Welfare and Communities Board

25/03/2024, 5:30-7pm, Online

Attendance

Present:

* Matthew Beach, MB, VP Communities
* Evie Russell, ER, Welfare BL
* Adam Khan, AK, Trans Rep
* Jules Buet , JB, LGBT+ Rep (ME)
* Aliya Garraway, AG, BAME Rep (ME)
* Shreya Sathya, SS, BAME Rep (BL)

Apologies:

* Tahmid Khan, TK, VP Welfare

In attendance:

* Ruth Truscott RLT, Welfare and Liberation Coordinator

Motion 1

* JB introduces the motion: Aim to create Neurodiversity training for PLTL Facilitators. Background being PLTL Facilitators don’t have a lot of training. They are Peer Lead Team Learning, so often students facilitating other students. As facilitators they don’t receive a lot of training, have some on QM Plus and some within their school. Suggesting neuro diverse students to be hired over the summer to create a module on QM Plus. Created by students for students.
* SS has a question: would these be undergraduate neurodivergence students.
* JB: they would be neurodiverse, not specifically PGT/ Undergrad
* SS: so, would it be diverse range of students/ ages etc
* JB: agrees, would like it to be a range and diverse.
* MB: supportive of this motion, seems achievable, wanted to raise is just what just on the last sentence in the why do you want it around a neurodivergent student being assigned as a supervisor
* JB: more using the QM Plus language in terms of making aure there is a person assigned to the course, happy to change language, but there needs to be a paid person facilitating this, and have it be an interactive course as if there are questions they should be able to be answered there, and have the opportunity to feedback ways to make it better. Also think there should be someone to maintain the course and to answer the questions throughout the year once it has been built and established. This should be a paid position that is offered to a neurodivergent student.
* AK: Is seconding this motion. Through society involvement understands current context and training framework in place. Students are already working with various staff members to put on trainings, a few students doing this voluntarily so would be great to have a system where they can be paid. We do have active students currently engaging with this issue.
* JB: checks with MB if the wordings needs to be changed.
* MB: says its ok. Proposes to do it after in consultation with JB and AK as the proposer and seconder.
* RLT: notes currently not quorate so have to wait for AG to return to meeting. While committee waits for AG to return, moves to JB second motion before taking a vote.
* AG: need to ensure there is neurodiversity in it
* JB: agrees
* Motion passes: 6-1

Motion 2

* JB introduces second motion: Aims for EDI training to be mandatory for all staff and students. Current training is optional. Aiming to create an online resource that is created from students and staff from ideally as many diversities as possible. Aiming to also be compensated for it. This would then be a QM Plus module and then it is necessity to complete it. Especially in the areas when onboarding a new member of staff, or when if you’re a teacher you are starting with a new student and there are reminders and/or consequences if you don’t do it.
* MB: support of this, need to figure out how to navigate it especially with support from EDI and or DDS team. Mandatory for staff but not sure if need to be careful with the phrasing. As MB thinks at the moment it is mandatory maybe for full-time member of staff e.g. someone who is a full-time member of academic staff. But not for TAs? Thinks enrolment could be a good idea. And being student led is excellent. And hope EDI will want to pick it up. And there's also a kind of a precedence already because one of the things that the Sustainability Directorate is doing or sustainability department underneath the Estates Directorate.
* JB: I know it is mandatory for some number of staff, but think we are still missing those who have no EDI training at all.
* MB: Notes one thing would be curious about would be cost, how much does it cost? This would be part of implementing the motion, assuming it passes, is what is the cost of trying to do mandatory training for teaching fellows, teaching assistants etc
* 6-1 motion passes.

