



Paper Title	Student Survey Policy and supporting guidance documents
Outcome requested	<p>Senate is asked to approve the Student Survey Policy and supporting documents, and note the appendices of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen Mary Student Survey (QMSS) results • Module Evaluation Benchmarking
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>The contents of this paper are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Survey Policy • Student Survey Approval Form • Example Core Survey Calendar • Student Survey Policy Guidance <p>Appendices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. QMSS results – report to Council b. QMSS results – demographic analysis c. Module Evaluation Benchmarking <p>Student Survey Policy and supporting documents The policy was developed in discussion with members of the Student Survey Task and Finish Group. Its aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to reduce the number of surveys that current students are asked to respond to - to assure the quality and consistency of survey design and delivery - to improve the use of survey results and ensure they are shared in a timely fashion <p>It is proposed that any party wishing to survey current students in a population of more than one department must apply to the Student Survey Group using the Survey Approval Form, and commit to sharing survey results through the BI survey tool.</p> <p>The supporting documents were created in order to provide guidance about demographic data, data protection, ethics, suggested timelines and communication channels for promotional activity. It is hoped that by providing additional advice and information, it will allow the policy to remain concise, as well as aiming to improve the quality and consistency of future internal surveys of current students.</p> <p>QMSS results The Queen Mary Student Survey (QMSS) was launched last September to returning undergraduate students. The response rate was low, and work is currently underway to encourage an increase in response rate for the 2015 survey, including a plug-in that allows</p>

	<p>students to access the survey on QMPlus, extended survey period and the sharing of 2014 results with schools, professional services, course reps and the SU.</p> <p>As well as these papers, results have been uploaded to the BI survey tool, which can be accessed by all QMUL staff for analysis at College, faculty, school and programme level, as well as demographic indicators such as fee status, ethnicity, disability and gender. Staff are invited to explore the QMSS results here:</p> <p>https://bir.qmul.ac.uk/QMSS</p> <p>Module Evaluation Benchmarking Education Quality Board considered this paper at its meeting on 28 February 2015. Members appreciated the attempt to reduce the administrative burden, but felt that the existing system worked well. Taking these considerations into account, the board agreed that it would not be useful to revise the frequency of module evaluations or implement the benchmarking scheme proposed. The current practice of evaluating each module occurrence would continue.</p>
Questions for Senate to consider	N/A
Regulatory/statutory reference points	N/A
Strategy and risk	<p>Data gathered from student surveys, particularly from the QMSS, provide evidence for measuring progress against all three aims of the SETLA strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QMUL Risk Register: 2: High quality student experience throughout the student life cycle • SETLA Risk Register: 5 & 9.
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	<p>Senate to approve before publication</p> <p>Policy and supporting documents: considered by the Student Experience Advisory Board, and Education Quality Board.</p> <p>Module evaluation benchmarking: the Student Survey Task and Finish Group and Education Quality Board both supported the recommendation not to revise the frequency of module evaluations or implement the benchmarking scheme proposed.</p>
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Sponsor	Professor Susan Dilly, Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning)

Student Survey Policy

Purpose

Student surveys are a valuable method of collecting and assessing opinions in order to effect positive change. When used correctly, they can be an important way of providing information that can improve quality and student satisfaction. This policy aims to establish a coordinated approach for student surveying at QMUL. It does not intend to limit the gathering of feedback from students via surveys. It does, however aim to:

- monitor the frequency with which students are asked to participate in surveys
- assure the quality of student surveys
- assure that results are shared in a timely fashion, where appropriate
- assure the results will be used for the purposes for which the data was gathered

Improved use of data and reporting of results

This policy aims to address concerns regarding the number of surveys taking place in the university of which results are not reported or acted upon, and to ensure that QMUL efficiently and intelligently uses surveys and the data gathered by surveys. As a condition of survey approval, survey administrators must commit to timely analysis and reporting of survey results, sharing of results with the Student Survey Coordinator and consent to results being reported in an Annual Report to the Student Experience Advisory Board.

Limiting survey fatigue

The policy aims to ensure that student surveys are conducted in a manner that minimises redundancy and frequency of surveys and that QMUL students are not over-surveyed at critical times in the year for established surveys. To minimise the risk of over-surveying and to ensure that the university's core surveys remain a priority to students, a Survey Register and Calendar will be maintained by the Student Surveys Coordinator so that proposed surveys can be aligned with the topics and timings of other surveys.

Minimal overlap in collected data

A lack of coordination can result in similar surveys being simultaneously administered to the same students, creating confusion and frustration for respondents as well as survey administrators.

