

Senate

Paper Title	Students' Union President's Report
Outcome Requested	Senate is asked to note the report from the President of the Students' Union
Points for Senate members to note and further information	
Questions for Senate to consider	
Regulatory/statutory reference points	
Strategy and risk	
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	
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QMSU President's Report

QMUL Senate, Thursday 12th October 2017

Diversity at Queen Mary

A priority for Queen Mary Students' Union this year is to support QMUL to tackle the BME attainment gap. Data collected by ERS shows that BME students are less likely to receive a First Class Honours. With one of the highest populations of BME students in the Russell Group, QMUL has a responsibility to lead in tackling this problem. Along with our focus on diversifying the curriculum, we have also been working to identify environmental factors which contribute to the BME attainment gap at QMUL, particularly given that over 80% of our students say that it's important to feel part of a community (Redbrick data).

Wayfinding and Signage

As part of the Wayfinding and Signage review at QMUL, the consultant highlighted that the building designs, names and on-campus monuments do not reflect the diversity of the staff and student population at QMUL.

Throughout the next year, the Union wishes to work in partnership with QMUL to address this problem.

24-hour Library Opening

Mary Ojo, Vice President Education, has been working with Kate Price, Head Librarian, and other members of the 24-hour library working group to provide a 24-hour library service for students throughout the academic year. This is a great milestone for the QMUL and the Union. We are currently proposing to extend this throughout the summer to ensure that Postgraduates are able to use the library within the same time frame and gain access to learning resources.

Malta

On the week commencing 11th September, four representatives from the BLSA Board went to Gozo to meet the new SMD students. The students designed their own 'Gozo Society' to fit into the Barts and The London representation structures and talked about setting up a buddy scheme between the campuses. Students said that they valued being able to meet their representatives face to face and getting advice and insight from older students. The BLSA Board members also met representatives from the Malta Medical Students Association to discuss how students can get involved in academic, sporting and social opportunities in Gozo. Work is ongoing to elect a Gozo Representative for the BLSA Board and to elect and train a Course Rep for the cohort.

We are concerned that no student representatives are permitted to sit on any academic committee which oversees the provision of the course in Malta and would like to see this rectified as soon as possible.

Black History Month

The Union is launching our first ever series of events to celebrate Black History Month in October. Black History Month is a time for us to highlight the histories, culture and struggles

of Black Britons and all people of African and Caribbean descent. Black History Month at the Union is a celebration and review of all the above. All of our events will showcase the contributions that this group has made to our society.

Black History Month allows us to place close attention to a history that should be celebrated all year round and we anticipate that our events will be the catalyst for student activism, and the discussions that we begin will continue to be part of student discourse here at QMUL.

The aims of our Black History Month work are;

- To create a safe space for black students on campus, increase their participation in Union events and to foster social cohesion between all students.
- To create spaces to learn, discuss key issues, and to partake in cultural experiences.

We hope to see the following impacts:

- Increase in voter turnout from black students in the 2018 Union elections
- Increase in nominations from black students in the 2018 Union elections

Student Staff Liaison Committees

At the most recent TEF Working Group, there was a discussion regarding the continuing purpose and effectiveness of SSLCs. There has been a need to not only review SSLCs but also address the inconsistencies between departments relating to how effective those committees are; in particular the relationship between staff and course reps. It is pleasing to see a number of departments stress the importance of SSLC meetings and role of course reps as the student voice for those year groups and it is important to highlight areas where this is working well.

Furthermore, these SSLC meetings should not be the sole indicator or sole feedback mechanism of a department and we need to identify more avenues to provide a student voice within institutional hierarchies. In contrast, the perception of these meetings are also reflected by the teachers and their first impressions.

We know that students only engage in feedback mechanisms where they feel confident that their feedback will be acted upon. It is integral to the improvement of the SSLC meetings that students feel comfortable and respected when discussing departmental affairs.

Subject-level TEF

After the introduction of subject-level TEF last week, representatives from the Union are applying to sit on the TEF Panel. Whilst the view of the Union is that the TEF remains a flawed model, we believe it important that the Panel has a diverse range of members, crucially including student representatives.