Motion 3

* AG introduces her motion: To allow BAME reps to be involved in Asian Heritage Month (AHM) and Black History Mont (BHM). This motion came about due to AG and SS own experience of being BAME Reps this year. As BAME rep AG argues it doesn't make sense to not be able to have an input or to be first hand involved in the organisation in these months. Uses example of MB in role as VP Communities attends all Liberation meetings as the chair. Argues it would be beneficial for the role to be involved directly in the campaigns even though AG notes can run events but don’t have the direct method of communication with students in that group and would enable reps to build student trust.
* MB: to change that the quoracy other reps be invited so LGBT reps sit on LGBTQ+ history Month and Disabled and SPLD Reps sit on Disability History Month etc.
* RLT read out Tahmid Khan (TK) feedback needs to be limited to BAME Reps for BHM and AHM as can’t be for all liberation months, should only be based only on the celebration of an ethnic background. Not that it's made mentioned, but hypothetically speaking the BAME Rep involvement could be difficult when it comes to something like Jewish Heritage Fortnight as an example, as its ethno-religious by nature. TK argues the BAME Rep shouldn’t get a vote in the organising committee if they're not from that ethnic background of the month, i.e. if they had the vote, it would be as a student member of the OC, not as a BAME Rep and shouldn’t be compulsory to participate.
* AG asked for clarification on disability rep for Disability History Rep
* JB clarified as the LGBT rep has to be LGBT and has to identify as LGBT and the disability Rep has to identify as disabled as well. So that doesn't really apply because they can already sit, but because they are part of the community, was the BAME wrap is unlikely to be both Asian and black.
* AG asks for clarification on TK’s point about ethnic liberation months?
* RLT: clarifies on TK’s behalf that this only applies to BHM and AHM and can’t be applied to wider liberation months.
* JB: Notes in TK’s presented idea that BAME Rep unless part of the community couldn’t vote.
* AG: Asks so is he extending it to say that the BAME Reps should be allowed in those liberation months organising committees, but just not allowed to vote if they are not part of the community.
* RLT: clarifies that voting means understanding what is done with the funding of the month, events etc which is done by students of the community of the campaign.
* RLT: asked if anyone in the meeting wanted it to be added to the motion. No one offered to take this change up, so no vote was needed.
* AG: Asked if MB is allowed to vote
* MB: notes he can in his role as chair and VP Communities.
* AG: Notes doesn’t agree with what TK was saying because as, if MB is allowed to have a vote in those months despite not being identifying in all liberation identities QMSU campaigns on, AG argues that the BAME representative should also be able to.
* SS: Mentions that aim for this motion is for everyone to be involved as much as possible and be involved in change and improvement for everyone even if you don’t identify with the group.
* Motion passes 5-1
* MB abstains
* **PTO Updates**
* AK: Had an intro meeting with Student Voice Team. Went through objectives of what to achieve. AK’s aims are to review QMUL and QMSU policies on trans issues making sure they are up to date. Also running an online and in person consultation for trans students to begin the feedback loop.
* Action for MB to put AK in contact with EDI team gender to try to get you linked up with other professional services and academic staff members who are trans.
* AG: Currently working on networking event for BAME students with East London Business Alliance. Happening on 8th April. Working with Henriana on event for Women and Non-binary people to connect. Aiming to do this in early April. Put forward a motion which aim to discuss in this meeting and comes into AG looking wider about the BAME role, it’s structure and what the role will look like going forward.
* ER: Working on funds on how much have left, meet with Kate McFalrene. Have limited funds left. Working on planning events on Mental Health Awareness week in May. RLT to invite BL Reps to study well meeting
* JB: Did lots of events for LGBT+ History Month, have got confirmation of 8th April. Have 2 motions going forward on EDI topics. PLTL/PHD tutors don’t have EDI training or access to EDI training. Working with EDI staff to bring this forward.

VP Updates

* MB: frustrated at the lack of linkages with different areas specifically EDI and the central team. (such as faculties leads, EDI and institutes). There are still problems coming up such as haven't received minutes etc. MB to raise this in EDI steering group. In this meeting will also raise faculty saabs don’t all receive invites for these meetings. Hoping then to create more linkages between these areas, improving this such as education and /or training as then these spaces are places where these should be brought forward. Working on Decol project. Trying to organise Jules’ event. Action for MB to Alex with the availability and see what they say. Aiming to bring together PGR students who are working with different collections under the offices of decolonizing as well as the QM archives to talk about the different ways to decolonise archives. Also understanding the discourse around using the word ‘Decolonise’ Aiming to look at other universities do for decol work and what other higher education sector things separate to the institute do for decol. Hope to create a document for resource. Aiming to write a report for this campaign too. Working on cabinet cultures. Doing a kite making workshop on Wednesday. Working on PGR and PGT representation too, although PGT at this point is mostly around getting a stronger baseline for PGT experience survey response
* MB shares the option to look at extensive written updates.
* AK: can MB send AK the history of Decol with QMUL.
* TK has sent in written updates: There is now a review underway of multi faith spaces across the university by the University’s Student Experience Directorate - this is part of the work to improve and expand the multi faith provision at the university. Work continuing on getting more microwaves and water fountains on campus - figuring out details on placement and funding - campus walkaround planned for water fountains. Working on the Access and Participation Plan Student Submission - this feeds into things like FAF and widening participation

AOB

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| **Officer** | **Vote 1**To pass Motion 1Neurodiversity Training for PLTL | **Vote 2** To pass Motion 2Mandatory EDI Training | **Vote 3**To pass Motion 3BAME Reps to be invited to both BHM and AHM |
| **BAME Rep- Aliya Garraway**  | For | For | For |
| **VP Communities Matthew Beach** | For | For | Abstain |
| **Trans Rep Adam Khan** | For | For | For |
| **LGBT+ Representative (Mile End)** **Jules**  **Buet** | For | For | For |
| **Welfare Officer (BL)** **Evie Russell Tia DSouza** | For | For | For |
| **BAME Rep (BL)- Shreya Sathya** | For | For | For |
| **Tahmid Khan- VP Welfare** | Against  | Against | Aganist |