

VP SETL Senate Update

Applications for September 2018 entry: In mid-November we would expect approximately one third of the total (c. 30,000) undergraduate applications. We are seeing a general increase in UG applications for 2018 compared with 2017 but there is a significant decline compared with 2016 entry. As last year, our PGT admissions position is much stronger than that for UG, and we are seeing increases in applications overall at this point for the second successive year. Both UG and PGT applications are weakest for non-UK EU applications.

Refining our planning and review: Work is under way to ensure our planning and review processes are underpinned by appropriate data sets and metrics, aligning with the external environment. We have also introduced new mechanisms for defining, capturing and evaluating actions relating to student experience resulting from student surveys. The Faculties of Science and Engineering and Humanities and Social Sciences have both drafted Student Experience Strategies. Actions and progress against actions will be monitored at faculty level and at the TEF Working Group. Faculty action plans on retention and attainment have been considered by EQSB at its November meeting and progress will be reviewed in May. Specific initiatives are planned to help graduates secure graduate-level employment. A new group, the League Table and Returns Group, has been introduced that will have oversight of data presented externally in league tables, giving consideration among other things to funding implications.

TEF: Taking league-table performance out of the remit of the TEF Working Group leaves it to focus on preparations for Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (the new expanded title of TEF) submissions and pilot exercises. We heard on 2 November that we had not been selected to participate in the subject-level TEF pilots but we should receive our subject-level data in mid-December and can then start our internal shadow exercises, currently being planned by the TEF Working Group, to ensure we address any areas of concern. Note the recent publication of the [TEF3 guidance and resources](#) and [subject-level TEF specification](#).

QMUL Model: see separate Senate paper.

Institute of Technology: We are exploring a new initiative at Albert Island in the Royal Docks in East London, which is a Greater London Authority regeneration and development area. The development will create the infrastructure to support a major transport engineering hub, combining employment and training to serve the “4 Rs”: road, river, runway and rail. We have submitted an expression of interest (in partnership with Newham College) to the Department for Education to establish a Transport Engineering Institute of Technology as part of the development, which if successful would form a focus for transport and sustainable energy engineering education and research with integrated industrial engagement.

Degree Apprenticeships: In addition to our existing Digital and Technology Solutions Degree Apprenticeship programme, with a growing number of employer sponsors, there is ongoing work to develop a Social Sector Professional Degree Apprenticeship programme. We also continue to play an active role in the so-called ‘Trailblazer Groups’ for the following Degree Apprenticeships: Level-6 Data Scientist; Level-7 Architecture; and Level-7 Digital and Technology Solutions Specialist. A central part of the potential large-scale development at Albert Island – see above – is working with industry partners to develop Degree Apprenticeships in transport engineering. For further information, contact our Apprenticeships Manager, [Jamie Hilder](#).

Queen Mary Digital: A number of subject areas have been identified by the Queen Mary Digital project team as having potential for development as part of the next tranche of online PGT programmes, to be launched in 2018/19. Programmes and modules under consideration include: International Policy; Accounting, Finance and Management; Financial Mathematics. These ideas are being discussed with the relevant academic leads but we welcome interest from other subject areas.

Professional development portfolio: A new project manager to help develop our professional-development courses has been appointed to start in January 2018. The project manager will work with Professional Services to devise and implement an appropriate infrastructure for supporting the development of the CPD portfolio, and work with Schools and Institutes to identify opportunities that will raise our profile in this area and meet industry needs.

KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden: A two-day workshop was held at the end of September to move towards a strategic partnership between Queen Mary and KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. The workshop covered areas including mutual research interests, joint programmes, student and staff exchange, community engagement and leadership development. The event was very productive – a number of actions were agreed and are being taken forward – and a memorandum of understanding between QMUL and KTH was signed, describing the intention to work towards a strategic partnership. A follow up event is planned in April 2018 at KTH in Sweden.

Student Surveys: As noted in the last Senate update, we have discontinued the Queen Mary Student Survey (QMSS) and opted instead to run the United Kingdom Engagement Survey (UKES) as part of our semester-2 survey season alongside the National Student Survey and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey. Sarah Grossman, our new Student Surveys Coordinator, is now coordinating a short, focused consultation on the questions to include in UKES. Meanwhile, preparations for the promotion of the surveys running in the survey season are under way, with the NSS opening on 29 January 2018 and PTES and UKES opening on 5 February. Campus promotion will launch on 5 February, once all three taught surveys are live. For more, see <https://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6804>

Academic Lead for Personal Tutoring: we are in the process of recruiting an Academic Lead for Personal Tutoring (a fractional post similar to existing academic lead roles). A three-year Engagement Retention and Success project is being set up to explore ways to enhance the personal tutoring function. The Academic Lead for Personal Tutoring will lead this project. The aim of the project is to ensure that there is appropriate training and support for personal tutors and clear expectations of, and recognition and reward for, personal tutoring. Given the centrality of the personal tutor role to the success of the QMUL Model, it is vital that we ensure the role is understood and valued by everyone.

Review of Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Group: With the Academic Registrar, incoming Director of Marketing and Communications and Director of Planning and with the Head of Admissions, I have been reflecting on our recruitment and admissions operations and on the function of the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Group (MRAG). MRAG has, to date, had an important operational role but there is potential for a more strategic approach to recruitment, fee and target setting and portfolio development, with strong engagement from faculties and key professional services teams. QMSE has approved the introduction of a new strategic Student Recruitment and Admissions Group (SRAG) to replace MRAG, Taught Programmes Planning Group and the Scholarships Committee.

Part 1s and programme approval/withdrawal: Changes have been made to the processes and paperwork relating to Part-1 programme approval and requests to suspend or withdraw programmes. Taught Programmes Planning Group reviewed the process last year, and it was agreed that the group (or its successor body) would consider and comment on such requests prior to sign-off by the relevant Faculty Vice-Principal to help ensure improved portfolio planning and management, linking to recruitment activities. Relevant forms have been updated and uploaded to the [ARCS pages](#) and further communications on this matter will be issued by ARCS.

Consultations: A [consultation](#), to which we will respond institutionally, on the review of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education opened on 11 October and runs until 13 December.

A [consultation](#) on the proposed new regulatory framework and fees for the Office for Students was launched on 19 October and runs until 22 December 2017. One notable element of the consultation on the Office for Students is that it makes explicit that TEF will be mandatory for Higher Education providers to be in receipt of public funds.