To prevent duplication of existing survey data, the administration of non-core surveys requires the approval of the Student Survey Group. This policy defines the role of the committee and application procedure for the survey approval.

The policy and guidance documents apply to all surveys of QMUL students. If a survey does not have to follow the approval process, it is recommended that the guidance documents are still followed.

Policy Scope

This policy covers:

- All surveys of QMUL current students.

This policy does not currently cover:

- Surveys of QMUL staff, alumni or applicants. The policy may be developed to include these groups in the future.

Core Surveys

The following are considered core surveys for gathering information about student experience and engagement, and do not need to go through the approval process.

- National Student Survey (NSS) and the Intentions After Graduation Survey
- National Student Housing Survey (NSHS)
- Module Evaluations
- Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)
- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

- Queen Mary Student Survey (QMSS)
- QMSU Annual Survey

All surveys that are not considered a core student survey must go through the Survey Approval Process. Very short, multiple choice surveys may be exempt from this process – contact the Student Surveys Coordinator to assess this.

Survey Approval Process

Scope

The process must be followed for:

- Internal surveys that intend to reach any sample of QMUL students where the demographic is from more than one department and which are not included in the core survey register.

Process

In order for a survey to be considered for approval, survey administrators must undertake the following:

1. Consult the Survey Calendar – any surveys that propose to overlap with an existing survey and a similar sample may possibly not be approved. This ensures that survey fatigue is minimised.
2. Consult the Survey Register to see if there is existing data that is relevant to the proposed survey findings. Contact the Student Survey Coordinator for help in obtaining any available data.
3. Fill in a Survey Approval Form. Please note that submission of an application does not guarantee approval.
4. Surveys will be considered for approval by the Student Survey Group and if successful added to the Survey Calendar.
5. Approval of a survey obligates the survey administrator to share the results with QMUL and the population surveyed within the timeframe committed on the Survey Approval Form.
6. The survey administrator must also consent to results of the survey being reported in an annual report of student surveys, on the QMUL website where appropriate for staff and/or students to view, and via the Business Intelligence survey tool

Student Survey Group

The Student Survey Group will meet on a regular basis to consider any survey applications against:

- The number of surveys taking place within the proposed survey period that survey a similar target population
- Possible duplication of information and whether required information may be obtained from existing data sources, surveys or otherwise
- Potential value and quality of the data to be collected
- The potential impact on the target population
- Suitability of proposed methodology
- Impact and consideration of data protection issues.

Survey Calendar and Register

In order to demonstrate which student groups are being surveyed and when throughout the year, a survey calendar is available online and maintained by the Student Surveys Coordinator. It displays all core and approved surveys for the current academic year by surveyed cohort, ie year of study.

To see at a glance which student groups are being surveyed and when, to accompany the calendar all core and approved surveys are listed online in a survey register.

The Survey Calendar and Register will be updated following each Student Survey Group meeting.

Data

On completion of internal surveys the data should be made available to load in to the Business Intelligence survey portal. The Business Intelligence Team will load the raw data into the portal. At this stage the survey respondents will be linked to their demographic characteristics as recorded in the student record system, SITS. Please see the guidance document for further information.

Reporting and Use of Data

By applying to the Student Surveys Group for survey approval, the survey administrator is agreeing to make the results of the survey available as appropriate.

- The results of all approved surveys will be reported on in an Annual Report to the Student Experience Advisory Board & the Education Quality Board.
- Results should be shared with QMUL staff and students, for example via Connect, QMPlus or Staff Student Liaison Committees.
- Actions and responses relating to the survey results should be fed into planning activities and made available to reporting back to students where appropriate.

Storage of Survey Data and Survey Tool

The data from each student survey will be uploaded to and stored within the QM Business Intelligence system, which will allow subsequent data analysis.

Guidance and Support

A separate guidance document is available to assist survey administrators with data protection, marketing, data gathering and ethics.

If survey administrators have questions about whether their survey needs approval or any other aspect of the survey policy or process, they are encouraged to contact the Student Surveys Coordinator.

Survey Approval Form

Name of survey administrator	
QMUL Department/Service	
Telephone/extension	
Email	

Title of survey	
Purpose of survey <i>What are the reasons behind this survey?</i>	
Target population <i>Eg, undergraduate, UK fee status, School</i>	
Is the survey aimed at a whole population or a sample?	
Approximate size of population	
Proposed date to begin survey	
Proposed date to close the survey	
Are these dates flexible?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Data collection methods <i>Where will the survey be hosted?</i>	
Date storage <i>Where possible survey data should be stored in the central surveys database.</i>	
Do you intend to repeat this survey and if so, when?	
How do you intend to promote this survey?	
Reporting plans <i>How will the results be reported and to whom will they be shared?</i>	
Reporting timeframe <i>When will results be reported and shared?</i>	

To attach: The student surveys group require a copy of the survey questions in order to ensure that the survey is of quality standard and that the collected results will not duplicate existing data.

