertaken to further understand the BAME attainment gap and recommend improvements. Improvements were also made to the student journey through the Careers Service, including the introduction of HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Record) transcripts.

### Healthy sex and relationships

This year saw a focus on healthy sex and relationships. We worked in partnership with the local charity Positive East to deliver regular sexual health testing sessions. The highlight of the campaign was the first Sex & Relationships Month, featuring 12 events including active bystander training, a panel discussion on forced marriage, a sex toy workshop and a variety of online features covering domestic abuse and dating safely online.

### Study Well

Study Well is our wellbeing campaign run during the exam period. It provides a series of events, activities and online self-help resources to support students and promote positive mental wellbeing. New events for 2019 included massage sessions, Try Something New Day and Tea & Talk – an opportunity for students to drop in anytime for a quick chat with elected representatives over a free drink. The campaign also saw the return of the popular doggy distress event, plus 14 free sports sessions every week including fencing, football and touch tennis. The campaign also highlighted changes the Executive Officers made to improve the student studying experience.

### Best Bar None for a Good Night Out

Our on-campus venues Drapers and The Griff Inn were recognised at the Tower Hamlets Best Bar None awards. The awards recognise excellence in responsible management of licensed premises. The award highlighted the impact of new initiatives such as the Good Night Out campaign, bystander training for staff and training on tackling and preventing issues of harassment.

### Wellbeing Referral Programme

This year saw the successful introduction of our new Wellbeing Referral Programme. The programme offers tailored 1-2-1 support to students who are struggling with low mood, anxiety or with the pressures of University life in general. The support offered by the programme helped referred students to improve their wellbeing by getting active and eating better.

### Wellbeing Weeks

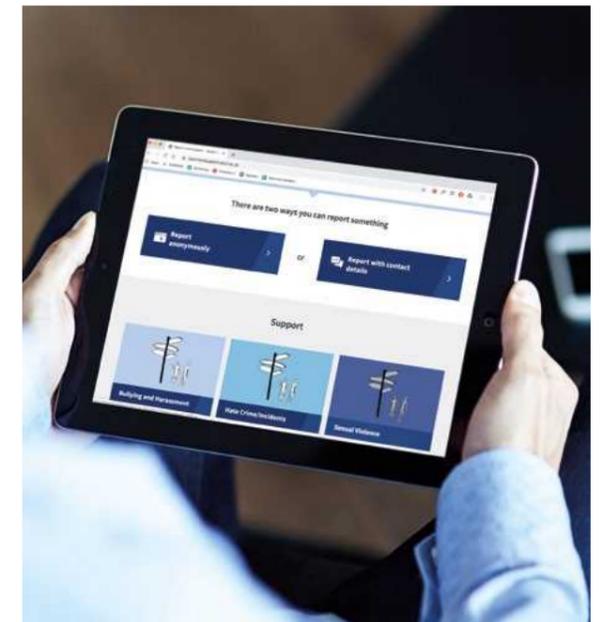
We secured funding to introduce "Wellbeing Week" as part of our ongoing "Be Kind To Your Mind" campaign. These campaigns focussed on teaching students how to effectively use self-care methods including grounding techniques, CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) exercises and workshops on how to manage different aspects of student life such as finance, housing and time management. The Wellbeing Weeks aimed to enhance wellbeing support on campus, and complement the existing services provided.

### Introduction of Qmotion Workshops

Qmotion Sport & Fitness Centre introduced a new series of free, comprehensive workshops covering core technique, beginners Olympic weightlifting, squat technique, deadlifts and nutrition. Qmotion also introduced a new loyalty card aimed at increasing attendance during the exam semester. The projects have enhanced the Qmotion member experience.

### Report and Support

The Students' Union, led by the Vice President Welfare, has worked closely with the University on their response to sexual and gender-based violence and hate crime. In particular, this work has focused on securing the implementation of the Report and Support reporting platform which allows students and staff to report cases of sexual violence, domestic abuse, harassment, bullying and hate crime, either anonymously or with contact details. The platform went live in September 2019, with a full launch commencing in November 2019. Alongside this, the Students' Union has continued to lobby for improvements to the University's investigation process and support provision.



