QMSU

We Listen. We Act.
We Improve Students' Lives.

2030 PLAN

Impact Report 2024-25

Welcome



Mike Wojcik
Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to Queen Mary Students' Union Impact Report for 2024-2025.

We exist to support, represent and empower over 30,000 students across Queen Mary University of London by listening, acting and continually improving students' lives across our wide range of activities, opportunities and services. Led by our elected student representatives and student leaders, and supported by our committed staff team, we work to ensure that every student's voice is heard, every student feels they belong, and every student can make the most of their university experience here at Queen Mary.

This report reflects the significant progress we have made towards the ambitions set out in our 2030 Strategy – our vision to become an outstanding Students' Union where wellbeing, community and student leadership are at the heart of everything we do. Our work is guided by our four strategic priorities: building an authentic student voice, creating meaningful connections, resonating with everyone in our community and prioritising student mental health.

Across these pages, you'll find stories, data and outcomes that show our strategy in action, from amplifying student voices and strengthening representation to expanding support services, launching new student-led initiatives, increasing opportunities for underrepresented students, and celebrating achievements across our community. Through campaigns, clubs, volunteering, advice, events and employability initiatives we have enhanced the student experience in meaningful and measurable ways.

This year, we were proud to be shortlisted for Best Students' Union at the 2025 WhatUni Student Choice Awards, recognition based entirely on student feedback. We also saw progress yet again on our NSS Question 26 score to 79%. This reflects the commitment and energy of our student leaders, staff, volunteers and student groups who make QMSU such a vibrant and supportive community.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on deepening our impact, strengthening our partnerships and responding to the evolving needs of our diverse student community, despite the challenging environment within the sector. We are excited to continue delivering our 2030 Strategy and shaping a Students' Union that truly works for, and belongs to, every student at Queen Mary.

See our full strategy and our progress so far: **qmsu.org/strategy**

WE LISTEN. WE ACT. WE IMPROVE STUDENTS' LIVES.

Our vision is for every student to feel they belong, in an environment where wellbeing, inclusion and community are at the core of everything we do. We will ensure every student is empowered to grow and thrive throughout their time at University and beyond into their future lives.



Our Exec 2024-25

QMSU is led by students, for students, and at the heart of this work are our six Executive Officers. Elected by students each year, these full-time student leaders represent students voices, champion their priorities and hold the University and Students' Union to account. Through delivering on their manifesto commitments, leading campaigns and driving meaningful change, they've worked hard every day to make the student experience at Queen Mary the best it can be.



Faith & Contemplation Spaces

This was one of our most significant student engagement projects of the year, generating **1466 responses** from a wide range of faiths and backgrounds. The findings provided robust evidence that current provision is not meeting student needs and has directly informed high-level discussions with the University.

The resulting report, drawing on detailed student feedback, sets out clear recommendations to improve inclusivity, accessibility and capacity of faith and contemplation spaces on campus. Early engagement has already strengthened the case for change, helping to place equitable faith provision firmly on the institutional agenda and laying the groundwork for long-term improvements that will benefit current and future students.

Students who work

Recognising that balancing employment alongside study is a reality for many students, we launched a survey engaging **over 500 students** to better understand the pressures faced by those working during their studies.

The findings provided clear evidence to inform high-level discussions with the University and strengthened our advocacy for improved institutional support.

Insights from the research have already shaped reports and communications highlighting the experiences of self-funded students and those managing work alongside academic commitments. This work is helping to drive greater recognition of working students' needs and influence more practical, targeted support across the University.

Read about all our Exec Officer's achievements in 2024-25



Our Highlights

13553 Society memberships

1539 Get Active participants

293 Clubs & Societies

250+ new cases supported by the Academic Advice Service

28,750 matcha drinks sold in Ground Café

128,289 Omotion gym visits

7727 student feedback responses received

523 Course Reps elected into post

5462 voters in our Elections

3218 Club Sport memberships sold

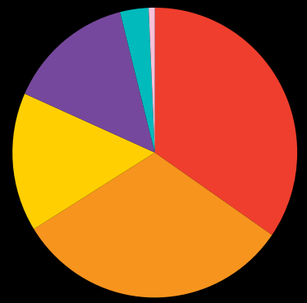
Over **£100K** raised for charity through Raise & Give

5000+ Volunteering hours logged

Our Charitable Expenditure

Block Grant Expenditure

We are grateful for the University's support in providing a block grant of £2,944.075 to QMSU. This funding is focused directly on front-line student benefit.



- Student Activities 35%
- Student Voice 32%
- Governance 15%
- Student Facilities 14%
- Volunteering 3%
- Student Media 1%

In addition, through self-generated income from QMSU Services, additional external grant funding and student expenditure we spent a total of £4,542,403 delivering our charitable and student-facing services, significantly increasing the total value delivered to students beyond the block grant alone and recognising the marked amount of self-funded student-led activities taking place within QMSU.