Guidance document to support the Student Survey Policy

1. Survey population and demographic data
David Marks, Deputy Director of Strategic Planning
2. What to consider when creating a survey
Lucy Burrows, Student Surveys Coordinator
3. Data protection
Paul Smallcombe, Records & Information Compliance Manager
 - Data Protection
 - Storage of data
4. Ethics statement
Hazel Covill, Ethics Facilitator
5. Methods for survey promotion/marketing
Fran Dodd, interim Head of Internal Engagement
 - Promotion to students
 - Promotion to staff

1. Survey population and demographic data

Defining the survey population

As part of the survey approval stage survey administrators are asked to state the purpose of the survey, the target population and the approximate size of the population. Following approval for the survey to run, the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) can assist in defining parameters and extracting the population from the student records system (SITS) in advance of the survey going live.

If you require assistance it is advised that the SPO is contacted three weeks in advance of the survey going live so that a full specification of the population can be considered. Please send an email to planning@qmul.ac.uk stating 'Survey Population' in the email title and details of the population to be surveyed.

Demographic data

On completion of internal surveys the data should be made available to load in to the Business Intelligence survey portal. Please contact its-bi-team@qmul.ac.uk in advance of the survey running to inform them of the intended date that data will be available, and if possible, the structure of the survey.

In order to link respondent's demographic data it is essential that a unique identifier is supplied as part of the raw data. This ideally will be the respondent's student identifier – the nine character number on a student ID card. Another possible identifier would be the QMUL email address.

On loading the data in to the Business Intelligence Student Survey portal the survey respondent's data will be linked automatically to demographic data as recorded on the student record system, SITS. The demographic data available for analysis is:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability
- Socio-economic Class
- Domicile
- Ethnicity

As well as academic indicators at faculty, school and programme level. So that individuals cannot be identified within the analysis tool of the BI portal, any analysis where the population is less than five will be suppressed.

2. Considerations when designing a survey

Timeline of a survey

Administering a survey takes time and planning. It is important to allow time for the following:

Design: design surveys questions, write copy for contacting students and promotional materials; create the survey through online survey tool

Data: it will take three weeks from applying to receive demographic data from the Office of Strategic Planning

Test: allow half a day to test the survey using different email addresses and personas

Survey Launch

Reminders: Depending on how long the survey will run for, send at least one reminder to students that have not filled in the survey. Please be mindful about the number of emails students receive and do not send reminders more than once a week.

Thank you: Send an email to participants to thank them once the survey has closed

Analysis: It is important to allow time for full analysis and comparison to demographic factors. The BI team require up to five weeks to upload a new survey into the BI survey tool, and 3 weeks to upload new data for an existing survey and cross tabulate results to view year on year comparisons.

Reporting /sharing of results: Stick to the reporting window that participants have been assured of and allow time to upload results to webpages.

Good practice

It is good practice to include a short explanatory section before and after the survey questions.

To include in introductory section:

- Information on why students are being asked for this information
 - who will use the data
 - where and when the results will be available

- A contact for any questions students may have before beginning the survey
- A data protection notice (see data protection section)

To include in post-question section:

- Thanks for participation
- A contact for any feedback students may have after completing the survey
- A link to the webpage where the shared data is likely to be published, or generic department page.

For consistency and to be able to compare results to other surveys of QMUL students such as the NSS, PTES and QMSS, it is strongly advised that any scales ascends from the most negative option to the most positive, eg 1 = worst, 5 = best.

Students are more likely to respond to a survey if they are told it will not take up too much time. Think about what you are trying to find out and only ask questions about necessary subjects in order to keep the survey as short as possible.

If you have applied for data from Strategic Planning do not ask questions about gender, age, department etc – this avoids unnecessary duplication and potentially reduces the length of the survey.

QMUL style

If you are using Bristol Online Surveys (see [eLearning](#) for information), there will be an opportunity to add branding to the survey. For logos, banners and colours, see the [QMUL logo and branding](#) pages. Make use of the [QMUL style guide](#) when talking about the university and using educational terminology.

