



Senate

<b>Paper Title</b>	QM-wide Language Strategy
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked to <b>consider</b> the draft Language Strategy.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	<p>At the May meeting of Taught Programmes Board, the Board requested the development of a language strategy in order to provide a more consistent and effective way of regulating language provision across Queen Mary and to better articulate a framework for language provision at degree level across different schools.</p> <p>The strategy has been developed following consultation with staff in all three Faculties and Professional Services.</p>
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	n/a
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	n/a
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	n/a
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	Senate to approve.
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## QM-WIDE LANGUAGE STRATEGY

### **RATIONALE FOR A LANGUAGE STRATEGY, AS A SUBSIDIARY OF THE COLLEGE STRATEGY:**

The purpose of having a 'College Language Strategy' is to facilitate the implementation of the College's principle of providing language learning opportunities to students of the College (enshrined in the College's Graduate Attributes), and to ensure a more consistent and effective way of regulating the QA of language provision across Queen Mary University of London, including language for specific purposes and disciplines. <sup>1</sup>

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The development of this College Language Strategy has benefited from input from various key stakeholders in all three Faculties across the College, including Directors of Taught Programmes, the Director/Chair of the Language Centre, Deans of Taught Programmes, Heads of School, TLC representatives, ARCS, and the Students' Union, among others, over the course of 2012-13.

### **KEY PRINCIPLES:**

1. The College commits itself to providing all College students equal opportunities for language learning, in order to contribute to the internationalization of its students in line with Graduate Attributes.
2. The College commits itself to ensuring Quality Assured language modules. This is to ensure that language provision in the College is not brought into disrepute.
3. The College commits itself to ensuring that all language provision is delivered by suitably qualified language teaching professionals.
4. The College commits itself to increasing the range of language provision (based on demand) suitable for QM students and their respective career

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<sup>1</sup> This strategy engages with point 4 of the current Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for 2010-15: 'To ensure all students are offered the skills, knowledge and attributes to succeed throughout their studies', with specific attention to Key Aspect 4.6 'To facilitate the implementation of the Graduate Attributes framework through enabling aspiring students to gain competence in more than one language'.

paths (e.g. offer the possibility of learning languages that could serve the needs of working in the local community, as well as languages that provide students with a global perspective).

5. The College commits itself to the provision of study-only modules for PGT and PGR students who are *ab initio* in a language they need for their specific programme of study and to revise the use of arbitrary levels in terms of language learning. In doing so, the College will observe the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) with attention to relevant language learning levels at A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2. The College will have a set of defined outcomes via CEFRL for all language provision, instead of using the current system of setting language modules at levels 4, 5, and 6. In this way, the College will break the artificial correlation between language level and year of study, therefore allowing first year students to study advanced language courses, where they are able to do so, thus enhancing student choice.

**STRATEGIC AIM 1: ENHANCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND IMPROVE GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY RATES**

**Enabling Strategy:**

- Allow at least 30 credits of language learning during an undergraduate programme, which could be credit or non-credit bearing, in order to offer the opportunity to acquire a better understanding of another language and culture and thus enhance the ability to work efficiently in a different cultural environment including a wide range of social groups.
- Increase the use of the full timetable, to include evening, weekend and summer courses, and modules that could be taught on a Wednesday afternoon.
- Provide the opportunity for intensive language courses during the summer.

**STRATEGIC AIM 2: ENABLE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ALL LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**Enabling Strategy:**

Appoint the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, through its Language Centre, to be responsible for Quality Assurance of all language provision in the College, without necessarily being involved in all the teaching of language modules on offer.

**STRATEGIC AIM 3: ENSURE PROFESSIONAL DELIVERY OF ALL LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES**

**Enabling Strategy:**

Appoint the Language Centre as the responsible body for the appointment, **or approval**, of suitably qualified language teaching professionals and for the recommendation of suitable externals, even if its own staff will not be delivering specific modules.

#### **STRATEGIC AIM 4: IMPROVE RANGE OF LANGUAGE PROVISION THAT IS DISCIPLINE-RELEVANT**

##### **Enabling Strategy:**

- Increase the range of languages available to study, which are suitable for QM students in particular degree programmes, e.g. for medics in the local community (e.g. include provision for Asian, East African and Eastern European languages; Mandarin to support the EECS-BUPT joint programme; maintaining Arabic for historians, and Latin for medievalists, etc).
- Internationalize programmes of study, including outward mobility, thus providing the opportunity to study at partner institutions or in industry abroad, to promote a more global vision.

#### **STRATEGIC AIM 5: FACILITATE LANGUAGE PROGRESSION**

##### **Enabling Strategy:**

- Enhance language provision at all levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- Allow PGT and PGR students to take language modules at *ab-initio* (A1 of The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*), where relevant.
- Develop bespoke language programmes to allow PGT and PGR students to study a language relevant to their discipline.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Based on this strategic framework, Faculties and Schools will be expected to develop their own action plans, and set their Faculty targets and Key Performance Indicators, which should be embedded in the Schools' Taught Programmes Action Plans, with attention to:

- Credit-bearing language learning modules:

##### **Recommendation:**

For language learning modules studied for credit and leading to an award: student load in the usual way.

- Non-Credit Bearing (but transcriptable as study only) language learning modules, and not leading to an award:

**Options and points to consider:**

- student load
  - financed by departments
  - financed directly by students [Note: where students are expected to pay, the Students' Union recommends the possibility of monthly payment plans to be made available as well]
- Finding out what opportunities students would value in specific disciplines.
  - Acknowledging progression in language ability and deciding the point at which *ab initio* learning would be allowed in a career path, whilst recognizing the future aspirations of the student population.
  - Decide on joint provision or intercalated provision, where relevant, e.g. intercalated degrees in SMD, e.g. Medical French, etc.

It is envisaged that a designated web space will be crucial for dissemination of ALL language learning modules available at QMUL, as particularly requested by the Students' Union.

**Recommendation:**

Any local provision should be linked to:

<http://language-centre.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/language-learning>

**Note:** At the moment, the Language Centre offers: Arabic, Chinese, German, Japanese, and Spanish. The School of Languages, Linguistics and Film offer academic programmes in Catalan, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish to degree level. The School of History offers Arabic for Historians and Latin for Medievalists.

NOTE: The Students' Union recommends surveying all students at the beginning of their studies with reference to language proficiency (as done at the moment in SMD) and recognizing the employability benefits, followed up on an annual basis as part of a CPD strategy / portfolio.

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