Through careful financial management, strong cost controls and a continued focus on value for money, we delivered a £50,524 year-end surplus, meeting our £50k Reserves Policy target and strengthening our financial resilience during a challenging sector climate.

We also received a clean audit opinion and maintained our 'going concern' status, providing assurance of our sound governance and long-term sustainability.

Did you know?

£404,250 of student group expenditure was delivered by self-generated funding from student club and society members. Student leaders also volunteered 1000s of hours towards an amazing range of activities, events and services that make a real difference to the student experience.

Total Charitable Expenditure



- Student Activities 63%
- Student Voice 19%
- Governance 9%
- Communications, Marketing and Digital 6%
- Volunteering 2%
- Student Media 1%

QMSU Services

£100k surplus

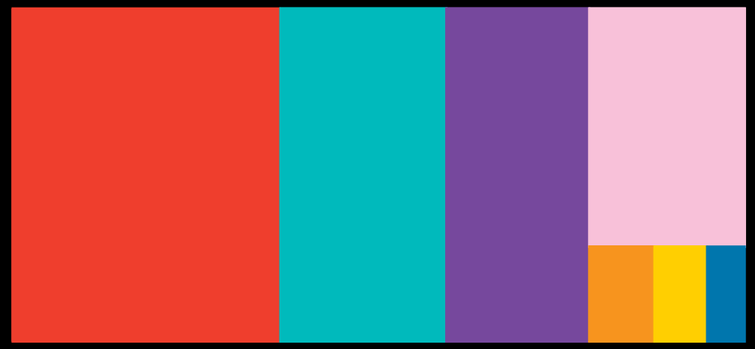
£3,803,774 turnover

£47,370 more than 2023-24

£215,378 in-kind facilities support

Our commercial spaces are not just retail, café or gym venues, they are vital community hubs that play an important role in student wellbeing, connection and belonging. From socialising with friends to participating in events or activities, these spaces help students engage fully with university life and strengthen their relationship with the Students' Union, directly supporting the delivery of our strategy.

Beyond their commercial function, our spaces also provide significant in-kind support to our charitable objectives, totalling £215,378 this year. For example, our bars and cafés host hundreds of student group and student-facing events, while Qmotion is used daily for club and recreational sport training, classes and activities, with extensive staff support provided in-kind. Together, these contributions maximise value for money and help deliver more to students without increasing costs.



- Cafés £1,393,900
- Retail £860,610
- Gyms £739,040
- Bars £583,591
- Entertainment £95,124
- Services Marketing £77,998
- Other Income £53,511

Our strategic pillars

Our strategic pillars bring the work of the Students' Union together and span across all that we do. They are evidence-based and have been created from the insights we have collected from our students, student representatives and staff. The strategic pillars are ambitious and highlight our priority areas, outlining what we will focus on and what our outcomes will be across all of our campuses over the coming years.

1

Building an authentic student voice.

Pg 12

2

Supporting meaningful connections.

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3

Resonating with every student.

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4

Prioritising students' mental health.

Pg 36



Pillar 1

Building an authentic student voice.

Student voice sits at the heart of everything we do at QMSU. This year, we strengthened the ways students shape decisions, influence change and hold both the Students' Union and the University to account. From everyday feedback to national advocacy, we focused on making it easier, more accessible and more meaningful for every student to be heard. Throughout we have tried to listen widely, act transparently and deliver tangible changes shaped by students, for students.

29%
of students gave feedback at least once per academic year

54%
of students feel QMSU actively listens to them



Student ideas stall 2024



Student Experience Forum

We held in-depth, one-to-one conversations with students from across faculties and programme types to understand what matters most to them in 2025. Analysis of these discussions revealed cross-cutting themes, from email overload and communication challenges to the ongoing cost-of-living impact, as well as what students value most in their university experience: community and connection.

The findings were presented to staff from the Students' Union and the University, and will help shape future improvements.



5462
voters

Elections Success

We recorded our second-highest voter turnout on record, with 5462 students casting a vote in the Spring Executive Officer Elections – despite the removal of over 70 roles compared to comparator elections following the Democracy Review. Every position was contested, with 58 candidates across six roles. Engagement was boosted through our VoteFest festival event in Library Square and Candidate Question Time events at Mile End and Whitechapel, creating visible, accessible opportunities for students to take part in campus democracy.



