

Student Council

Tuesday 17 October 2023 6.00pm to be held online via Zoom

Agenda

1. Welcome and Apologies

Members are reminded:

- The meeting will be recorded and also live streamed.
- Please be respectful towards each other at all times.
- Please use the 'raise hand' function if you wish to speak during the meeting.
- Please remember to keep yourself muted during the meeting, unless asked to speak.

2. Chair's Introduction

3. Election of Deputy Chair

Student Council needs to **elect** a Member to serve as Deputy Chair:

4.2 An election for Student Council Deputy Chair shall be held as the first item of business at the first meeting of the academic year.

4.2.1 The Student Council Deputy Chair shall undertake the duties and responsibilities assigned to the Student Council Chair in the Bye Laws in the absence of the Student Council Chair.

Members will be invited to nominate themselves at the meeting, and then asked to say a few words (one minute each) about what they think they would bring to the role. Members will then be asked to vote.

3. Terms of Reference of Student Council and its Sub Committees (*appended at end*)

Student Council needs to **note and approve** the Terms of Reference of Student Council. These have been circulated in advance and will be taken as read. Members will be asked for questions, or comments and then will be asked to vote to approve them.

The Terms of Reference for the Sub-committees of Student Council will go to the first meeting of the relevant Sub-Committee where its Members will have the opportunity to review and approve them before they come to the next meeting of Student Council.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*appended at end*)

Student Council are asked to **note and approve** the minutes of the last meeting of Student Council held on **7 March 2023** (the meeting scheduled for 4 April 2023 was inquorate).

These will have been circulated in advance and will be taken as read.

6. Minutes from Sub-Committees (*appended at end*)

Most Sub-Committees will not have met at this point in the year - if any minutes are available, these will have been circulated in advance and will be taken as read. Council members and any students attending will then have the opportunity to put questions to the relevant Chairs/members.

7. Reports from and Questions to the Executive Officers

The Executive Officers will have submitted written reports on their work so far this year in advance of the meeting (attached as Students' Union's President's Report to QM Council), and which will be taken as read. They will be invited to give a brief verbal report highlighting any particular matters of interest, Council members and any students attending will then have an opportunity to put questions to the Officers.

Any students wishing to ask questions are asked to notify the Secretary (b.coales@qmul.ac.uk) before the meeting so that they can be given access to the meeting as participants, rather than just watching the live stream.

8. Bye-Law Changes

Deadline for Bye-Law changes is Tuesday 10 October 2023

Amendments are planned to the following Bye-Laws:

- a) Bye-Law 9 Scrutiny Panel - *held over from previous inquorate meeting*
- b) Bye-Law 7 Executive Committee
- c) Bye-Law 13 Code of Conduct, Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

a) Should the Students' Union repeal Bye-Law 9 Scrutiny Panel and thereby remove the Scrutiny Panel, returning scrutiny of the work of the Executive Officers to Student Council?

Proposed by: Azzah Abubacar (Chair of Student Council)

Seconded by: tbc

NB As the Chair of Student Council is the proposer of this motion, they will hand over the Chair to the Deputy Student Council Chair for this item.

What do you want?

I have been re-elected as Student Council Chair on a manifesto which promised to remove the Scrutiny Panel and return scrutiny of the work of the Executive Officers to Student Council. This motion proposes that the Scrutiny Panel Bye-Law (19) be repealed and

replaced with the text appended to this motion: **Bye-Law 9 Scrutiny of the Work of the Executive and Part-Time Officers**

Why do you want it?

Scrutiny Panel was created as a result of the democracy review that took place several years ago, which created a significant number of additional Student Council members. Its intention was to ensure that the work of the Executive and Part-Time Officers was subject to scrutiny, without burdening Student Council with reading nearly 60 reports, and then taking up a large amount of time at Council meetings with questions.

Since it was introduced, the Panel has always struggled to recruit the necessary volunteers from both Student Council and the wider student body. The revolving nature of its membership means that members are never quite sure what they are supposed to be doing. Written guidance is given and training offered, but as members may only attend one or two Panel meetings a year, this is seen as an additional time commitment, and makes serving on the Panel even more unattractive.

In order to focus attention on students who have already got a connection with the Union, recruitment was re-directed to those who are Course Reps, or officers of a student group. We have even tried offering attendance at Scrutiny Panel as part of the QMSkills Award, but still we struggle to get engagement.

With the roll-out of Student Council Sub-Committees, scrutiny of Part-Time Officers has been re-allocated to the relevant sub-committee, where their work can be reported and assessed by their peers. This element of the current Scrutiny Panel Bye-Law is retained unchanged.

Student Council has itself had problems with engagement, even with its quoracy reduced to a third we still struggle to hold quorate meetings. Attendance by students who are not Council members is non-existent, unless they are amongst the few who have submitted motions.

Therefore, it is hoped that by returning scrutiny of the work of the Executive Officers to Student Council, and by actively advertising that any student can attend Student Council and ask them questions, this will increase its relevance and improve attendance.

What impact will this have?

This change will ensure that the Executive Officers are properly held to account, are more accessible to non-Council Members, and that Student Council meetings have more relevance to the wider student body.

This will also avoid duplication of reporting by the Executive Officers (as they already give verbal updates at Student Council), reduce the number of out-of-hours meetings which Executive Officers and others need to attend, and free up some staff time to provide additional support elsewhere.

Bye-Law 9 Scrutiny of the Work of the Executive and Part-Time Officers

1. Scrutiny of Executive Officers

- 1.1. Scrutiny of the Executive Officers shall be the responsibility of Student Council.
- 1.2. Executive Officers should submit a written report on their work to each Student Council meeting. The report should be between half a page and 3 pages in length, and should be submitted by the deadline set for submission of agenda items.
- 1.3. The reports will be circulated with the Student Council papers and will be taken as read. The Student Council Chair will allocate time at each meeting for Executive Officers to highlight anything they wish draw to the attention of Student Council.
- 1.4. Student Council members, and any member of the Students' Union attending the meeting, will then be allocated time to put questions to the Executive Officers on any aspect of their work including emerging issues, and progress on implementing existing Union policies.
- 1.5. However, if there are concerns regarding the work of the Executive Officers in their role as Trustees, these should be passed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, or to the Deputy Chair of the Board if the concern is regarding the President. This does not remove the rights of Student Council to remove the Sabbatical Trustees as per the Articles of Association.