3. Data Protection

Running a survey may entail collecting personal information i.e. data from which living individuals can be identified. This could be in the form of names, addresses, dates of birth etc. but also attributable comments or other identifiers such as student ID numbers or other means of identifying who gave what response, perhaps due to small numbers. This means survey administrators will need to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, which controls how personal information is used, and in order to do so there are a number of principles which must be adhered to.

Firstly, the survey administrator must ensure that they explain who they are to respondents (if not obvious), why respondent information is being collected and what the College intends to do with it, including who it will be shared with, at the very start.

Checklist of what may be appropriate to include in such a 'fair processing' or privacy notice:

- A brief overview of what the survey is about;
- The respondent, service user or public benefit of the survey;
- A description of the data to be used – if sensitive items¹ are to be included, this should be made clear;
- How identifiable the data to be used are, e.g. 'We will not collect name and address but need to collect date of birth and postcode. Whilst these items could be used to identify individuals we will only use them to match data held in different locations about the same individual to ensure duplicate responses are not received. We will not seek to identify individuals';
- Who will be accessing/using the data;
- Where the data will be kept;
- How long the data will be kept in identifiable form and what will happen to the data when the aims of the survey are complete;
- To whom to direct any queries and how to contact them;
- Assurance that the data will be held securely and confidentially and a brief description of what measures are in place to ensure this, e.g. 'All data collected in this survey will be held securely and all responses are treated as confidential. We use a code to link individual responses to student and course information on our records systems for the purposes of analysis only. However, it will not be possible to identify any individual from any response as the data we will use and any findings we publish will be aggregated and anonymised; even where there are small numbers there will be safeguards to ensure no individual is able to be identified.'

Respondents should be assured that personal information will not be held for longer than necessary, for example by deleting or anonymising the data once it is analysed, superseded, no longer required or out of date.

Appropriate measures should be taken to protect the information from loss, destruction or damage and that it is kept secure at all times (see below).

Further information is available at on the [ARCS webpages](#).

Storage of Data

Bristol Online Surveys should be used wherever possible for conducting surveys - when data is held by BOS it is in full compliance with UK data protection laws.

If data is held locally, for example by downloading results, and it consists of personal identifiable data (see above) then steps should be taken to protect it and make sure it is only accessible to those who have a need to see it. Therefore, use passwords or encryption on the files. Network drives are backed up whereas removable media are not, are easily misplaced and would require encryption to hold this type of data. Similarly, commercial

¹ Sensitive personal data includes: ethnicity, religion, political opinions, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, commission of any offence or court proceedings

online cloud services such as Dropbox and OneDrive must not be used unless appropriate encryption is employed.

Physical information and media must be locked up when not in use and disposed of through confidential waste/shredding. Hardware storing this type of information must be securely wiped and possibly physically destroyed when deleting. IT Services can advise.

Further information can be found in the information security guidance at <http://www.infosec.qmul.ac.uk/index.html>

4. Ethics Guidance

Ethics approval is not required for the surveying of students as long as the Student Surveys Policy is adhered to. The Student Survey Approval Form is not suitable for student research projects, which must be approved through the QMUL Ethics Filter.

If offering incentives such as vouchers, they should not be offered of a level that could lead to a participant taking part in the survey against their own best interests.

If planning on surveying students about issues that may be considered to be personal or sensitive, contact Hazel Covill, Ethics Facilitator h.covill@qmul.ac.uk for advice.

For any further information about ethics procedures and policy at QMUL, see <http://connect.qmul.ac.uk/research/ethics-of-research-committee/index.html>

5. Student survey promotional guidelines

A key component to the success of any survey is promotion and utilising a wide range of communications channels.

The National Student Survey 2014 showed that 40 per cent of students said that they were told about the survey by a lecturer or member of staff. While it is naturally important to raise the profile of the survey to students, it is also crucial to ensure that staff are well briefed on the survey, and are supporting it during their face to face contact time with students.

This document provides an overview of the QMUL channels available for promotion of survey both to students and to staff. This document assumes that the survey proposed is targeted at all students across QMUL.