Postgraduate Consultation Group Success

The group continued with four meetings this academic year. In these meetings, Postgraduate Research students (PGRs) have a space to share their experiences at Queen Mary and suggest improvements. This year's topics included funding, work-life balance and engagement with the Students' Union. Examples of outcomes from the meeting were new postgraduate events and the new Postgraduate Lounge, a weekly event held in The Lounge to substitute for a postgraduate common room. Here, postgrads can drop-in, meet new people and partake in some low-pressure games and activities during study breaks.

Russell Group Partnership

Working with other Russell Group Students' Union's we co-launched the flagship International Students Report and actively lobbied MPs and Lords through the All-Party Parliamentary Group on International Students, representing the interests of Queen Mary's 10,000+ international students at a national level. Separately, we also worked with other institutions in London to lobby the government for a London weighting on the stipends of PGR students at Queen Mary, supported by insights from our collaborative survey with UCU to better understand the needs of PGR students to inform future lobbying and policy advocacy efforts.



2500+
responses

Tell Us Campaign

During our Autumn Tell Us campaign, Executive Officers gathered feedback from more than 2,500 students through surveys, focus groups and drop-ins, directly shaping action on faith spaces, MBBS assessments, academic advising and support for working students. For example, our Faith & Contemplation Spaces survey received 1,466 responses to support our President's manifesto project to improve faith provision and support for faith groups. A report was created and presented to the University, with actions to be implemented in the 2025-26 academic year.

Academic Voice & Learning Spaces

532
Course Reps elected

We strengthened student influence across key academic and campus developments through targeted consultation and advocacy. Focus groups across the Faculty of Science & Engineering gathered feedback to improve advisor schemes and shape future academic support, while we secured the continuation of anonymous module evaluations to protect honest student feedback. At Whitechapel, we worked closely with the Library to inform renovations, advocating for more silent and group study space and a new contemplation room to support wellbeing. In response to the HSS faculty merger, we led a dedicated survey and presented our findings at Senate, ensuring student perspectives directly informed decision-making and future communications, alongside releasing a joint online Q&A live video session with faculty leadership.



SU Wins & Ideas

Our new Ideas & Wins platforms on qmsu.org were launched to streamline how students submit feedback and proposals, and to clearly demonstrate the actions taken in response. The platform strengthens transparency and accountability by evidencing how student insight directly informs our priorities, decision-making and delivery.

Ethical and Sustainable Investments Forum

In response to student interest and previous motions from our student meetings, we launched the Ethical and Sustainable Investments Forum in partnership with the University. The forum gives students a direct voice in shaping how Queen Mary's investments and policies can become more ethical, transparent and sustainable, with representatives from the student community, elected representatives and university stakeholders. We have begun facilitating important conversations about the University's ethical investments policy and met with several university investors including Barclays and Cazenove Capital to gather a deeper understanding of investments the University are making, alongside wider work through the newly established Good Campus Relations Steering Group.

Boosting feedback on Sport

1565
feedback responses

Qmotion recorded 128,829 visits this year. Feedback from 545 members informed targeted improvements to facilities and services, contributing to increased usage and a 99% satisfaction score, despite ongoing space pressures. Alongside this, our Sports team's Balancing Life Survey gathered insight from over 1000 students into how they balance study, work and wellbeing, alongside their physical activity and wellness too, enabling us to evolve our sport and physical activity offer to better support student health and lifestyles.

NSS Success

QMSU achieved strong results in the NSS, with our headline score for Question 25 rising from 74% in 2023 and 76% in 2024 to 79% this year. Student Voice was the only section above the Office for Students benchmark, with Question 25 the strongest performer against the benchmark across the University. We also saw notable improvements for scores on student voice and wellbeing questions, both areas where QMSU plays a leading role. We also partnered with the University to deliver a joint communications campaign that increased student response rates.

79%
satisfaction score

Building an Authentic Student Voice

University Strategy 2030

- Pillars of Education: Excellence in Student Engagement
- Objective 1: Greater student satisfaction
- Objective 4: Reduce student attainment gap

Spotlight on Democracy

Building a simpler, more accessible Students' Union for every student.

Why we reviewed our democratic structures

Over recent years, engagement with our democratic structures has been inconsistent. While many representatives were highly active, others struggled with workload, meeting attendance and complex processes. Some meetings failed to reach quorum, vacancies remained unfilled and students told us it felt difficult to understand or access how decisions were made.

At the same time, student life has changed. More students study hybrid, work part-time, start courses at different points in the year or are based across multiple campuses. Our structures, last reviewed in 2019, no longer reflected how students engage today.

In response, we commissioned an independent Democracy Review to redesign our system so it is simpler, more flexible and easier for every student to participate in, to deliver an authentic student voice.