2. Scrutiny of Student Council Members

- 2.1. Scrutiny of Part-time Officers who are members of Student Council shall be the responsibility of the Student Council Sub-committees on which they serve.
- 2.2. Part-time Officers should report on their work to the relevant sub-committee/s of which they are members, in a format approved by the relevant sub-committee. The Sub-committee shall also consider:
 - 2.2.1. A record of attendance at, or apologies sent to, Student Council, its Sub-committees and the Annual Members Meeting. This will be compiled by the appropriate member of staff;
 - 2.2.2. Any feedback, comments or questions provided by students;
3. Sub-committees are responsible for considering the work of their members, and may make following recommendations to Student Council, but do not have the power to pass the recommendation itself:
 - 3.1. **Commendation** – Given to those who have demonstrated exceptional work;
 - 3.2. **Satisfaction** – Given to those who have demonstrated satisfactory work;
 - 3.3. **Censure** – Given to those who have not satisfied the requirements of the Panel in meeting their responsibilities;
 - 3.4. **No Confidence** – Given to those who have either already been Censured and would again be Censured by the Sub-committee, in which case they will be given an automatic recommendation of No Confidence. Or if they have performed their responsibilities so exceptionally poorly that the Sub-committee feels that the position

should be opened again for election without a Censure being given first.

- 3.5. Any recommendation of Censure or No Confidence must first include a welfare check to be carried out by a member of Staff allocated by the CEO between the meeting of the Sub-committee and the next Student Council meeting.
 - 3.6. The content of a Welfare Check shall be decided by the Sub-committee, but may include contacting the Part-time Officer as to why a report was not submitted, or they may mandate the member of staff allocated by the CEO to meet the person physically or via video call.
 - 3.7. The Sub-committee should also indicate what it would change its recommendation to if the Welfare Check reveals mitigating circumstances. Chairs Action will then be taken to change the recommendation.
 - 3.8. All recommendations from the Sub-committee must be voted on by Student Council at its next meeting in order to ratify them.
 - 3.9. Student Council may choose, from time to time, to review the minutes of Sub-committees to ensure that they are exercising effectively their responsibility of holding Part-time Officers to account.
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b) Should the Students' Union amend Bye-Law 7 Executive Committee to clarify the powers of the Executive Committee and to establish a mechanism to resolve deadlock?

Proposed by: Executive Committee

Seconded by: Executive Committee

These are amendments to the Executive Committee Bye-Law as requested by the Board of Trustees during 2022-23 which will go to Student Council on 17 October. As these were requested by the Board, they are asked to **consider** and **approve** the amendment in advance - they will not be effective until, and if, they is also approved by Student Council.

5. Authority

Delete the following paragraphs:

1.2 The Executive Committee is authorised by the Board of Trustees to take decisions on issues in line with this Bye Law. It is not authorised to make decisions on those issues which are properly the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, other Committees of the Board, the Student Council or other Committees of the Student Council as set out in their respective terms of reference. The Executive Committee is authorised by the Board of Trustees to take decisions on issues in line with this bye-law. It is not authorised to make decisions on those issues which are properly the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, other Committees of the Board, the Student Council or other Committees of the Student Council as set out in their respective terms of reference.

Add the following paragraphs:

1.2 The Executive Committee is authorised by the Board of Trustees to take decisions on issues in line with this bye-law. It is not authorised to make decisions on issues which are the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, other Committees of the Board, the Student Council or other Committees of the Student Council as set out in their respective terms of reference. Nor is it authorised to make operational decisions which are the responsibility of Students' Union managers, or to make policy decision which are the responsibility of Student Council and its Sub-Committees and are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, especially those which may have financial implications for the Students' Union.

1.3 As the Executive Committee is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees of Queen Mary Students' Union, its members are subject to the Trustees Conflicts of Interest policy.

1.4 Should the Executive Committee be unable to reach a majority decision on any matter then no decision shall be taken, and the topic will either be brought back to a subsequent meeting; or instead be referred to Student Council, or the Board of Trustees for resolution, whichever the Chair may decide.

Renumber Current paragraphs 1.3 as 1.5 and 1.4 as 1.6

c) Should the Union amend Bye-Law 13 Code of Conduct, Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure to include protection for Students' Union Staff?

Proposed by: The Executive Officers

Seconded by: The Executive Officers

Add a new paragraph as follows:

2.3 Complaints by Students' Union Staff

All Students' Union staff have the right to work in a safe environment and not be subject to abuse, bullying or harassment. Should a member of Students' Union staff have reason to report the behaviour of a student whilst on Students' Union premises, using services provided by the Students' Union, or participating in a Students' Union activity, this will be referred to the Students' Union President who will deal with the matter following the process for dealing with student complaints as set out in sections 5.5 to 5.7. This does not prevent action also being taken in the first instance under section 3.4 Licenced Premises, or 4.4.4 Health and Fitness Centres, where other regulations also apply.

Also,

Correct reference in paragraph 2.2.4 as follows:

2.2.4 Students' Union Staff

This procedure does not apply to matters relating to Students' Union staff (including students whilst employed as staff members). These will be considered under the Union's HR policies (see also 3.2.1 and 4.4.11 for further information).

9. Motions

a) Should the Students' Union investigate DDS Support for Students?

Proposed by: Jules Buet

Seconded by: Rosie Nee

What do you want?

The Student Union should launch an investigation into DDS to evaluate the breadth of its failures of neurodivergent students

Why do you want it?

The Neurodivergent Society group chat has revealed multiple failures of DDS for neurodivergent students (refusal to provide accommodations they had previously, failure to respond to emails in a reasonable timeframe, failure to send accommodations to the teachers so they can implement them, failure to follow up on the neurodivergent students to make sure their needs are being met, repeated requests for diagnosis letters they have already received multiple times). The Student Union should investigate how broad those failures are beyond anecdotal evidence and based on the results request changes with the University to guarantee it complies with the Equality Act of 2010

What impact will this have?

