



**Senate**

<b>Paper Title</b>	Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on 11 June 2015.
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked to <b>approve</b> the minutes of the last meeting
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	n/a
<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.
<b>Authors</b>	Jane Pallant, Deputy Academic Registrar
<b>Sponsor</b>	Professor Simon Gaskell, President and Principal

## Senate

### Minutes of 11 June 2015 (unconfirmed)

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#### Present:

Professor Simon Gaskell (Chair)	Dr Aylin Baysan	Professor Alison Blunt
Dr Melania Capasso	Professor Susan Dilly	Dr Matthias Dittmar
Professor Markman Ellis	Professor Omar Garcia	Imran Hussain
Dr Robert Janes	Professor David Lee	Professor Valsamis Mitsilegas
Dr Sandra Nicholson	Dr Chris Phillips	Professor Richard Pickersgill
Dr Katy Price	Jane Reid	Professor David Sadler
Professor Julia Shelton	Professor Morag Shiach	Professor William Spence
Dr Anwar Tappuni	Dr Christopher Tyson	Professor Olwyn Westwood
Professor Geraint Wiggins	Professor Ferranti Wong	

#### In attendance:

Dr Paul Chapple	Dr Esther de Leeuw	Jonathan Morgan
Jane Pallant (Secretary)	Professor Philip Rawlings	Sam Rowles
Professor Georgios Varouxakis		

#### Apologies:

Professor Adrian Armstrong	Dr Mark Baxendale	Dr Adrian Bevan
Dr Russell Binions	Professor James Busfield	Professor Mike Curtis
Dr Steve Dunn	Professor Matthew Evans	Professor Graham Hitman
Dr Henri Huijberts	Professor Boris Khoruzhenko	Professor Martin Laffin
Professor Nicholas Lemoine	Professor Steve Lloyd	Matt Mahmoudi
Professor Spyros Maniatis	Carolina Mantzalos	Professor Seán McConville
Professor Peter McOwan	Professor Thomas Prellberg	Professor Adrian Smith
Professor Richard Trembath	Professor Wen Wang	Dr Nasir Warfa

### Part 1: Preliminary items

#### Minutes of the previous meeting (SE2014.45)

2014.127 Senate **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March, subject to an amendment to minute 2014.86 (iii) which should refer to QMSU, rather than QMSE.

#### Matters arising (minutes SE2014.104- SE2014.106)

2014.128 The Chairman **reported** that further discussion had taken place with regard to the establishment of a Confucius Institute at QMUL. The proposals for the Confucius Institute had been discussed at the March 2015 meeting of Senate where members had requested assurances relating to the protection of academic freedom and compliance with EU human rights legislation. These concerns had been addressed and were reflected in a clause of the formal agreement which established the Confucius Institute.

## Presentation

2014.129 Senate **received** a presentation from Paul Edlin, Director of Music, on musical activities at QMUL. Members thanked Dr Edlin for his interesting and informative presentation.

## President and Principal's report

2014.130 The President and Principal **reported** that:

- (i) Senate offered its congratulations to the newly appointed sabbatical officers of the Students' Union. Members **noted** that Carolina Mantzalos would be President of the Students' Union for 2015-16. Imran Hussain had been elected Vice-President (Education) and Miranda Black would serve as Vice-President (Welfare). Will Atkins was the Vice-President elect for Barts and The London.
- (ii) Professor Rebecca Lingwood had been appointed to the role of Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning) and Professor Edmund Burke would join QMUL as Vice-Principal and Executive Dean (Science and Engineering).
- (iii) Joanne Jones had been appointed to the role of Director of Finance.
- (iv) Professor Mike Curtis would act as the interim Vice-Principal (Health) and Executive Dean (Medicine and Dentistry) from September 2015.
- (v) Since the general election of May 2015 there had been two new appointments in government that were relevant to the sector: the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills and the Minister for Universities and Science. The approach of the new government to higher education policy was unlikely to involve a reduction in tuition fees paid by students, with a review of the student support system likely to be undertaken in the near future.
- (vi) The Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced that there would be a £450 million in-year cut in the budget for the Department of Business Innovation and Skills. This significant cut would be felt keenly by higher education institutions; in order to mitigate the anticipated reduction in funding, colleagues at QMUL were undertaking financial forecasting analysis and modelling.
- (vii) The sector had become concerned by the direction of government policy on international recruitment. Universities UK had been engaged in representing the importance of international students to the UK, also voicing the need to make provision for appropriately qualified international students to work in the UK after graduation.
- (viii) Universities UK was working with institutions in the Russell Group with regard to the new counter-terrorism legislation. The sector's apprehension, which was echoed by QMUL, related to the need to strike a balance between appropriate security measures and the protection of freedom of expression.