What we changed

- More direct student voice
- Streamlined leadership
- Flexible ways to get involved
- Clearer feedback pathways
- Hybrid access

Why it matters

- Reduces barriers to participation
- Prevents volunteer overload and protects student wellbeing
- Increases the legitimacy of decisions
- Accelerates action on student issues
- Creates multiple pathways to engage – not just formal elections



Students have more opportunities to shape QMSU's priorities and future direction

Democracy Review at a glance

Previously

- Complex structures
- 70+ volunteer officer roles
- Inquorate and ineffective meetings
- Limited routes for students to engage throughout the year

From September 2025

- Simpler, flexible and easier to understand system
- 10 well-supported student representative roles
- All-Student policy meetings throughout the year
- Flexible, hybrid and digital student voice opportunities through a range of routes

10 student rep roles

Enacting Pillar 1: We will build an authentic student voice.

The Democracy Review is a key way for us to deliver Pillar 1, strengthening how students shape decisions and influence change across QMSU. By simplifying our structures, introducing all-student meetings and creating more flexible ways to participate, we have removed barriers that previously limited engagement to a small group of student volunteers. The new model broadens participation, enhances the legitimacy of student mandates and ensures feedback is acted upon more consistently, creating a system where student voice is more representative, accessible and impactful.



More representative
All-student meetings enable many more students to directly shape policy.

More accessible
Flexible, hybrid and digital routes remove barriers to participation.

More responsive
Clear feedback pathways ensure student ideas lead to action.

More sustainable
Streamlined roles reduce burnout, improving long-term engagement and impacts.

More credible
Stronger turnout gives our elected student representatives a clearer mandate when lobbying the University.

Pillar 2

Supporting meaningful connections.

Meaningful connection and a sense of belonging is central to student success. This year, we focused on creating the spaces, activities and support that help students to meet new people, build lasting friendships and feel part of a welcoming community at Queen Mary – removing the expectation on students to build these networks alone. From investing in welcoming social spaces to delivering a wide-ranging and inclusive programme of events, sport, volunteering and social opportunities, we made it easier for every student to thrive socially as well as academically and find their place.

69%

of students say QMSU provided them with opportunities to connect with other students

60%

of students say they feel part of a student community supported by QMSU





The Lounge

Working with the University, we secured £150,000 of one-off funding for Phase 1 of The Lounge refurbishment. This transformed an underused, dark and drab nightclub space into a warm and welcoming social space that actively supports student connection and belonging. The space has already become a focal point for community-building, hosting 48 student group bookings and welcoming more than 2,000 attendees in Semester 2 alone, alongside QMSU-led events such as awards ceremonies, Elections Results Nights and Try Something New activities such as Crafternoons. The Lounge represents a key step towards our wider ambition to establish the new Students' Union Quarter at Godward Square, strengthening this area of the Mile End campus into a vibrant student destination.



Women's Fencing Success

Our Women's Fencing team were crowned champions of the 2024-25 BUCS Southern Premier Division – the first Premier League title in the history of QMSU Fencing, achieved in just their second season at this level. The team recorded decisive wins against leading institutions including Oxford, Cambridge, Bath, Kent and UCL, demonstrating the impact of targeted investment through our Performance Sport Programme. As a designated Focus Team, they benefited from enhanced support such as strength and conditioning coaching and sports therapy, highlighting how structured performance investment can deliver improved sporting outcomes.

28,750
matchas sold



373 Matcha Baths

In response to student feedback calling for more inclusive, alcohol-free ways to socialise, we improved our low and no-alcohol offer to ensure more students can take part in campus life comfortably and safely. We enhanced soft drink and mocktail options at Sports Clubs socials and across our venues, creating accessible spaces that support connection and wellbeing without alcohol as the focus, recognised by our Best Drinks Menu Design Award received from NUS. Matcha drinks have also proved to be very popular with our student community, with 28,750 matcha drinks sold in Ground Café alone this year – that's enough for 373 matcha baths!

Our Education Awards 2025

Celebrating Student Success

We delivered six awards ceremonies to celebrate student achievements and strengthen the sense of community across our activities, generating more than 900 nominations and bringing together over 500 attendees. By hosting most events in QMSU spaces and keeping them free or low cost, we maximised accessibility and value for money, ensuring more students could take part. Our Education Awards were hosted at Drapers Hall, with the venue provided free of charge by the Drapers' Company.

900+
award nominations

Success for Women's Football: Community Outreach

The Queen Mary Women's Football Club were nominated for the Community Outreach Project at the 2025 BUCS Football & Futsal Workforce Development Awards in recognition of their eight-week programme delivering free after-school football sessions to girls at Globe Primary School in Tower Hamlets. The initiative boosted community engagement, expanded access to sport for local children and supported professional development for student participants, who received FA-accredited qualifications in coaching or refereeing as a result.