Empower the SU to request changes from the University to be more inclusive towards the neurodivergent community

10. Policy Renewal

Policy Renewal

- 8.1 *Policy passed more than two academic years earlier shall be presented to Student Council with a recommendation from the Executive Committee to renew, embed or lapse.*
- 8.2 *Any policy that is renewed will be debated again after 2 years.*
- 8.3 *Any policy that is embedded will be considered permanent policy until Student Council brings it back for debate to retain or lapse.*
- 8.4 *Recommendations shall require the approval of a simple-majority of Student Council to be passed and should be done in 1 vote for all policies at the same time.*
- 8.4.1 *Student Councillors should make clear to the Chair any individual recommendations they would like to be debated separately, the Chair shall bring these forward for debate before being voted on. The rest of the recommendations shall then be voted on in 1 vote.*
- 8.5 *A Union member may, at any time, bring policy that is considered to be out of date to the attention of Student Council to be debated.*

- 8.6 *Policies which exceed the 2-year limit for any reason shall be brought forward for debate at the next meeting of Student Council.*

The following policies are now due for review and may be lapsed, renewed or embedded:

These will have been discussed by the Executive Officers, who will have made recommendations for each - Serena can lead on this and the Executive Officers can take any questions.

Held over from Previous inquorate meetings (and therefore still active)

The following policies were due for review in February 2023 and have been carried over as the meeting had become inquorate by the time they were due to be considered:

| Policy | Recommendation |
|---|-----------------------|
| The Union should introduce a 'Big Green Box' online 'suggestion box' /concern reporting form | Renew |
| The Union should introduce sustainability training for all SU staff | Renew |
| The Union should introduce a new 'sustainability role' within society committees on a voluntary basis | Renew |
| All Queen Mary Students' Union staff should undertake suicide awareness training | Embed |
| The Union should recommend all staff and student officers to include their name pronunciation in their email signature | Embed |
| The Union should lobby the University to implement a long-term scheme to provide and distribute free menstrual products on Campus | Renew |

The following policies were due for review in March 2023 and have been carried over as the meeting had become inquorate by the time they were due to be considered:

| Policy | Recommendation |
|---|-----------------------|
| The Union Should Discourage Staff and Students From Flying on Trips Associated With the Student's Union | Renew |
| The Students' Union should develop and offer a sustainable menu in all of its eating outlets. | Embed |
| The Students' Union should lobby the university to make all welfare provisions, including Advice and Counselling and DDS services, more accessible to students regardless of which campus they are on or which course they study | Renew |
| The Students' Union should lobby schools to consider length of teaching recordings so as to ensure they are suitable for student learning and allow for regular breaks. This could include splitting recordings into shorter clips or adding timestamps to videos so students can more easily navigate content. However, any approach should be faculty specific and appropriate to their own students. | Renew |
| Should the SU provide accessibility guidance on events, campaigns and social media? | Renew |
| Should the SU lobby the university to introduce mandatory accessibility training for all staff? | Renew |
| Malta vs London Tuition Fees Flexibility Differences The Students' Union should lobby the University to allow Malta Students who are self-funding their tuition fees to pay in multiple instalments as allowed for London based students. | Renew |
| The Students' Union should lobby the university to reevaluate and publish a process for the suspension or cancellation of active courses that recognises the need for student as well as staff consultation when making such decisions. | Renew |

| | |
|--|-------|
| The Union Should Broadly Endorse the Aims of the Green Charter, and Facilitate a | Renew |
| Method of Direct Democracy in Working Towards its Full Implementation | |
| The Students' Union should provide recycling in its facilities on all campuses (UK and international) and lobby the university to do the same. | Renew |

Due to expire after this meeting

| Policy | Recommendations |
|---|-----------------|
| QMSU should publicly acknowledge its own issues of institutional racism alongside lobbying for the University to do the same | Renew |
| QMSU should declare a climate emergency, and lobby the University to do the same | Renew |
| Should QMSU revoke the adoption of anti-racist policies that are not fit for purpose and call on QMUL to do the same | Renew |
| Technology of Q-Review requires updating | Renew |
| QMSU should lobby the university to mandate compulsory Consent and Bystander intervention workshops for first years | Renew |
| QMSU should lobby the university to provide subtitling on Qreview videos | Renew |
| QMSU should lobby the university to improve the accessibility of affordable student housing | Renew |
| QMSU should provide the perks student council members receive and specific trustee training for QMSU student trustees | Renew |
| All Toilets in QMSU Buildings to have provisions for both purchasing individual sanitary products and disposal of sanitary products | Embed |
| Should QMSU Lobby QMUL to install sanitary bins in all male toilets around campus for the Transgender Community? | Renew |
| Oppose Prevent and support groups that campaign against it | Renew |
| QMSU should lobby the University to establish an Advanced Manufacturing | Lapse |

| | |
|--|--|
| Training Course for the Science and Engineering Students | |
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9. AOB

Annual Members Meeting - the date is **Monday 27 November 2022** at **6pm** and all Student Council Members are expected to attend.

Terms of Reference for Student Council

Last updated and approved 18 October 2022

Student Council Terms of Reference 2023-24

A. Minutes from Subcommittees

1. For minutes from the Board of Trustees or Student Council Subcommittees to be included on the Student Council agenda, the Subcommittee must have met more than 10 days before the relevant Student Council meeting and the minutes must be submitted by the deadline for Student Council papers.
2. For the sake of brevity, all minutes will be taken as read; Members are free to ask questions on points of interest.
3. Any policies passed by Subcommittees will be listed separately for information, and will be shown under motions to be debated by Student Council if they fall outside of the remit of the Subcommittee concerned.
4. Policies passed by Subcommittees which meet after the 10-day deadline must be submitted separately to the Clerk of Student Council so that they can be noted, and considered by Student Council if necessary.

B. Student Council Papers

1. **Paragraph 6.2** of the Student Council Byelaw requires that 'the Papers for Student Council shall be emailed to all Union Members before Student Council meets.' This will be done either by an all-student email containing a link to the papers on the Union's website, or by a link in the 'Your Union' student email.
2. **Paragraph 6.3** of the Student Council Byelaw requires that: '*Minutes of Student Council Meetings and its sub-committees will be published to all members.*' This will be done by publishing them on the Union's website.
3. **Paragraph 6.4** of the Student Council Byelaw requires that: '*Policies and Actions passed in Student Council Meetings and its sub-committees will be published to all members.*' This will be done by publishing them on the Union's website.