Survey promotion aimed at students

Channel	Further information
QMUL Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QMUL Student is the monthly e-newsletter to all students. The e-newsletter is sent on the first Monday of the month. • Copy deadline is one week before publication. • Submit copy to qmul-student@qmul.ac.uk
All student email list (sympa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider approaching the Principal or VP Research/VP Teaching, Learning and Student Experience to endorse the survey and issue an email in their name • Consider producing a designed HTML email to catch the eye - example • Time emails for launch, reminders and a few days before close of survey • Approach Internal Engagement for advice on sending emails via the all student email list.
Emails from Schools to eligible students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate School based staff (e.g. Head of School, course leaders, course administrators, school support officers) email eligible students • Encourage staff to reference the surveys and hyperlink to them at the end of their email signatures
QMplus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Schools to include information about the surveys in their School QMplus pages e.g. on PGT module pages • Discuss the possibility placing an image on the homepage of QMplus with E-learning
My.qmul http://my.qmul.ac.uk/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student portal • See NSS web page example here
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time social media posts on School and central QMUL Facebook and Twitter accounts promoting the surveys around the time the emails are sent to students to maximise effectiveness

Mobile app campaign banner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13,000+ registered users on the student mobile app • Campaign banner needs to be designed by QMUL Design and Branding, requests must be made six weeks in advance: http://qm-web.mc.qmul.ac.uk/designandbranding/book/index.html
Posters/leaflets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce printed marketing materials for use during survey period • Discuss design work with QMUL Design and Branding team: http://qm-web.mc.qmul.ac.uk/designandbranding/book/index.html
PowerPoint presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure PowerPoint presentations are included in any teaching time
Plasma screens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place plasma screen slides around the university • Karen Condon in Internal Engagement can upload the slide to centrally controlled plasma screens on campuses: k.condon@qmul.ac.uk
Events attended by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your School or Student Service is running events, consider creating a 'survey hub' with PCs or tablets where students can be incentivised to complete the survey – often a free hot drink is enough to convince students to take a few minutes to complete the survey • Incorporate mentions of the survey in other activities or events being run
Students' Union	<p>Discuss options with Melissa Bowley (Marketing and Communications Manager) and President/Vice Presidents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask to include a mention in the weekly Students' Union email to all students • Ask to feature on their website • Discuss getting course reps and societies involved in promoting the survey – discuss with VP Education and Education Zone coordinator in the Union – currently Carolina Mantzalos and Brad Coales.

Survey promotion aimed at staff

Channel	Further information
E-bulletin	<p>The weekly e-newsletter to all staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published every Wednesday • Deadline for copy is the Monday before publication • Submit copy to e-bulletin@qmul.ac.uk
Vice Principal's updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cross-cutting Vice Principals' send regular updates to all staff • Consider asking to include a reference to the surveys in the VP Teaching, Learning and Student Experience for example. Approach the Vice-Principals' Executive Officers • Also consider asking to be included in the Faculty VP Updates – approach Faculty Executive Officers to discuss
School email to staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Heads of Schools/School Managers and/or Directors of Taught Programmes or Directors of Graduate Studies email appropriate staff to encourage them to support the survey and why it is important • Brief staff on the survey at team meetings and events
Connect http://connect.qmul.ac.uk/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff intranet • When submitting a story to e-bulletin, the copy will be uploaded to the staff news pages of the intranet: http://connect.qmul.ac.uk/qmandyou/staff/index.html • You can also request to have the story added to the Connect homepage image boxes, which is a good way of promoting the surveys • You may also want to consider developing an area of Connect for your survey. An example of the NSS promotion page is available here: http://connect.qmul.ac.uk/teachlearn/nss2015/index.html. You will need to discuss where this content sits with the Connect content owner e.g. Teaching and Learning.
Plasma screens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place plasma screen slides on plasma screens, if School has them
Posters/leaflets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce printed marketing materials for use during survey period for staff to display as appropriate • Discuss design work with QMUL Design and Branding: http://qm-web.mc.qmul.ac.uk/designandbranding/book/index.html

Queen Mary Student Survey: Report to Council, March 2015

1. Background: Review of Student Surveys and Design of Queen Mary Student Survey

One of the key challenges for student experience, teaching and learning is to evaluate the impact of initiatives designed to enhance the quality of student experience. The data gathered via national surveys (NSS, PTES, PRES, ISB) is rarely useful for supporting an evidence based approach. Therefore we have been developing policy and process that:

- establish a coordinated approach for student surveying at QMUL
- assure the quality of the design of student surveys
- manage the storage of data so that it is available for future analysis
- ensure that results are shared in a timely fashion along with any action plans

The first requirement was identified as the new QMUL Student Survey (QMSS) and this was launched in September 2014, following a pilot that took place in March 2014.

This work also addresses recommendations in the KPMG audit report on Student Satisfaction, published in May 2014.

2. Design and Content of the QMSS Survey

The survey was designed over a six month period through collaboration between academics, professional services and the Student Union and adopts a holistic approach to evaluating student experience. (The questions are included in appendix A along with the top-level analysis.)