Improving Support for Student Clubs & Societies

To help society committees plan engaging and well-run activities for their members, we improved the support available to them by significantly reducing response times to enquiries and reviewing and enhancing our training programme and committee resources. This has enabled student leaders to organise events more efficiently, improve their offer and deliver a better experience for their communities.



11,000
atendees

Welcome Fair Events

Our Welcome Fair events are a highlight in the calendar in September and January and saw more than 11,000 students attend our largest community-building moments of the year, creating a vibrant gateway into student life at Queen Mary. With over 200 stalls from clubs and societies and 50+ external brands and charitable organisations, students were able to discover opportunities, meet new people and find communities that match their interests from day one. An outdoor performance space featured over 25 live performances that further showcased the breadth of student talent and activities on offer, helping new and returning students feel connected, informed and part of campus life.

Spotlight on Volunteering

Our Volunteering Service is supported by £95,367 of block grant funding from the University.

Following a rebrand and website revamp, it continued to deliver meaningful opportunities that connect students with the local community. Students logged over 5,000 hours of volunteering, taking part in a diverse range of one-off and regular opportunities that make a real difference across Tower Hamlets and the wider London community. This included supporting community events, foodbank and environmental projects and mentoring & youth outreach work. Highlights included Student Volunteering Week, where our Volunteering Champions ran 5 one-off volunteering events and 3 donation drives to support local charities. Teddy Bear Hospital also ran their Safety Day, where volunteers led a day of activities for 60 school children, educating them about healthy eating and hand washing, alongside a visit from St John Ambulance and the local police. Our Volunteering Officer also organised an Eid Smiles Gift Bag donation drive, donating around 20 gift bags for Haven House Children's Hospice.

QMSU Volunteering not only enriches the lives of local residents, but also helped students develop skills, build networks and strengthen their sense of belonging and connection with other students.



5000+
volunteer hours logged

Mile End Volunteering Officer Lily created and delivered handmade care packages and activity booklets for St Joseph's Hospice, a project warmly received by both the hospice and participating students.

Participation Highlights

1539 Get Active participants

596 Social Leagues participants

2641 Qmotion gym members

1688 Society Committee Members

13553 Society memberships

293 Clubs & Societies

3218 Club Sport memberships sold

33 Weekly Radio Shows on Quest Radio

Over **£100K** raised for charity through Raise & Give

5000+ volunteering hours logged



Welcome Crew

Our Welcome Crew, made up of 80 trained student volunteers, provided a friendly and visible presence across campus during the September arrivals period, supporting students and helping students connect as they settled into university life. The team offered guidance, signposting and peer support, helping new and returning students navigate campus, access services and connect with activities from day one. By creating early moments of reassurance and connection, the Welcome Crew helped students feel informed, confident and part of the Queen Mary community from the outset.

National Community Impact Award Win

Gowri Promy as named the Community Impact Award Winner at the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) #WeareInternational Awards 2025, recognising her contribution to the international student experience and wider community. Gowri's work, including her leadership of Lawyers Without Borders to connect students with local charities, human rights education and advocacy networks, exemplifies the real-world impact our students have beyond campus, and the breadth of student influence, leadership and community engagement supported through QMSU.



Supporting Meaningful Connections

University Strategy 2030

- Pillars of Education: Excellence in Student Employability
- Pillars of Education: Excellence in Learning Environment
- Objective 1: Greater Student Satisfaction

Pillar 3

Resonating with every student.

At Queen Mary, our community is diverse, global and constantly evolving. This year, we focused on ensuring that every student, regardless of background, identity or circumstance, can see themselves reflected in QMSU and feel that our spaces, services and opportunities are relevant, welcoming and accessible. Through our work we have broadened our reach, deepened inclusion and made progress towards building a Students' Union that truly connects with all students.

58%
of students say that QMSU is relevant to them

Over
13550
students engaged in activities, events and services from QMSU*



Netball Teams 2025

*countless more participated in non-ticketed, free to attend and outdoor events



WhatUni Awards Success

QMSU was shortlisted for Best Students' Union at the 2025 WhatUni Student Choice Awards, with nominations based entirely on student feedback. This external recognition positions QMSU among the sector's leading Students' Unions and validates the impact of our work to resonate with every student. It reflects the collective efforts of our student leaders, staff, volunteers and student groups in creating a vibrant, supportive and inclusive community. We were delighted to join colleagues from the University to celebrate the achievement at the awards ceremony.

Open Iftar & Ramadan

750 attendees

Two Open Iftar events were held to bring students together in celebration of Ramadan, creating inclusive spaces for connection across our diverse community. Open to all, more than 750 students took part, with feedback showing the events had a strong impact. 87% said the Open Iftars helped them connect with others and 84% reported feeling part of a community supported by QMSU.