C. The Discretion of the Chair

1. All references to 'the discretion of the Chair' are qualified by the right to challenge the Chair's ruling as set out in **paragraphs 4.4 and 4.4.1** of the Student Council Byelaw: **4.4** *The Chair shall be impartial and, subject only to a challenge, the Chair's ruling shall be final. 4.4.1 A challenge to the Chair shall be heard immediately and include a debate chaired by the Deputy Chair that will last for no more than 5 minutes. A decision will be made by a vote cast by all present Student Councilors.*

D. Subcommittees of Student Council

1. **Paragraph 14.4** of the Student Council Byelaw states: *'Sub-Committees have the power to pass policy that covers the area of work that they do. If policy is brought forward at a sub-committee meeting that affects more than one sub-committee it shall be brought to Student Council instead. The responsibility for ensuring this happens is on the Executive Officer in attendance.'*
2. In circumstances where there is no Executive Officer present, there is no provision as to how Student Council will be become aware of such policies. Therefore, attention is also drawn to **paragraph 14.6** which states: *'Student Council has the power to overturn policy from sub-committees by bringing policy from sub-committees forward to Student Council for debate and to vote on.'*
3. The Chair of Student Council, together with the Clerk to Student Council, will review the minutes of Subcommittees and any separate notifications of policies passed, and will include any policies which appear to fall under the provision of **paragraph 14.4** on the next Student Council agenda as may be required.

E. Conduct of on-line Student Council Meetings

1. On-line meetings will be held via Zoom..
2. Meetings will be recorded for the purpose of minute taking and may also be available to view online after the meeting.
3. A link to the meeting will be sent to all Members in advance of the meeting, together with any meeting password that will need to be entered when logging in.
4. Members will be directed to the 'waiting room' when joining the meeting and will be admitted by the Chair or Secretary.
5. Members can attract the attention of the Chair by using the 'raise hand feature' when they wish to speak.
6. The 'chat' feature will be disabled to avoid the distraction of conversations outside of the mainstream of debate.
7. Voting will be conducted through the inbuilt polling system that will be set to record votes – this means that the requirement for Members to complete an individual voting record (as set out in the Student Council Byelaw) will be suspended, as the record will be generated automatically.

F. Streaming of Student Council Meetings

1. Online meetings held via Zoom will be live-streamed.
2. All Members of the Students' Union will be provided with instructions on how to access the meeting.
3. The Union will explore how best to enable Members to take part in debate during the meeting and will communicate this to Members in advance of the meeting.
4. Members of the Union who are proposers of a specific motion will be given separate instructions as to how this will be facilitated.

Student Council

Minutes

Tuesday 7 March 2023, 6.00 pm - Held via Zoom and live streamed

Present

Azzah Abubacar, Chair of Student Council

Executive Committee:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Jojo Croft | VP Welfare |
| Charlie Sellar | Vice President Barts and The London |
| Radhika Thiagarajan | Vice President Communities |

Student Representatives and Part-time Officers

In attendance:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Brad Coales | Secretary and Governance Adviser |
| Marianne Melsen | Student Voice and Insights Manager |
| Jak Curtis Rendall | Head of Communications and Marketing |

Apologies

Apologies had been received from the following Members:

- Sarah Chan - BL Sports Officer
- Liam Nicholson - BLSA Vice-President London
- Saphia Rahman - Economics and Finance Representative
- Saynab Sharif - Vice President Humanities and Social Sciences
- Adi Sawalha - SU President would be Joining later, as there was an overlap with University's Finance and Investment Committee

1.0 Chairs Welcome and Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2.0 Chair's Introduction

The Chair reminded Members that the meeting was being recorded and live-streamed.

Max Paley has volunteered to fill the vacant post of Sustainability Officer (BL) to serve for the remainder of this academic year (2022-23).

As provided for in the Bye-Laws, Max's written statement had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting and require a simple majority of Student Council to vote in favour for them to be appointed.

The result of the vote was follows:

- In Favour: 13
- Against: 2
- Abstentions: 0

Although the poll was carried in the meeting, there were insufficient Members present for the appointment to be approved; a simple majority of Student Council members overall being required i.e. 50% plus one of the Student Council membership. Therefore, it was agreed that a further online poll would be circulated so that Members who were not present could also vote and the totals from both polls would then be combined.

3.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members were asked to approve the minutes of the Meeting of Student Council held on 7 February 2022. The minutes were duly approved.

4.0 Minutes from Sub-Committees

Minutes from the following Sub-Committees had been included in the Council papers and were to be taken as read.

BLSA Board - 10 January 2023 and 9 February 2023

Club Sport Committee - none

HSS Board - none

Postgraduate Board - 13 February 2023

Science and Engineering Board - 26 January 2023

Societies Board - 8 February 2023

Sustainability Board - 23 January 2023

Volunteering Board - none

Welfare and Communities Board - 2 February 2023

Members were invited to put any questions to the Chair's of the committees concerned, but none were asked.

5.0 Report from the Scrutiny Panel and Executive Officer Updates

As there was no February Scrutiny Panel meeting, the Executive Officers were given the opportunity to give an extended verbal update on their work and take questions from members of Student Council and any other QMSU members present.

There were no questions.

Motions and Amendments

6. Byelaw Changes

There were no Bye-Law changes to be considered at this meeting.

7. Motions

a) **Should the Student Union become more sustainable by going 60% plant-based by 2024-25, with a 10% increase each year thereafter?** *(revised and re-presented after a non-quorate vote at the previous Council meeting)*

Proposer: Keenal Shah

Secunder: Andrew Demetriou

Keenal spoke in favour of the motion, outlining some of the benefits set out in the motion. The motion had been revised and the proposal was that the change should be phased incrementally to ensure that it was financially feasible. The Union's manager responsible was supportive of the principle. The change could take into account the needs of all faiths, ideologies and dietary requirements. Educational marketing would be needed to support the science and overcome stigma. The University's Zero Waste Shop was not a viable comparison. The emphasis would need to be on taste, nutrition and affordability. The Union had a duty to be environmentally sustainable.