## Vice-Principals' reports

- 2014.131 The Vice-Principal (International) **reported** that:
- (i) QMUL had entered into discussion with the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA), a network of 104 UK universities which works to defend and promote academic freedom. The organisation co-ordinated a fellowship programme for refugee academics and QMUL was considering the possibility of sponsoring a fellow.
  - (ii) Members **noted** that the Vice-Principal (International) provided information on overseas visits connected with QMUL business on the VP (International) web pages.
- 2014.132 The Vice-Principal and Executive Dean (Humanities and Social Sciences) **reported** that the Faculty was engaged in discussions about summer schools that might be offered in both London and Paris. The Faculty was also developing a liberal arts programme which would feature contributions from each of its schools.
- 2014.133 The Vice-Principal (Research) **reported** that:
- (i) QMUL had launched its first Graduate Festival which aimed to showcase the cutting-edge research being undertaken by PhD students and to bring researchers together. The event had proved to be successful, and thanks were extended to the organisers.
  - (ii) The programme of annual research reviews was underway and these had been very positive, indicating some interesting developments across schools and institutes. The outcomes of these meetings would feed into the preparation for the Research Excellence Framework 2020.
  - (iii) The faculties were in the process of coordinating bids for the Research Equipment Fund for up to £3 million.
  - (iv) The Life Sciences Institute (LSI) had launched a new website on which Senate members were invited to provide feedback. Developments at the institute included a working group to examine space for the LSI at the Whitechapel campus. Members **noted** that there was no student representation on this group at present, but a student representative would be appointed in the near future.

### Students' Union President's report

- 2014.134 The Students' Union President had given apologies for the meeting and his representative informed Senate that there were no major items for report.

## Part 2: Matters for information

### International strategy (SE2014.46)

- 2014.135 Senate **received** a draft of the International Strategy. Members **noted** that the draft International Strategy reflected feedback following a consultation process across QMUL; indicators of progress were being developed in order to monitor and support

the strategy.

- 2014.136 A member of Senate raised concerns regarding the data that supported the reference to 'a truly diverse workforce' in section 4 of the International Strategy. The Vice-Principal (International) explained that the composition of QMUL's workforce was an indicator of internationalisation, and that there were staff working across a variety of delivery models, including those programmes based in China and in France. It was agreed that further information on the data used to formulate the Strategy would be provided by the Vice-Principal (International) outside the meeting.
- 2014.137 In the context of a discussion on diversity, the Vice-Principal (Research) **reported** that QMUL had received funding from the Wellcome Trust for a twelve-month post to support diversity. This role would be based in Professional Services and would work across QMUL.
- 2014.138 Members **noted** that there was a task and finish group that had been formulated to examine issues related to transnational employment. Higher education as a sector was focusing on the different models for transnational working, and Human Resources had undertaken some research in relation to the models in operation at QMUL.
- 2014.139 Members were invited to provide further feedback on the draft International Strategy to the Vice-Principal (International).