### Your Ideas

You wanted us to prioritise your safety on nights out

### Our Changes

We introduced Good Night Out and bystander intervention training for our staff so they can effectively prevent and tackle any harassment in our venues

## Theme 3

# We will create and support social, cultural and recreational activities so that students will feel part of a community



### Highlights

**81%**

of students involved in Students' Union activity feel part of a community

**7051**

students part of a student-led society

**2800**

Sports Club members - the highest ever

**150,000+**

member visits to Qmotion

**1038**

students involved in Get Active

**98%**

of Social League attendees would take part again

**11**

Sports Club teams were promoted after winning their BUCS leagues this year

### Campus Games

Our new Campus Games programme was introduced to engage students, staff and alumni in different activities throughout the year, ranging from a Park Run to a tug-of-war. Academic schools gain points for participation and at the end of the academic year the school with the most points receives the Campus Games trophy. The School of Medicine & Dentistry lifted the 2018-19 trophy.



### BLSA Mentoring Scheme

The new Barts and The London Students' Association Mentoring Scheme was introduced to provide additional pastoral peer-to-peer support to students within the School of Medicine & Dentistry. The scheme was open to first year students, before being expanded to students on the Gozo campus and Certificate of Clinical Foundation Studies (CCFS) students. In 2019/20, the scheme has expanded to final year students, with mentoring support available from peers and alumni.

### Trans Day of Remembrance

To mark Trans Day of Remembrance a campaign was run across our digital, print and social media channels to remember trans people who have been killed as a result of transphobia and to draw attention to the level of prejudice, hate crime and violence trans people experience. A student survey was also launched to increase our understanding about how we can make Queen Mary more accessible for our trans student community.

### Liberation Campaigns

47 events ran throughout the year as part of 5 liberation campaigns – Asian Heritage Month, Black History Month, Islamophobia Awareness Month, LGBT+ History Month and Women's Week. The campaigns saw a number of events held on campus, touring exhibitions, online profiles and features and awareness raising content across our website and social media.

### This Girl Can

This Girl Can Week celebrates women in sport and aims to boost female participation in sport across our campuses. In 2018-19, 212 students participated in 14 events across the week. 12 students were also profiled on our online channels.

### Welcoming all students

This year we reviewed how postgraduate students within the School of Medicine & Dentistry were welcomed. This resulted in a series of new events at Charterhouse Square, including a new Welcome Fair, inter-institute quiz nights, barbecues and film nights.

### Improving accessibility

The Customer Service department worked on an accessibility review of the Students' Union's buildings and services to improve accessibility. This resulted in the introduction of new hearing loops and changes to the layout of our buildings. We continue to work on implementing changes within the inaccessible areas of the BLSA building. There is also an ongoing project to create a new accessibility awareness handbook for student leaders and staff.

### New Club Sport Development Fund

The newly launched Club Sport Development Fund allowed Sports Clubs to access a new source of additional funding for their Club. The funding aimed to develop Clubs through funding activity that focussed on engaging new students in Sport, or for one-off events aimed at increasing sports participation. The Fund provided new opportunities for 24 Sports Clubs, providing £5422 of additional funding.

### Excellence Award

The Excellence Award is the Students' Union accreditation scheme which aims to recognise groups that truly represent the Students' Union's values and deliver an outstanding experience for their members. This year the Award was open to Societies, Volunteering groups and Student Media outlets. Student groups submitted evidence and based on how many points they scored against a set criteria they could get a bronze, silver or gold award. There was a 15% increase in the number of Societies who completed and subsequently rewarded for their participation in the Excellence Award, helping to improve the experience of student group members.

### Campus Community Fund

The Campus Community Fund is generated by a proportion of profits from the Learning Café. It supports various campus activities including cultural and learning events, competitions and displays, funding for equipment and facilities and other projects that intend to create and promote campus communities or improve the Queen Mary student experience. In 2018-19 the Campus Community Fund distributed £41,769.04 to a total of 45 projects. Student-led projects awarded funding included; Formula Student, a BAME Careers Fair, QMTV's Short Film Festival, Pan African Society events, Queen Mary Theatre Company's trip to Edinburgh Fringe and projects as part of Teddy Bear Hospital.

### Nationally recognised Societies

Three Students' Union Societies were nominated for the National Societies Awards; Barts and The London Drama Society, Queen Mary Comedy Society and PsiStar Society. The societies were shortlisted for Most Improved Society, Best New Society and Best Society respectively.