LH asked whether the intention was still for the Students' Union to become 100% plant based, and Keenal confirmed that this was the case but that the move could be halted if it proved not to be sustainable. LH stated that a plant based diet did not necessarily suit everyone e.g. those who suffered from IBS, and Keenal explained that there was support available to assist with menu planning.

LP asked if the move had to be to 100% plant based, and whether meat could not be made available as well e.g. 80% plant based. Keenal explained that the initial aim was for 60% and the demand and impact of the changes would be monitored. Other options were also available, both on and off campus.

There being no speakers against Keenal made a short summation; this was a good opportunity to make the Union more sustainable, Cambridge SU had just voted in favour of a similar motion, and Stirling SU were also about to. Implementation could be stopped along the way if necessary. Marketing would be an important factor and Plant Based Universities could recommend suppliers.

AW added that given the impact of meat consumption on the environment, he supported the motion, and believed Student Council should vote in favour.

There being no other speakers, the matter was then put to a vote:

In Favour: 7

Against: 5

Abstain: 5

The Chair announced that the motion was passed, but there was then again some confusion as to whether there were sufficient votes cast for the vote to be valid, the Secretary advising that the motion had not met the threshold.

The motion was **passed** (the result was reviewed and amended after the meeting where the original announcement was that the motion had not passed).

[The Secretary subsequently clarified the following day that the motion required 50% plus one, of one third of Student Council members voting in a quorate meeting with Abstaining members not counting either way (but counting towards quoracy). The result of the vote was 7 In Favour, 5 Against and there were 5 recorded Abstentions. The quorum of 17 was met and the vote required a simple majority of the votes cast to be in favour for the motion to pass i.e. 50% plus one. The 5 Abstentions do not count and therefore a total of 12 valid votes were cast. 50% of 12 = 6, 50% + 1 = 7, 6 plus 1 is 7, and 7 votes were cast in favour - therefore the motion was passed].

b) Free Legal Guidance on name change for Trans Students

Proposer: Lola Pony (LGBT+ REP ME)

Lola spoke in favour of the motion. This was a national issue, and QMSU would be pioneering if it implemented the requested guidance so that students were able to receive their degree certificates in their correct name.

Lola was asked to clarify whether the proposal was that the Union should provide generic advice on the name changing process, or whether it was proposed to offer individual advice. Lola replied that this was something that could be explored. RT suggested that the University's Law Clinic might be able to assist with general guidance and in-house support.

There being no speaker against, the matter was put to a vote.

Secunder: tba

In Favour: 9

Against: 0

Abstain: 5

The motion was **passed**.

Despite the number of Members participating in the vote, the online attendance continued to show that the meeting was quorate.

c) Talk about Discrimination and Harassment

Proposer: Lola Pony (LGBT+ REP ME)

Secunder: tba

Lola spoke in favour of the motion. Students were being harassed on campus due to their appearance, names, and general transphobia. The proposed talk would emphasise equality, diversity and tolerance. The Union should lobby the University to provide the talks, which should be mandatory for aggressors.

The Chair asked whether the proposal was that the talks would be a sanction, or given to everyone. RT questioned the practicality, and whether the talks would be similar to consent training, or only given to those who offend (which would be hard to implement if people reluctant to formally report incidents).

Lola replied that she envisaged the talks being made available to everyone, in a similar manner to 'consent matters'.

There being no speaker against, the matter was put to a vote.

In Favour: 9

Against: 1

Abstain: 2

The motion was **passed**.

Again, despite the number of Members participating in the vote, the online attendance continued to show that the meeting was quorate. However, at least one member subsequently left the meeting and it then fell into inquoracy.

8. Policy Renewal

For the second meeting in a row, the meeting had now become inquorate, and it was not possible to put the Executive Officers' recommendations on policy review to a vote, and so these would be carried over until the next meeting.

9. AOB

There was no other business

Date of Next Meeting

- Tuesday 4 April 2023

President's University Council Report

September 2023

www.qmsu.org



President's Report

Welcome Week

Welcome Fair

The Welcome Fair events at Mile End were a great success with over 10,000 excited attendees attending across the three days of Fairs. There was a great atmosphere across the Great Hall, Students' Union Hub, Sports Hall and outdoor areas, and the whole event went very smoothly. The event featured 250 stalls from our Student Groups, performance and demonstration areas, sporting activities, university services, an inflatable fun zone and several external organisations and charities. We were also pleased to welcome members of the University SET team who toured the event on day two. There will now be a review to ensure the ongoing success of the event. The event in its current format is certainly at full capacity in terms of both attendee numbers and the number of student groups and organisations who can be accommodated across the existing indoor and outdoor spaces on campus, however we need to ensure the current atmosphere and experience of the event is maintained.

At Whitechapel, the event took place inside the BLSA Building. There were some challenges with crowd numbers due to the popularity of the event, poor weather meaning outdoor activity had to be curtailed and the Garrod Building not being open (a space traditionally also used for the event alongside the BLSA Building). Despite this, feedback from attendees and student groups was positive and there was great engagement throughout the day. Thank you to the Estates team who helped our team navigate the various challenges.

Welcome Crew & Help Squad

Over 120 students volunteered their time over Arrivals Weekend and Welcome Week to help welcome new students across our London campuses. In their standout 'Here to Help' red and black hoodies, these volunteers were a key friendly face to help new students feel welcome while they also assisted with move-in to accommodation, moved luggage, signposted to opportunities and supported students in navigating our campuses. The volunteers' generosity and dedication to ensuring that new students had a memorable first week has been remarkable and we cannot thank them enough for their time, commitment and positive energy! We look forward to expressing our appreciation at the upcoming Thank You Party.

Welcome Events

The Students' Union delivered a packed programme of events for Welcome Week, that continue at the time of writing into week one. Over 9000 tickets have been sold for these events so far and many were completely sold out. Hundreds more students participated in free / non-ticketed events.

Events took place across the three London campuses and other off-campus locations and have included speed meeting events, craft & planting sessions, comedy nights, sports activities, club nights on and off-campus and trips & tours to locations such as Thorpe Park and Cambridge and walking tours. Our events team also delivered two Boat Ball events down the Thames which were sold out. Dedicated events were also run for our commuting, postgraduate and international students – helping these students meet other students from within their community, with at least 350 students attending each of these.