#### **TeachHigher (SE2014.47)**

- 2014.140 Senate **received** a paper from a member regarding the use of subsidiary companies to deliver academic programmes.
- 2014.139 Members **noted** that TeachHigher, a subsidiary recruitment company, had been established at the University of Warwick. Members further **noted** that this proposal had been withdrawn in response to criticism of the approach from across the sector.
- 2014.140 Senate **agreed** that it should provide a statement of principle to summarise its approach to the use of subsidiary companies of this type, in that it would not sub-contract its teaching services in this way. 'Senate affirms that it has concerns about the potentially detrimental impact on the student experience and on the reputation of the higher education sector more generally arising from the use of subsidiary recruitment companies to manage hourly paid teaching staff.' (*suggested wording for draft statement from ARCS as agreed in the meeting*)

#### **Student opportunities for cross and interdisciplinary modules**

- 2014.141 Senate **received** an oral report on the development of opportunities for cross and interdisciplinary modules at QMUL. Members **noted** the following:
- (i) The Education Quality Board had considered a paper on the introduction of interdisciplinary modules for undergraduate students. A bid for funding to support this initiative was unsuccessful in the Planning and Accountability Review; however, it was hoped that the momentum for the project would continue.
  - (ii) The Language Strategy had been embedded successfully during 2014-15 and it was pleasing to note that the project was widely supported across

QMUL. The Planning and Accountability Review had provided £50k to support bursaries across all schools and institutes to enable students to undertake language courses.

### **Forecasting the effects of planned growth on the teaching timetable (SE2014.48)**

2014.142 Senate **noted** a paper which detailed a modelling exercise undertaken to examine the effects of planned growth in student numbers (to 2019-20) on the teaching timetable. Members **noted** the following:

- (i) The paper had been presented to Senate for members to note where QMUL had reached in terms of planning its teaching space, and to open up discussion on how QMUL might design its space to align with its aspirations for teaching in the future.
- (ii) Members were invited to contact the Assistant Academic Registrar (Timetable) to discuss space planning, noting that further modelling exercises could be undertaken to explore and test ideas.

### **Research degree programmes: review of Academic Regulations and Code of Practice (SE2014.49)**

2014.143 Senate **received** an information paper on proposals for changes to the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. Members **noted** that a consultation exercise would take place across schools and institutes, with final drafts of these documents being considered by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board, the Doctoral College Management Group, and the Vice-Principal (Research) Advisory Group. Senate would consider these documents by circulation in August 2015.

### **Freedom of speech and preventing extremism in UK higher education institutions (SE2014.50)**

2014.144 Senate **received** a briefing paper on freedom of speech and the prevention of extremism in UK higher education institutions. Members **noted** that there was some uncertainty across the sector regarding the expectations on higher education institutions in this connection. Universities UK was working closely with the Home Office and the Department of Business Innovation and Skills in order to represent UK higher education effectively and protect freedom of speech within the law.

2014.145 Senate **noted** the views of the Students' Union which was engaged with the national discussion of this issue and an intended lobby of parliament by the National Union of Students.

## **Part 3: Matters for consideration**

### **Academic governance review (SE2014.51)**

2014.146 Senate **considered** an interim report of the review of academic governance. Members **noted** that the process had included the scrutiny of terms of reference and minutes of sub-boards of Senate and committee meetings from schools and institutes. A series of interviews had also been held in order to get a fuller understanding of colleagues' experiences of academic governance at QMUL.

2014.147 Senate **noted** the initial observations of the review had confirmed that QMUL had a comprehensive framework of academic governance that conformed to sector expectations, providing structured opportunities for staff and students to engage on issues at all levels across the institution. The review identified the potential for some aspects of the Academic Framework (introduced in 2010) to be clarified or strengthened, with recommendations emerging in the areas described below.

- (i) The provision of increased opportunities for Senate members to engage in debate and constructive challenge on strategic issues across all QMUL's academic activities.
- (ii) A realignment of consultation and decision making processes where these had deviated from those defined in the Academic Framework.
- (iii) Arrangements for academic governance arrangements should be strengthened and refocused as needed in order to support emerging strategic priorities.
- (iv) Senate should ensure that those matters that it has formally delegated to schools and institutes are addressed in a consistent and transparent way.

2014.148 Senate members were invited to submit comments on the report to the Academic Registrar and Council Secretary by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015. Members **noted** that the final report of the academic governance review, and its recommendations, would be considered by Senate at its meeting in October 2015.