The QMSS includes questions on academic programmes, campus life, the Queen Mary Students Union, student support and student services. They have been chosen to relate to areas identified in QM strategies as being of high importance, in contrast to the national survey questions which ask generic questions intended for cross-institutional comparisons. The output from this survey is used as part of the metrics for the annual stocktake of progress against the College Strategy and SETLA targets.

The style of questions is a mixture of satisfaction, engagement, awareness and usage questions; along with opportunities for free-text to provide detail. The decision to include 'engagement' questions is a change and is in response to research on what influences student achievement. Surveys of student engagement have been used quite widely in North America and elsewhere and the Higher Education Academy is piloting a similar survey in the UK (NSSE). It is very different in style and substance to the NSS and has the potential to be used as part of a personal discussion between a student and their tutor. It might also influence a student's attitude and expectation by encouraging them to think more reflectively about their programme and how they engage with it, rather than simply whether they are 'satisfied'. The QMSS includes questions from the NSSE, with permission from Indiana University.

The other major change is that the Business Intelligence Tool recently implemented at QMUL allows the student responses in surveys to be anonymously linked to their demographic, programme and enrolment details held in SITS. This significantly improves the analysis that can be undertaken as the student's experience can be interrogated by student type (eg gender, ethnic origin, fee status, socioeconomic group) and student achievement (eg entry grade, progression, degree classification) as well as programme and cohort.

The aim is to survey all students on taught programmes, but for the first run only UK-based undergraduates were included. The survey is run at the start of the academic year and students are asked to reflect on their experiences over the entire previous year.

The academic questions relate to the whole programme (rather than individual modules) and provide improved data for quality assurance monitoring and programme review (eg on whether the programme and its modules fit together in a coherent fashion, whether students are being challenged, whether the range of assessments is balanced and appropriate). This complements the feedback provided through the Module Evaluation Questionnaire, which are evaluated as they run in year. It also includes questions on the resources and support services at QMUL. These questions are quite high level (about overall satisfaction), but students are invited to make comments on the services, and the services can use the feedback as a starting point for further investigation of issues should they need to.

3. Findings, QMSS September 2014 (see Appendix A for table of overall results)

The response rate for the 2014-5 QMSS was 11.5%, and so too low to analyse at faculty or department level this year. Indeed, even the QMUL-level results should be treated with some caution. As this was the first time the QMSS was run, it is not possible to compare results to previous years to identify trends. We will, however, look to see where patterns emerge between QMSS results and results from other surveys (eg NSS, Module Evaluation Questionnaires).

Positive headlines

The content of academic programmes scored highly with respondents. 89% of respondents felt that their programme was intellectually stimulating – a 2% increase compared to the same question in the most recent NSS. This was one of the highest scores overall, with 54% of respondents awarding it the highest mark on the four point scale. As well as this, 80% felt that their modules were well-balanced, 87% of respondents felt they had been challenged to do their best work, and 81% felt satisfied that they had formed a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information.

Areas for potential improvement

The lowest scores for engagement or satisfaction surrounded contact with academic staff. When asked how often they had discussed ideas from their course with teaching staff outside taught sessions, 66% of respondents gave answers of 1 or 2 out of 4. 61% of respondents gave low scores when asked about their opportunity to discuss academic performance with teaching staff. 44% of respondents were dissatisfied with the level of module feedback received as well as the lack of encouragement to become involved in research (45%). This echoes the results of the most recent NSS, in which satisfaction for feedback was between 62% and 63%.

One of the lowest levels of satisfaction was in response to 'Talked about your career plans with teaching staff or advisors', with 76% of respondents scoring this 1 or 2 on the 4 point scale. 46% of respondents gave this a score of 1/4.

QMUL services

All services had a satisfaction level of 75% or more, with library services achieving 93%, which was 10% higher than score given in the 2014 NSS. The Disability and Dyslexia Service had the highest score as over 93% of users were satisfied. Disability access also scored high levels of satisfaction when students were asked about campus life, receiving 82%. The health service had the lowest satisfaction rate, but at 75% does not suggest a significant cause for concern. Respondents showed the least awareness of the Chaplaincy and the Language Centre - 21% & 15% respectively marked that they were not aware of these services.

QMSU

Overall, 88% of students were satisfied with their student union – much higher than the most recent NSS rate of 73%. Student Union activities (q3 & 7) had some of the lowest scores for engagement from respondents, varying between societies, which 32% of respondents had not engaged with and SU media,

which 80% had not used. Opinion on the impact of student campaigns on academic experience was split – 46% of respondents thought they had no impact, whilst 46% thought they had some.