Our Freshers' events programme was complemented by our Try Something New programme that featured welcome events, meet & greets and taster sessions from our student-led groups such as Clubs and Societies, alongside alcohol-free activity and events delivered by our events team. This programme continues throughout semester one.

Reuse Fair

The Reuse Fair was a great success this year. Having trialed a new way of facilitating the event, it was much calmer and smoother. This year we included ticketed timeslots, a token system for individuals to trade for items and dedicated student staff helping with the running of the event. We diverted 1.4 tons of items from landfill and had 427 happy students attend! We are very grateful for the University Sustainability team giving us the budget to have student staff available on the day to ensure the event ran smoothly and we are excited to work with them on ways to keep expanding the Reuse Fair, especially after a large increase in donated items this year compared to last year. Our team will be looking at running a clothes swap event following plenty of clothing donations during reuse collections.

Welcome Communications

The Communications and Marketing team introduced the Students' Union to new students through our Welcome communications campaign. Launching on A-Level Results Day and running through to the end of September the campaign was fully segmented for the first time. All UK home students received a welcome pack in the post, and for the first time this included all postgraduate taught and postgraduate masters students. This was supplemented by a series of email communications split by undergraduate/postgraduate taught/postgraduate research, campus location, home/international and associates. The segmentation resulted in our highest-ever open rate, averaging at over 85% and click-through rates higher than 40%. There was also a strong social media campaign fronted by our student reps and Executive Officers and dedicated online webpages, seeing 18% more page hits than last year, beating our previous highest page views during the welcome period.

Welcome Week & supporting the university

The Students' Union worked in partnership with the university to deliver a successful Welcome Week programme. As well as the activity listed above, this included co-delivering several events such as the Wellbeing Fair and directly supporting other activity such as the Library Square Information Fair and chillout zone.

Due to the challenging weather conditions during Welcome Week we supported university activity that had been due to take place outside. For example, the University Wellbeing Fair was re-located from Graduate Square to the Students' Union Hub on the morning of the event, disrupting our own set-up of the Welcome Fair but ensuring the best experience for students. The International Student Welcome and other school welcome events were also moved from outdoors to the Students' Union Hub with little notice on the day, but we were happy to help where we could and all went well.

Our Venues & Events team also worked with several schools to host social activity and welcome events across our spaces including offering food & drink, games and craft sessions and icebreaker activities. We also worked with the Residential Life team to deliver a series of online speed meeting events for all halls prior to Welcome Week. Over 500 students participated in these online activities prior to their arrival at university, helping them to meet their new flatmates and make connections prior to their arrival.

Other key updates

Student Groups

Our 2022-23 student group feedback survey, conducted over summer, showed a positive increase in student group experiences for both committee members and student members. 87.2% of committee members felt part of a community with 71.6% of student members feeling part of a community and feeling welcome in their student group. 91% of committee members felt they had made a positive impact to student group member's experience. 94% of committee members felt they had developed skills through their committee role. We asked a new question this year to committee members on the impact their role had on their wellbeing with 77% saying their role had a positive impact on their wellbeing. Our Impact & Engagement Intern will be working to improve some key focus areas such as reward and recognition and our social media presence. We are very pleased with the results of the feedback survey, and we plan on retaining such positive results.

This year is already shaping up to be another busy one for all our student groups! We have already hosted extra training this month for all student groups, as well as volunteer group and student media induction sessions taking place recently. Welfare Rep training is currently taking place which is being co-delivered by our Student Engagement Team, Sports Club Team and Student Voice team. The Student Engagement Team have been working on ways to collect success stories from our student groups so that we can celebrate all the amazing work they do in a more visible way. The team are very excited for the year ahead and we can't wait to support all the amazing work our student groups do.

Performance Sport

Our Talented Athlete Programme, supported by the University, was last year accredited by the ground-breaking dual career scheme. QMUL is leading the way with supporting talented athletes in education in England, having been accredited by an innovative Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) initiative. The Sport England-backed programme supports young sportspeople on the talent pathway, giving them the opportunity to gain qualifications alongside their sporting pursuits, follow other interests, as well as further their personal development. By formally recognising an institution's commitment to supporting student-

athletes, the TASS Dual Career Accreditation Scheme aims to allow athletes to reach their potential in education alongside achieving success in their sport. The programme has received 26 applications, and interviews will be taking place over the next few weeks. By mid-October we will be welcoming successful new student-athletes onto the programme.

We have grown our focus team programme this year and are pleased to be supporting five clubs. QMBL Vipers are returning to the programme and will be joined by QMBL Women's Fencing, BL Netball, BL Women's Hockey and QMBL Water Polo. The focus team programme has been created to support teams who have clear performance ambitions within their competitions. Focus teams and their players will benefit from a support network to help them achieve their performance goals including; Access to performance development workshops, opportunity for Strength & Conditioning support, additional staff support on BUCS entries, admin, and travel arrangements, extra publicity around the team e.g. social media and dedicated webpage.

Sport Partnerships

We are pleased to announce that we have continued to develop our cross departmental partnerships with the university and will be working with the Advice & Counselling Service to support two wellbeing programmes and initiatives. We will be supporting a pilot exercise referral scheme for ten students in semester one, and will also be supporting a black female therapy group initiative. Both programmes will aim to collate data, information and relationships between physical activity and wellbeing. In addition to this, we have worked with the HR and benefits team to enable staff the opportunity to apply for a loan to be used against a 12-month membership at Qmotion sport and fitness centre. We hope that in making this membership more affordable and accessible to our staff, we will be able to encourage more staff to take part in physical activity on campus.

Student Staff

We currently have 145 student staff working across our commercial outlets, sport and as interns across the organisation. All new student staff are required to undertake an Introduction to QMSU, which provides an overview of the Students' Union, as well as the training they will need to complete to excel in their role, the Payroll and myHR process, ways to signpost distressed students, and the support available to them both in their role and as a student at Queen Mary. In addition, new student staff also complete our Customer Services Training workshop, an interactive two-hour session covering good and bad examples of customer service, essential customer-centred behaviours, and how to deal with difficult situations. They then complete the specific training that is required for the relevant areas of their role.