#### **Assessment governance consultation 2014-15 (SE2014.52)**

2014.149 Senate **considered** a report of the assessment governance consultation which made recommendations on the introduction of new policies on late submission penalties, word count, and supporting students with preparation for summative assessments.

2014.150 Senate **approved** a revised policy on penalties for the late submission of assessments. This policy would apply to all programmes from 2015-16.

2014.151 Senate **approved** a revised policy on penalties for exceeding the specified word count for a particular assessment. This policy would apply to all programmes from 2015-16.

2014.152 Senate **approved** the inclusion of a policy statement in the Assessment Handbook from 2015-16 as follows: *"Schools and institutes shall ensure that their programmes provide students with practice in the required assessment techniques and familiarity with the marking schemes for major components of assessment."* The statement was designed to ensure that students were supported appropriately with preparation for summative assessments.

#### **Student survey policy and supporting guidance documents (SE2014.53)**

2014.153 Senate **considered** a student survey policy and **received** reports on the Queen Mary Student Survey and a module evaluation benchmarking exercise.

2014.154 Members **noted** that the policy had been developed to minimise survey fatigue, provide guidance on the quality and consistency of survey design and improve the use of survey results. Senate **approved** the Student Survey Policy.

### Module evaluation: core statements and quality index (SE2014.54)

- 2014.155 Senate **considered** a proposal to include an additional core statement into the module evaluation survey together with the required re-weighting of core statements for calculation in the Quality Index (a quality measure).
- 2014.156 Senate **approved** the inclusion of an eighth core statement in the module evaluation survey as follows: *'The use of QMplus has made an appropriate contribution to this module.'*
- 2014.157 Members **noted** that there was some concern about the use of the Quality Index as an indicator of a module's overall quality. Members **agreed** that ARCS would review the use of the Quality Index in discussion with the Deans for Taught Programmes.

### Academic Regulations 2015-16 (SE2014.55)

- 2014.156 Senate **considered** the revised academic regulations for 2015-16. The proposed changes were summarised in a 'What's New?' guide; some of the changes had been approved at previous meetings of Senate as part of the assessment governance review.
- 2014.157 Senate **approved** the Academic Regulations for the 2015-16 academic year and reaffirmed its previous decision, after further discussion, to amend the quorum for Subject Examination Boards.

### Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework (SE2014.56)

- 2014.158 Senate **considered** and **approved** revisions to the Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework. This document had been revised to take account of changes to the award rules from 2015-16.

### Academic appeal regulations (SE2014.57a)

- 2014.159 Senate **considered** and **approved** proposed amendments to the academic appeal regulations. The appeal regulations had been mapped against the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) *Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Appeals*. Members **noted** that the proposed revisions had been discussed with the Students' Union and the Education Quality Board.
- 2014.160 Senate **approved** the establishment of 'results surgeries' or similar in all schools and institutes. The OIA had recommended the provision of a process to enable students to discuss concerns about assessment outcomes with a member of staff. Schools and institutes could vary their mechanisms for providing this opportunity for students, but the process should be publicised at key points in the assessment process.
- 2014.161 Senate **approved** the reintroduction of the final review stage for appeal cases. This final stage was the third stage in QMUL's appeal process and would be conducted by either the Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning) or the Academic Registrar and Council Secretary.

### Complaints Policy (SE2014.57b)

- 2014.162 Senate **considered** and **approved** amendments to the complaints policy in order to



reflect best practice as recommended by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Revisions to the policy (last updated in 2014-15) were as follows:

- (i) The inclusion of information on student recourse to the Financial Ombudsman Service for complaints about financial services offered by QMUL;
- (ii) A note on the consideration of anonymous complaints had been added to the policy. While anonymous complaints were not usually accepted, the good practice guidance required institutions to consider these in exceptional circumstances.

#### **Assessment offences (SE2014.57c)**

2014.163 Senate **considered** and **approved** revisions to the regulations for assessment offences. These changes clarified the penalties for assessment offence and provided clearer guidance on the resubmission of coursework that was affected by an assessment offence penalty.