### Your Ideas

You wanted more support running your student group activities

### Our Changes

We introduced a new event registration process and restructured staff roles to offer more tailored support for events

## Theme 4

# We will empower students to shape their own future

### Highlights

**£46,000**  
raised for charity

**86**  
student groups took part in the Adopt a Charity scheme

**84%**  
of student leaders feel they have developed new skills through Students' Union activities

**750**  
student leaders participated in training & development opportunities

**301**  
students participated in the Skills Award

**93.5%**  
of volunteers feel they have made a positive impact in the local community

**1590**  
volunteer hours logged through Community Sport

### Improved student leader training

Our student leader training was improved to offer new sessions tailored to accessibility, event management, effective communication, marketing and good leadership practice to encourage better run student groups and activities. A new governance and elections session was introduced to emphasise the importance of member feedback into how student groups are run. We also introduced consent training, with a full consent workshop also included in the Skills Award programme. These improvements to training aimed to better equip groups to run inclusive and well-run activities to provide opportunities that more students feel comfortable participating in.

### Skills Award

The Skills Award is the Students' Union's employability programme. It offers students the chance to learn new skills and understand how they can present their experience to employers through free training sessions and career reflection sessions. 301 students participated, with 119 students fully completing the Award. 100% of surveyed completers felt they had developed useful skills, 96% felt able to recognise their skills and 77% felt able to present their experiences to employers. We also introduced LinkedIn photo sessions where students could get a professional photo for their LinkedIn profile. 94.5% of feedback respondents said that the session had lived up to or exceeded their expectations.

### Community Sport

Our Community Sport programme continued to grow. In 2018-19 123 students were actively involved in the programme, with over 1590 volunteer hours logged, and a participant throughput of 11,816. The project was also selected as a Co-Op Community Cause. Over £5600 was raised by Co-Op members to support the delivery of inclusive sport sessions with local school children. The funding was also utilised to develop sessions with a focus on target groups such as disability, women and BAME groups.



### Green Mary Markets

Four Green Mary Market events were delivered during the 2018-19 academic year. The event featured a number of stallholders raising awareness of and selling local and organic produce. The market aimed to encourage people to enjoy healthier lifestyles and make more ethical life choices by choosing more sustainable products.



### Improving social cohesion through sport

The new Social Cohesion Project provided a platform for eight student groups to use Sport as a vehicle to tackle and raise awareness of identified issues in our local community of Tower Hamlets. The project aimed to break down barriers, bring communities together and promote fair play and equality. The project focuses on four core areas: healthy eating, staying active, lifestyle choices and equality & diversity. The project has already started to make a real difference, engaging 255 young people in over 350 hours of sport locally. The project was also recognised through an award at the Queen Mary Community Engagement Awards.

### Reuse success

The Reuse project saw donations received from departing students so new students could re-use these. Items ranged from plates and cutlery to duvets, lights and home furnishings. Over 200 new students attended the event, collecting 720kg of items that were saved from going to waste, equating to an approximate reduction of 15kg of CO2 emissions. 120 students also benefited from the winter Re-Use campaign. An additional 280kg of household items were saved from landfill during the winter project.

### Green Campaigns

The Students' Union Green Mary group led on a number of campaigns throughout the year as part of efforts to take a stand and deliver change to tackle climate change. The Carbon Awareness Challenge featured movie nights, talks, quizzes, photo competitions and pop-up games and stalls to help students reduce their carbon footprint. The Plastic Purge campaign raised awareness of recycling and reducing plastic consumption through a series of on-campus events. The campaign also featured a "water fountain hunt" asking students to log water fountains around campus, this was turned into a map for all to use to encourage people to refill water bottles.

### Green Excellence

As a result of its work on Sustainability projects the Students' Union achieved gold in the Green Impact Award, an improvement on our silver award the previous year. The Award is designed to recognise organisations that support environmentally and socially sustainable practices.

### Your Ideas

You wanted your extra-curricular activities to be formally recognised

### Our Changes

We ensured the Skills Award and Students' Union awards feature on the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)

## Theme 5

# We will build a strong Students' Union that is ready to deliver for students

### Highlights

221

student staff employed by the Students' Union

8

student interns employed during 2018-19

84%

of student staff feel they have gained enough skills and confidence to progress personally and professionally

86%

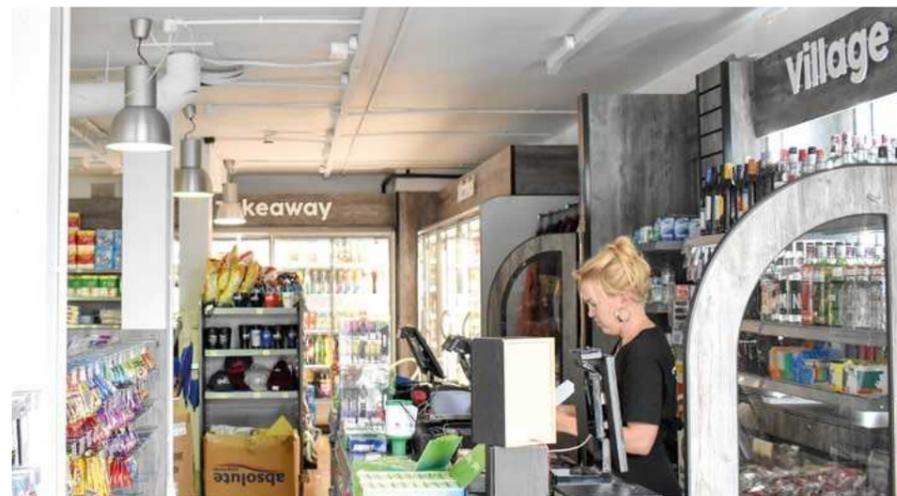
of student staff are proud to work for the Students' Union