Introduction for University Staff

This year we are introducing an introduction to the Student's Union for permanent QMUL staff to attend if they wish. This one-hour session will cover an overview of QMSU, our strategic plan, our people, how we help our students during their time at university and signposting resources as well as a chance to ask questions. This is intended to complement their overall induction and increase knowledge and understanding about the Students' Union. QMUL staff will be able to register to attend via the new CPD Training platform, and we will offer monthly sessions online with the option for an in-person session once a semester alongside a tour of some of our spaces.

Glow Up Survey & Brand Review

As part of our work associated with the new Strategic Plan, the Communications and Marketing team have been conducting research to inform our new Students' Union brand and communications strategy. Over the summer break the Glow Up Brand survey was launched, with nearly 1000 students completing the survey, giving their feedback on our comms and brand, and the direction we should take. The team are now using this feedback, alongside utilising research from external agencies and organisations to inform our new brand that is due to launch in 2024. The rebrand project and communications strategy is being completed entirely in-house.

Student Voice & Education

Autumn Elections

The Students' Union Autumn Elections are now open, and students are able to submit a short online nomination form to put themselves forward to become an elected student rep for this academic year. While the 6 full-time officer roles and most of the 70+ part-time officer roles were up for election in March, students

can still put themselves forward for 11 part-time officer roles, 2 student trustee roles, more than 400 course rep roles and more than 20 PGR subject rep roles.

To encourage students to become representatives, the roles were promoted during the Welcome Fairs with more than 1000 interested students speaking to the Students' Union team. Colleagues from the faculty education teams in Humanities and Social Sciences, Science and Engineering, the Doctoral College and various schools have also contributed to the promotion of the elections, and we are grateful for their support.

Nominations are open until early October, after which students can submit their votes for their preferred candidates. The successful candidates will receive training tailored to their role, and they will hold office for the 2023/24 academic year.

Rep Handover & Training

Following the Spring Elections in March, our six new full-time officers started their term in office on 1 August. In July and August, the new officers attended a comprehensive training programme covering a wide range of topics such as communication, the higher education landscape, teamworking and representation.

Our new part-time officers also took office on 1 August, and their training is currently ongoing. The training for part-time officers aims to equip them with essential skills for their role, as well as transferable skills such as leadership and inclusivity.

In addition to the training, part-time officers are also having individual meetings with their staff supports to identify their priorities for the year and plan how they will achieve their goals. The officers bring different ideas based on their roles and experiences, with ideas covering topics such as employability, inclusivity, community building, organising social activities and raising awareness about mental health support services.

Russell Group Students Union

In August, Serena-Amani Al Jabbar, President, and Aisha Qadi, Vice-President, Science and Engineering, attended the Russell Group Students' Union first residential of the year in Cardiff. During the event the group discussed the pressing issues students have and continue to face nationally and how to proceed and find solutions. Two of the main topics discussed were the rising cost of living and industrial action. Both attended a follow up September forum in which the group considered what actions were needed by the RGSU and how to lobby to better the student experience nationally.

Postgraduate Representation

Matthew Beach, Vice-President Communities, continues the work of his predecessor, increasing representational infrastructure for postgraduate students (both taught and research). He is working closely with PGR students and reps to continue lobbying the university in areas of struggle during the ongoing cost of living crisis, in particular those students on international scholarships whose stipends do not meet the UK Research and Innovation minimum funding amount.

Matt has also started scoping for a potential overhaul of the SYMPA listservs used across the university by Schools/Institutes to reach their postgraduates, which many postgraduate student representatives use (where possible) to ask for feedback from their constituents. He has also begun facilitating scoping meetings with university representatives and working with the Students' Union Comms team to find ways of increasing his role's visibility for postgraduates.

Institute of Technology (IoT) and Degree Apprentices

Aisha was invited to the IoT where she presented to students about the Students' Union and how they can get involved. Aisha spoke with students about the representative structure and student voice, gathering feedback on how to improve these areas for this unique group. Aisha is working with S&E on increasing engagement between Degree Apprentices and the Students' Union.

Authentic Assessments & Academic integrity

Aisha is working to review and improve the format of assessments within the faculty, ensuring that students get a diverse range of assessments to improve authenticity and gain employability principles. This in turn would improve integrity of assessments. Aisha has been discussing with faculty executives on the challenges academics may face with students using AI, such as chatGPT, and instead work on how students can use it effectively in assessments. To help inform this work, Aisha attended a WonkHE workshop, alongside Jovani, Vice President of Humanities and Social Sciences, that discussed what great assessment looks like, how it

might change in light of generative AI, what students might want from assessments, and how Students' Unions can shape the assessment agenda.

Employability Curriculum

Aisha is working on a proposal for her project to embed employability principals onto the curriculum within the faculty of Science & Engineering. The project is to focus on implementing criteria such as graduate attributes, graduate outcomes and more across all schools and course for both undergrads and postgrads. She has had several meetings with QM-Academy, the Careers & Enterprise Team, as well as faculty executives in S&E to discuss this project and how we can begin to review the curriculum to implement the employability principals.

Welfare & Liberation

Lighting Improvement

Tahmid Khan, Vice President Welfare, is working to improve the lighting provision on and off campus. At present, the focus of the project has been on off-site lighting, with a particular emphasis on the areas surrounding Mile End Campus and Whitechapel Campus. Tahmid has met with senior members of Tower Hamlets Council to discuss the project and identify common areas of interest. He has also met with staff from the University of Cambridge Students' Union, who worked on a similar project, to gain insight into developing a long-term project strategy.

Tahmid collected primary data on the lighting provision on and off-campus at Mile End and Whitechapel at the end of August. Using this data, Tahmid is compiling a paper detailing his findings and recommendations for areas of improvement, which will be sent to members of Tower Hamlets Council and relevant members of the University, respectively.

Black History Month

Matthew and the team have begun planning for Black History Month which begins in October with the planning led by an Organising committee made up from Students, Reps and Student Group members who self-identify as part of this community. This committee have been enthusiastic with their ideas, discussing culture and fashion showcases, various workshops on different issues that affect the community and creating content for the month to be used online. Upcoming events include a book club with Alumni Caleb Femi, which will coincide with sharing content, student spotlights and supporting student-led events in preparation for October.