Postgraduate Communications Project

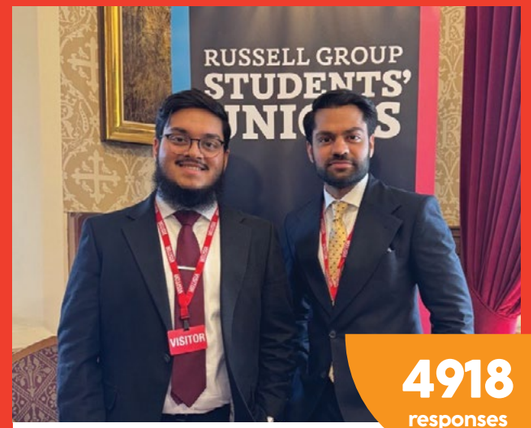
Funded through the Enhancing Research Innovation Cultures Fund, we delivered a targeted communications and engagement project to better connect with postgraduate students. This included launching a dedicated Postgraduate Hub on our website, developing postgraduate-specific events and programmes, introducing segmented-personalised communications for PGR students and rolling-out a range of new print and digital assets across our campuses. Our communications consistently achieved open rates of over 50%, significantly exceeding sector norms, while new online features and research spotlights increased visibility of postgraduate experiences. Together, these interventions strengthened relevance, engagement and sense of belonging among postgraduate students, ensuring our offer better reflects their needs and priorities.

Women's Wellbeing & Safe Spaces

Over 150 students took part in our pilot of women-only spaces. These safe, comfortable environments to eat, socialise, relax and study in improved student wellbeing and built a stronger sense of community. Findings were shared with the University and inspired expansion of our offer through regular Women's Wellbeing Walks, events and study sessions to provide ongoing, dedicated support and opportunities to connect.

Tackling Islamophobia

Following a public attack on our Executive Officers and ongoing feedback from Muslim students, we have prioritised addressing Islamophobia to strengthen safety and inclusion across our community. Collaboratively with the University, we raised awareness of lived experiences, produced a report with recommendations for change and introduced islamophobia training for staff. We also partnered with the University to begin training senior leaders and Council to improve accountability and deliver long-term cultural change.



4918 responses

Russell Group Survey

Working in partnership with other Russell Group Students' Unions, we led a sector-wide survey on the international student experience, capturing 4,918 responses, including 396 from Queen Mary students. The resulting report was launched at the Houses of Parliament, elevating student voices to a national platform and directly informing policy and advocacy on issues affecting international students across the UK.



QMSU Brand Refresh

Following the launch of our 2030 Strategy, we fully refreshed our brand and visual identity to better reflect our diverse community and ensure QMSU resonates with every student. The new brand has improved clarity, consistency and reach across our communications, helping more students to recognise our offer, engage with our services and see the Students' Union is relevant to them. Delivered entirely in-house by our part-time designer, the project has achieved impact efficiently while maximising value for money without external agency costs.

Liberating students together

Block grant win

Supported by £20,000 of restricted funding from the University, our liberation campaigns delivered a wide-ranging programme celebrating identity, heritage and social justice across campus. Working with student groups, we marked key moments including Black History Month, LGBTQ+ History Month, Disability History Month, Asian Heritage Month, Jewish Heritage Fortnight and Anti-Apartheid Week. Highlights included large-scale cultural celebrations such as Diwali with the Hindu Society and initiatives such as blood donation events during Black History Month. Together, these campaigns created visible, meaningful opportunities for students to see their identities recognised, build cross-cultural understanding and feel represented within the Students' Union.



Cultural Unity Week

The first Cultural Unity Week was held to celebrate the diversity of more than 170 nationalities represented at Queen Mary and foster greater understanding and inclusion within our community. The programme aimed to challenge unconscious bias, xenophobia and racism, whilst creating opportunities for students to connect through shared cultural experiences. Through securing university funding and partnering with Residential Life, we delivered a wide-ranging series of community-building activities, culminating in the Cultural Unity Ball.

Drapers tops non-alcoholic charts

Student Beans research identified a lack of engaging alcohol-free options across many Students' Union venues nationally. In contrast, Drapers Bar & Kitchen was recognised as a sector stand-out, with one of the largest alcohol-free menus in the UK.

The recognition highlighted our affordable mocktails and expanded matcha and dessert offer, alongside our wider programme of alcohol-free events, demonstrating how we support sober and sober-curious students and ensure our social spaces remain inclusive and relevant for all.