QMSS Results – Demographic level

This paper summarises the results of the QMSS reviewed alongside demographic data in order to identify trends by different student groups. The indicators are: ethnicity, gender, disability, domicile and socio-economic classification. Any statuses that are unknown, not applicable or not given have been omitted from this analysis as it not possible to draw any conclusions from these groups. The numbers shown in the tables are the percentage of positive responses on the 4 point scales on the QMSS (scores of 3 and 4 on the satisfaction/agreement scale and 2,3 & 4 on engagement scale (1 being 'not at all')).

Gender

When responses were separated by gender, female respondents showed higher satisfaction or engagement scores in 69% of answers. There was a difference of over 10% between male and female engagement or satisfaction levels in 8 different areas, 5 of which are in regard to the Students' Union. Female students responded more positively to male respondents on the following:

- ability to develop effective written and spoken English on their programme (10.1% and 8.6% higher than male respondents respectively),
- ability to make significant changes to their work based on feedback (almost 10% more female respondents agreed with this statement)
- engaging with work opportunities to develop employability skills (8.8%) and volunteering opportunities (13% higher than male respondents)
- satisfaction with IT services and the Chaplaincy (both over 11% higher than male satisfaction rates).

Male respondents had higher satisfaction or engagement levels in several areas:

- using quantitative data confidently on their programme (8.5% higher than female score)
- engagement with sports activities (13% more)
- satisfaction with staff contact (over 6% higher than female respondents for administrative contact and almost 4% for academic staff contact)

In the 2014 NSS results for QMUL, there was a 5% difference between male and female respondents in satisfaction with teaching (male students being less satisfied). This was echoed in several teaching related questions of the QMSS – for example, in regards to the satisfaction with the different ways in which subjects are taught, female respondents had a 4.6% more positive score.

Ethnicity

For the purpose of this analysis, students were split into two groups: white, and non-white. Unlike recent HEFCE trend analysis which notes that non-white students tend to have lower satisfaction rates, and QMUL's most recent NSS results which corresponds with this, the QMSS suggests that the College's non-white respondents were in fact more satisfied and engaged than white students. Non-white students had higher satisfaction rates in 40 out of 71 QMSS questions (56%).

The 2014 NSS showed QMUL white student satisfaction with teaching as 9% higher than for non-white students, and the QMSS showed a similar trend. 5.5% more white respondents were satisfied with the different ways their subjects were taught.

There was a difference of 9.5% between white respondents, who felt that they had arrived at taught sessions prepared, compared with non-white respondents.

Non-white respondents felt more encouraged by their programme to confidently use quantitative data (7.2% higher than white respondents) and use technology to interpret information effectively (7.8%).

Non-white respondents were more satisfied with almost all QMUL services and facilities – satisfaction rates were between 5 and 11% higher for the Chaplaincy, IT, the Student Health Service and the Fees Office.

Questions regarding the Student Union saw a similar increase in engagement as well as satisfaction. 9% more non-white students had engaged with both Students' Union campaigns and volunteering in the last academic year.

Fee status

For the purpose of this analysis, respondents with EU and overseas fee statuses have been combined as non-UK. This is to make the non-UK group larger and more robust, and because this group will largely share the same experiences of studying abroad here at QMUL.

Non-UK respondents were more positive about all questions about campus life. In particular, satisfaction with disabled access, the eco-friendly environment and campus shops was between 7 and 10% higher than the scores of UK respondents.

Similarly, satisfaction with most services were greater, with satisfaction with Advice & Counselling and Residential services 10% higher for non-UK respondents.

UK domiciled students however seemed more likely to agree positively with statements about teamwork – almost 10% more UK respondents felt that they had discussed course ideas with peers, and almost 7% more felt encouraged to work in a team with other students.

Disability

In order to compare to NSS demographic indicators, respondents were split into three groups to match the Texunatech categories: no known disability, learning disability and other disability. Of the 845 respondents, 94 did not fall into the no known disability category, and so the reliability of the trends shown is limited. The group with no known disability was much longer than the other groups, and therefore this group's results were very similar to all College level results.

Respondents with a learning disability had overall satisfaction and engagement levels higher than those with no known disability. Conversely, respondents with other disabilities had lower satisfaction and engagement rates. This group felt more positively than students with no disability about only 6 out of 71 questions, while respondents with learning disabilities were more positive in 43 questions than the non-disabled group.

Respondents with learning disabilities seemed more satisfied with skills developed on their programmes than respondents with no or other disabilities. Compared with respondents with no disability, this group had satisfaction levels over 15% higher for developing skills to influence and lead; contributing to course discussions, and reflecting on their own progress. The highest satisfaction levels for this group was for the Disability and Dyslexia Service, and the highest agreement level was for the statement 'The programme was intellectually stimulating' (95.7% agreed).