Women's Safety on Campus

Aisha is working to improve women's safety on campus this year. She is currently working with the Sexual Assault Harassment Advisory team at QM to introduce a survey by the Students' Union on women's safety. The data will be used to write up a report for the university on what is needed on campus. The survey content & details will include questions on women's experience on campus, how safe they feel, the support they get, as well as what events/campaigns students would like to engage with when it comes to raising awareness.

Accommodation Review Platform

Tahmid is working on creating a platform that would allow students to review and give feedback on their accommodation and their housing provider. The platform is to be located on our website. The project aims are to provide both the Students' Union and the University a more regular source of information on the student experience within the accommodation sector. Tahmid has begun meeting with Housing & Residential Services staff to discuss the project and to build a collaborative approach for developing the review platform.

Improving the Multi-Faith Provision

Tahmid has been working with the team to write a paper on engaging with the university to develop the multi-faith provision. This is part of a broader push to improve multi-faith spaces on campus, as they have been identified as inadequate for several years. A draft paper, which is to be presented to relevant members of the University for feedback, is currently being prepared.

Additionally, Tahmid has been providing support to finalise the Multi-Faith Centre timetable for the first semester of the new academic year, and this has now been released. It is hoped that reverting back to a semester based timetable will allow for more flexibility in usage times and result in greater satisfaction rates amongst student groups. The new system will be reviewed at the end of the first semester.

Cost of living

Serena and Tahmid Khan, VP Welfare, met with the Higher Education Policy Institute to discuss and contribute to a paper titled 'How to beat a cost-of-learning crisis: Universities' support for students'. The paper allowed the team to reflect on their struggles as students and help shape the means in which we prioritise how to support students during the cost-of-living crisis going forward.

Students Who Work

Jovani has worked with the team to start to gather data for his 'Students Who Work project with Careers and Enterprise providing support. Jovani is aiming to pinpoint the most overwhelming problems that students who work face in order to identify how to narrow any gaps and ensure these students are able to reach their full potential.

Student Opportunities

Sustainability

The canal clean ups continue to be popular, with our first Big Green Canal Clean, partnered with Residential Life, taking place at the end of September. Our Sustainability Officers are very engaged, with great projects planned including a medicinal herb garden, creating social green spaces, litter picks and a sustainability hub. Sustainability training has been delivered to Student Groups and will be rolled out to Sports Clubs at the end of September. Teams from across the Student's Union will actively contribute to the Green Impact Accreditation effort this year including Student Voice, Student Engagement, Exec Members and the Events Team.

We have also been working closely with the new QMUL Sustainability team on a variety of projects including a student evaluation of sustainability in the curriculum, creating student roles, a Sustainability Action Network and pulling together a new Sustainability Strategy.

Matthew is working with the team to bid for a Centre for Public Engagement Large Grant to fund a role that would work with external partners to engage the public with the University and help achieve the partners sustainability goals. Matt is also creating links between the Students' Union and other parts of the university, including a collaboration with the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences Environmental Futures Programme Director. Upcoming plans include bringing an arts organisation to speak about photography and environmentalism during Sustainability Week and a Sticky Campus proposal combining tropical and subtropical plant teaching and learning, alumni engagement, and an arts/culture display.

Volunteering

At the time of writing, there are 65 volunteering opportunities for students to choose from on our Community Volunteering Hub, as well as two Give Volunteering A Go opportunities, and nine student-led volunteering groups that students can join. The Volunteer Fair is set to take place the week commencing 2nd October, date to be confirmed due to recent TFL strikes being announced, and this will be an opportunity for students to meet 48 of our partner charities and 7 of our student-led volunteering groups.

Get Active

Get Active is a part of our recreational sport programme offering a timetable of weekly sport and physical activity opportunities for students, staff and alumni. We are excited to introduce a broader range of sessions this year to engage more of the university community to take part in physical activity and will be offering yoga, meditation and dance in addition to our usual sporting offers which include badminton, football, table tennis and many more.

The programme has had a successful start to the academic year, firstly with the employment of 5 new student staff members. Get Active supports the university by running pop-ups on campus for events and key university dates and this included supporting the Residential Services across Arrivals Weekend. Pop-ups were also run across the Welcome Fairs, with 418 students taking part across activities such as badminton, cornhole, touch tennis and table tennis. The programme has expanded this year and has grown its partnership with residential services offering exclusive membership options to our residents.

Club Sport

Club sport has started the year with clubs currently undertaking their extensive programme of committee training. We had 65 clubs in attendance at both Mile End and Whitechapel Welcome Fairs welcoming all new

and returning students. The Club Sport Board and Sports Officers will be having their first meetings in October which allows the opportunity to discuss new club affiliations and key dates this year. The first round of the Development Fund will be taking place in October, which will be an opportunity for clubs to apply for extra funding to support and develop their club. Leagues will be starting on Wednesday 12 October for BUCS and/or LUSL, and we are very excited to see how our teams perform this upcoming year.

Social Leagues

The Social Leagues will commence the week beginning Monday 10 October. This year we will be running football, netball, basketball and cricket. The leagues will also be recruiting and upskilling student staff as umpires, referees and officials over the next few weeks.

Dentistry PTSR Social Responsibility Volunteering

Inductions have been delivered to Year 2, 3 and 4 UG Dentistry students, as well as Year 1 Dental Hygiene students and some Foundation students. These students complete a minimum of 8 hours of volunteering per academic year for their Professionalism, Teamwork and Social Responsibility module. Students can choose which of our volunteering opportunities to take part in. Last year a number of these students chose to continue volunteering, including 3 students achieving bronze volunteering hours awards (25+ hours), and 3 achieving silver volunteering hours awards (50+ hours).

Raise and Give (RAG)

Student Groups have already started their RAG fundraising for the year, including Groups fundraising for the earthquake in Morocco. Last year an impressive £64,859.69 was raised across the year, so we look forward to seeing how much is raised this year.

QM Skills Award

We have recently hired a new Student Engagement Coordinator within the student engagement team who will help oversee the SU skills award. There are currently 17 skill sessions planned over the first semester, with a couple more still to be confirmed. Currently we have 89 students signed up for at least one skills session, but this number is expected to grow throughout semester one.

Serena–Amani Al Jabbar
Students' Union President
28th September 2023