90%

of student staff agree that the Students' Union values equality and inclusion

### Transforming our spaces

The Students' Union invested in a full refurbishment of the Village Shop. The refurbishment saw a new store layout, brand new shelving, fridges and freezers, new merchandising areas and the introduction of hundreds of new products, including speciality, international and gluten-free ranges. The project greatly improved the in-store experience and improved the availability of student essentials on campus. We also invested in a refurbishment of Ground Café, introducing new furniture to offer more seating, group tables and to remove old and tired furniture.



### Working together to improve our facilities

The University funded projects to improve safety and ease of access to Godward Square during nearby construction works. This included transforming the Union Shop by providing a new entrance on Bancroft Road, providing a safe and easy route through to Godward Square. The project also saw £25,000 provided to increase the space available on the Qmotion Sport & Fitness Centre gym floor. This was completed by moving office and administration space, providing more space for cardio, resistance and strength equipment.

### Supporting our student staff

A new and improved recruitment and induction process was introduced for student staff which includes essential training, HR information, an introduction to the Students' Union and a new section on welfare and wellbeing. The new induction was supported by the creation of a new student staff handbook and training materials, helping to standardise and improve the quality of the recruitment and training process across the Students' Union. A student staff newsletter was also introduced to provide regular news and updates. The newsletter is student-led and introduced by the Commercial Services Officer, and features a Student Staff Spotlight which highlights outstanding members of the team.

### Developing our staff

As part of our commitment to our values we developed a series of new in-house Equity at Work training for all career staff. The training covered equality, diversity, inclusion, unconscious bias, power, privilege and structural oppression. We also ensured all our staff undertook Mental Health Awareness training provided by the University. Front-line staff who work with students and managers also participated in a course that enabled them to become qualified Mental Health First Aiders.

### Women's Football and Futsal Specialist Hub

In recognition of our passion and commitment to developing women's football, both internally and within the local community, Queen Mary was selected as a Women's Football and Futsal Specialist Hub for the 2018-19 academic year, in partnership with BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) and The FA (Football Association). This enabled the Sports Development team to receive additional support and guidance from the organisations in being at the forefront of developing women's football within the higher education sector, being the only London-based hub.

### New signage

At the start of the year we refreshed the wayfinding signage throughout the Students' Union Hub to remove tired and incorrect signage, and make it bright, friendly, accessible and on-brand. Work at Whitechapel included updating wayfinding signage following the BLSA Building refurbishment, and the installation of a new Barts and The London history timeline, with the content co-curated by a team of student and staff volunteers.

### Tower Project

We worked with Tower Project, a local community skills charity, to provide new work opportunities for adults with learning disabilities, sensory disabilities, autism, physical disabilities and other health related issues. Our first placement was in the Griff Inn where work experience was provided in our kitchen.

### Project Search

Project Search is a supported internship for young adults with learning disabilities and/or autism. The programme is a unique business-led, one year education to work programme. We became the first University in London to host a Project Search programme, with preparation and planning undertaken to welcome six new interns who will work in different areas of the Students' Union and University. We are working with the University, Phoenix School, Kaleidoscope Sabre and Tower Hamlets Council to deliver the programme.

### New brand guidelines



The Students' Union's brand is more than just a logo, it represents everything we do in our organisation from our name to how we sound, look and behave. The brand is guided by our mission, vision and values, and these values are at the core of our brand and what we do. This year saw the creation of a new set of brand guidelines. Developing the new guidelines included changes to our logos, fonts, colour palette and writing styles we use across the organisation. The project also saw the development of a new range of documents and templates to improve the presentation, quality and consistency of work produced. The new guidelines were implemented through a series of staff workshops.

### Your Ideas

You wanted more student internships on campus

### Our Changes

We employed 8 student interns working in administration, finance, HR, membership services, sport and web development

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