Resonating with Every Student

University Strategy 2030

- Pillars of Education: Excellence in Student Engagement
- Objective 1: Greater student satisfaction
- Objective 4: Reduce student attainment gap

Spotlight on Employability

Employability and careers support is a key priority for our students and one we try to focus on throughout our activities. All of our activities and training programmes have an underlying employability focus, with comprehensive training, skills development and induction sessions for student leaders, whilst participants develop a range of skills and competencies by taking part in our range of activities and services. This is complemented by several specific programmes targeted in this area, including some highlighted here.

95% of students said Skills Award training strengthened their skills ready for their careers



Upskilling our Students

This year saw 442 attendees at our Skills Award sessions, with 75 completing the Gold Skills Award. The Skills Award is open to all student leaders and student staff at QMSU. Part of the programme saw 67 students completing either mental health or suicide first aid training providing important skills for the students who participated. Students were engaged and thoroughly enjoyed the sessions, actively asking for more and inviting friends to future sessions.





Sports Employability Academy

We launched our new Sports Employability Academy to turn students' passion for sport into meaningful experience, qualifications and paid opportunities. Students accessed coaching, officiating and leadership roles across football, netball, cricket, basketball, fencing and more, alongside non-traditional positions such as events and sponsorship. Participants received free UK Coaching membership and up to £300 funding towards qualifications by completing 10-30 volunteering hours, with clear pathways into paid roles. Backed by targeted funding, including £2,500 for FA-accredited female coaching qualifications, the programme enhances students employability, reduces financial barriers and equips students with practical, career-ready skills while supporting sport on campus and in the local community.

Graduate Recruiter Collaborations

Our programme of Graduate Recruiter collaborations was expanded this year, supporting the work of Careers & Enterprise to help connect students to high-quality post-university opportunities. We hosted a range of leading employers on campus, including PwC, Deloitte, KPMG, Teach First, NatWest, Lloyds Banking Group, the NHS, GradUK, Handshake and Police Now, giving students direct access to recruitment insight, networking and career pathways across multiple sectors.



Pillar 4

Prioritising students' mental health.

Student wellbeing is fundamental to success at university. With 38.2% of students reporting feeling stressed or overwhelmed, we prioritised practical, preventative support that helps students manage pressures and access help when they need it most. From advice and advocacy to cost-of-living support, physical activity, peer connection and safe spaces, we have focused on reducing barriers and building resilience across our community.

38%

of students said stress and overwhelm are big issues they face

58%

of students say QMSU has a positive impact on their wellbeing



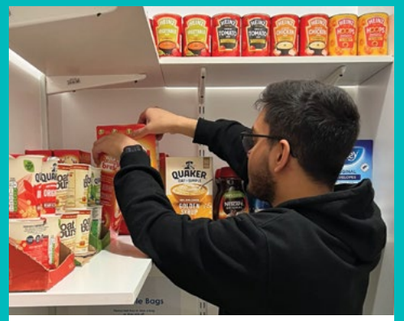
Students at our Postgraduate BBQ 2024

Cost of Living Support

To reduce financial pressures and help students focus on their studies, we enhanced our cost-of-living support. This included opening a new food pantry, updating our online cost-of-living hub and partnering with Advice & Counselling to deliver a targeted money advice series. We also championed self-funded students by lobbying for the removal of late fees, conducting research into their experiences and producing a report to inform change, alongside surveys and advocacy on travel costs and targeted work to address gaming and gambling harms.

Talk Club x QMSU

In partnership with Talk Club, a UK men's mental health charity, QMSU delivered a series of peer-led wellbeing sessions combining physical activity with open conversations about mental fitness. Led by trained volunteer "captains", each session followed a simple check-in, activity and check-out format, creating a safe and supportive space for men to connect, stay active and talk openly about their wellbeing. Following positive feedback, the programme will be expanded alongside further initiatives such as our Men's Walk & Talk Club.



Food Pantry Expansion

To improve access to essential cost-of-living support, we expanded our QMSU Food Pantry service to the Whitechapel campus, ensuring more students can access free food and household staples closer to where they study. The expansion further helps to reduce financial pressures, by managing rising costs and supporting their wellbeing and ability to focus on their studies.



Get Active

We expanded our Get Active programme by partnering with Sports Clubs to deliver more accessible, low-cost sessions while providing clubs with additional funding and leadership development opportunities. The programme engaged 1,539 individual participants across a wide range of activities, including cheerleading, volleyball, table tennis and badminton, helping more students stay active, connected and maintain positive wellbeing. This collaborative model strengthened links between clubs, staff and students, delivered strong value for money and received consistently positive feedback.



700
students attended

SpringFest 2025

SpringFest engaged more than 700 students through a week of free, inclusive events designed to reduce stress, support wellbeing and improve connection during a busy point in the academic year. From relaxed social activities to opportunities to try something new, the programme provided accessible ways for students to take a break, meet others and build community on campus. By removing cost barriers and creating low-pressure spaces to interact, SpringFest played an important role in supporting students' mental health and sense of belonging.