2014.164 Members **noted** the report on the work of the task and finish group that had proposed the revisions to the regulations for assessment offences. The group had also made additional recommendations to make the assessment offence investigation more transparent for students. Further, it had recommended that each school and institute should ensure that its Senate representatives were able to share their responsibilities with regard to serving on panels convened to hear assessment offence cases.

#### **Code of Student Discipline (SE2014.57d)**

2014.165 Senate **considered** and **approved** revisions to the Code of Student Discipline. These amendments had been proposed following recommendations from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator; members noted that the Code of Student Discipline would be reviewed further during 2015-16.

#### **Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations (SE2014.57e)**

2014.166 Senate **considered** and **approved** minor revisions to the Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations. Members **noted** that the amendments had been proposed to update terminology and to include the facility for the Chair of the Fitness to Practise Committee to refer cases back to the Professional Capability Committee where appropriate.

#### **Assessment Handbook 2015-16 (SE2014.58)**

2014.167 Senate **considered** and **approved** updates to the Assessment Handbook for 2015-16. These changes were confined to those amendments recommended during the assessment governance reviews of 2013-14 and 2014-15.

#### **Suspension of regulations report (SE2014.59)**

2014.168 Senate **considered** the report on suspensions of regulations received between March and May 2015. Members **noted** that there were seven requests for suspensions in this quarter, four of which affected 15 modules following errors on the part of the school/institute.

#### **Periodic Review Report: School of English and Drama 2015 (SE2014.60)**

2014.169 Senate **considered** the report of the periodic review of the School of English and Drama, held on 5 March 2015. Members **noted** that the review had resulted in some positive commendations and helpful recommendations.

#### **Periodic Review Response: School of History (SE2014.61)**

2014.170 Senate **considered** the School of History's twelve-month response following its periodic review held on 19 February 2014. Members **noted** that the Education Quality Board had discussed the response in detail, confirming on behalf of Senate that good progress had been made with the recommendations of the review.

#### **Annual Programme Review (SE2014.62)**

2014.171 Senate **noted** the outcomes of the annual programme review process during 2014-15. Members **agreed** that refinements to the annual programme review process for 2015-16 would be approved at the start of the 2015-16 session, following further discussions with the Deans for Taught Programmes.

#### **MBBS and BDS term dates (SE2014.63)**

2014.172 Senate **approved** 2015-16 term dates for the MBBS and BDS programmes.

### **Part 4: Reports from sub-boards of Senate**

#### **Taught Programmes Board (SE2014.66)**

2014.173 Senate **noted** the summary of proposals considered by the Taught Programmes Board between March and May 2015.

#### **Partnerships Board (SE2014.67)**

2014.174 Senate **noted** the executive summary of meetings of the Partnerships Board held between March and June 2015.

#### **Education Quality Board (SE2014.68)**

2014.175 Senate **noted** the executive summary of the meetings of the Education Quality Board held on 11 March and 13 May 2015.

#### **Ethics of Research Committee (SE2014.67)**

2014.176 Senate **noted** the executive summary of the meeting of the Ethics of Research Committee held on 11 March 2015.

#### **Vice-Principal's (Research) Advisory Group (SE2014.68)**

2014.177 Senate **noted** the executive summary of the meetings of the Vice-Principal's (Research) Advisory Group held on 15 December 2014, 16 February and 18 May 2015.

#### **Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board (SE2014.69)**

2014.178 Senate **noted** the executive summary of the meetings of the Research Degrees

## Part 5: Other matters

### Outgoing Senate members

- 2014.179      Thanks were extended to the student representatives who had served on Senate during 2015-16.
- 2014.180      Thanks were also extended to the Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning) for her excellent contribution to the smooth running of Senate.

### Dates of meetings in 2015-16

- 2014.181      Senate **noted** that the next meeting of Senate would be held as follows:
- Thursday 15 October 2015
  - Thursday 4 December 2015
  - Thursday 12 March 2016
  - Thursday 11 June 2016