Some of the lowest satisfaction and engagement rates for respondents with other disabilities were in regard to discussing opinions, ideas and performance – discussing course ideas and academic performance with teaching staff outside of lessons, and discussing career options had satisfaction ratings of 30% or lower. Satisfaction with many campus facilities, services and careers advice were 15-20% lower than for respondents with no known disability.

Socio-economic class

Socio-economic classifications are self-declared and a significant number of QMSS survey respondents chose not to declare or choose a SEC (only 56.4% of respondents have classification data). Therefore analysis is tentative.

However, as with the QMUL 2014 NSS results, respondents from higher managerial and professional backgrounds gave more positive responses than those with other backgrounds – out of the 71 questions, 74.6% of aggregated responses from this group were more positive than the College average.

Question 12 summary table

Below is a table of responses to the question 'Would you recommend the university to other students thinking of applying here?' Respondents could choose from 'definitely not', 'not likely', 'quite likely' and 'very likely' and the table below shows responses for the latter two options. Apart from a 7% difference between female and male respondents' answers, there is fairly little difference between each sub-group and the College average.

Group	% agree
Overall	87.6%
White	88.5%
Non white	87.3%
Female	90.5%
Male	83.4%
Disability	86.8%
No disability	84.8%
From UK	87.6%
Not from UK	88.0%

Appendix C:

Module Evaluation Benchmarking and Frequency of Evaluation

Background

The QMUL module evaluation scheme has now been in operation for three academic years (2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14) following the two pilots in 2010/11. In this time the scheme has developed considerably both in the functionality of the Evasys platform that is used to support it and the amount of data that has been generated and is used in schools, institutes and central departments.

Module Benchmarking

The Student Surveys Task and Finish Group on 12 January 2015 was asked to review possible models for module benchmarking using the common statements in place for all evaluations. The aim was to identify consistently high-performing modules and consider whether the frequency of evaluation for these modules should be adjusted.

The group considered six models as listed below:

- Model 1 Module mean for all seven core statements for each academic year. Modules which had a mean over 4.0 were highlighted.
- Model 2 Module mean for each core statement per academic year and the overall mean for that question for all modules in that academic year. Individual modules whose mean score was higher than the total statement mean were highlighted.
- Model 3 Mean for each module by core statement. Modules which achieved a mean over 4.0 per statement were highlighted.
- Model 4 This model is similar to model 3 except that the benchmark has been set at 4.5 per statement.
- Model 5 Standard deviation calculated for the population each year and then used to identify outliers
- Model 6 Modules which achieved an Overall Quality Index of 100% based on the formula previously agreed by QMUL

The number of modules impacted by each model are shown below:

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6*
Total number of modules	1768	1768	1768	1768	1768	833
Number of modules meeting benchmark over 3 years	170	91	42	2	33	35
Percentage of total modules affected	9.62%	5.15%	2.38%	0.11%	1.87%	4.20%
HSS modules affected	143	80	39	2	31	23
S&E modules affected	27	11	3	0	2	11
SMD modules affected	0	0	0	0	0	1

*As it is not possible to extract the Quality Index figures from Evasys, the reports of semester one 2014/15 were checked to see how many met this criteria. The rest of the models were based on extracted data for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14.

The group agreed that Model 6 should be put forward for consideration as a method for benchmarking module performance with an expectation that modules that received scores of 100% over an agreed period would be given the option of requesting an exemption from evaluation according to an agreed schedule.

Education Quality Board

Education Quality Board considered the paper at its meeting on 28 February 2015. Members appreciated the attempt to reduce the administrative burden, but felt that the existing system worked well. Comments included:

- i. Granting exemptions assumed that there were no changes to staffing, content, or delivery year-on-year;
- ii. The student cohort also affected delivery of a module;
- iii. The existing system provided useful data for module organisers to reflect upon to further enhance or develop modules and was important for staff development;
- iv. Good results could be used by staff as evidence in probation, promotion and appraisal processes. It also allowed the Deans to identify good practice and to issue commendations;
- v. The numbers of exempt modules in the proposed approach was so small (just over 4% of the total number of modules evaluated) that time spent identifying such modules might outweigh time saved in not evaluating them.

Taking these considerations into account, the board agreed that it would not be useful to revise the frequency of module evaluations or implement the benchmarking scheme proposed. The current practice of evaluating each module occurrence would continue.