250
new academic cases supported

Academic Advice Service

Following a successful block grant bid, we expanded our Academic Advice Service by recruiting an additional staff member, significantly improving student access to independent academic support. We formally supported more than 250 new academic cases, alongside numerous informal enquiries, helping students navigate issues including academic misconduct allegations, appeals and complaints. We also began implementing a new case management system to strengthen tracking, data and insight, improving how we evidence impact and value. The service is supported by £32,502 of University funding.



Inclusive PPE for medical placements

In line with policy set by the Annual Student Meeting and BMA, the Vice President Barts and The London secured hundreds of inclusive PPE samples for students to access free of charge ahead of clinical placements. Designed to meet NHS England guidelines and accommodate cultural and religious needs, the provision removed barriers and reduced stress, supporting a more equitable learning experience. We have since submitted a proposal to embed this offer permanently at the University.



Study Well and Self Care & Wellbeing Fair

The QMSU Study Well campaign provided practical, visible support during assessment periods, helping students manage stress and protect their mental health. Through a programme of free activities, study spaces and wellbeing events, including Pomodoro Study Sessions, Yoga, Creative Breaks and our brand-new Self-Care & Wellbeing Fair featuring free food from Deliveroo, outdoor yoga and brand partner-led experiences, we created a programme of low-pressure opportunities for students to rest, recharge and connect. Alongside online resources and guidance available via the Study Well Hub, the campaign promoted healthy study habits and ensured students could access support when they needed it most.

700+
students accessed free items



Reuse Fairs

More than 700 students accessed free essential items through our Re-Use Fairs in September and January, helping to ease financial pressures and reduce the cost of day-to-day living. Delivered in partnership with Queen Mary Estates & Facilities, the fairs also supported our sustainability goals by reducing waste and promoting reuse, creating both environmental and financial benefits for students and the wider community.

Supporting students who work

Recognising that balancing employment alongside study is a reality for many students, we launched a survey that reached over 500 respondents, capturing detailed insight into students' working lives and pressures. The findings informed high-level discussions with the University and led to the development of written outputs, including a focused piece on the experiences of self-funded students. This work is helping to drive greater recognition and more meaningful support for students managing work alongside their studies.

Sports Therapy Partnership

Our Performance Sport team secured a new partnership with the University of East London, giving our Talented Athletes and Focus Teams access to heavily discounted specialist sports therapy at the SportsDock facility. The partnership improves access to professional injury assessment, rehabilitation and recovery services, including sports massage and cryotherapy, helping student athletes stay healthy, return to play faster and perform at their best, while delivering high-quality support at reduced cost.

Prioritising Students' Mental Health

University Strategy 2030

- Pillars of Education: Excellence in Student Engagement
- Pillars of Education: Learning Environment
- Objective 7: Improved Progression

Behind the scenes

QMSU is a lean organisation operating in a challenging financial context, which means delivering exceptional value for money remains a core priority. Behind the scenes, we focus on using our resources strategically, strengthening partnerships and improving how we work to maximise impact for students. From securing external funding and refining internal processes to delivering services efficiently and sustainably, this work ensures every pound is used to support students' experiences, opportunities and wellbeing as effectively as possible.

2025 Staff Survey Results

81% feel part of a team

76% felt appropriately involved in decisions that affect their work

85% of our staff felt they had enough autonomy to perform their jobs effectively

83% completion rate of QMUL Staff Survey

83% know what they need to be successful in their role

Partnership Agreements

Over the past year, we have worked to improve our collaborative approach by developing and formalising a series of Partnership Agreements covering key areas including the Garrod Building, Human Resources, IT and Estates & Facilities, with further agreements in development for Charterhouse Square and Malta. These agreements aim to provide greater clarity and accountability around service delivery, strengthening joint working and ensuring more consistent, student-focused outcomes across the University.





Sustainability

Sustainability remains at the heart of our operations, and we continue to reflect on how we can reduce our climate impact as an organisation. A highlight of this year was Climate Action Week. Over 250 students and staff attended across 15 individual events, including 51 volunteers participating in a big clean-up of the Regent's Canal alongside campus.

Student Experience Strategy

Working together with the University we have created a set of Student Experience Strategic Clusters, jointly shared with Estates and Facilities. They focus on themes including Physical & Mental Health, Global & Inclusive, Flexible & Accessible and Living & Learning to ensure we work pro-actively together to make progress on improving the student experience. Setting up this framework of initial clusters will allow us to deliver the aims set out in our 2030 Strategy and enhance the student experience for all Queen Mary students.





QM SU | Queen Mary Students' Union

We Listen. We Act.
We Improve Students' Lives.

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