



### **Executive summary of Senate on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015**

<b>Outcome requested:</b>	Council is asked to <b>note</b> the executive summary of the meeting of Senate held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2015.
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	The summary provides Council with an update on business considered by Senate.
<b>QMUL Strategy: strategic aim reference and sub-strategies [e.g., SA1.1]</b>	n/a
<b>Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:</b>	n/a
<b>Strategic Risks:</b>	n/a
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	n/a
<b>Subject to prior and onward consideration by:</b>	n/a
<b>Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA</b>	No
<b>Timing:</b>	n/a
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<b>Date:</b>	20 January 2016
<b>Senior Management/External Sponsor</b>	Jonathan Morgan, Academic Registrar and Council Secretary

# SENATE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A full set of the minutes will be available online (following confirmation at the next meeting of Senate) at the following URL: <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/Senate/index.html>  
Alternatively, contact the Secretary of the Committee: Jane Pallant [j.pallant@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.pallant@qmul.ac.uk)

**Date of Meeting: 3 December 2015**

### Main Items Discussed

#### 1. Green paper and the Comprehensive Spending Review

Senate received an oral report from the President and Principal on the Government's green paper *Fulfilling our potential: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice* and the Comprehensive Spending Review.

##### 1.1 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)

Senate noted that the cuts proposed for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills were less severe than expected; however, this was accounted for by the move from maintenance grants to maintenance loans which would have a significant impact on students. There would also be a reduction made in the level of teaching grant allocated to higher education institutions in the coming years, with the distribution of this reduction yet to be determined. The student opportunity fund had been cut by 50% which would affect QMUL's use of this fund for the future.

##### 1.2 Teaching and research

Members noted the proposal for HEFCE and the Office for Fair Access to be replaced by a single body, the Office for Students. While there was some logic behind this move, it did signal concern that there may be a misunderstanding of the core activities of higher education if teaching and research would be separated under the proposals. The green paper touched on the review of Research Councils, undertaken by Sir Paul Nurse, and raised concern about the future design of the research landscape. It was possible that the current dual support system could be under threat with the potential for two mechanisms for the distribution of research funding, governed by an over-arching body. There was also some disquiet about a possible breach of the Haldane principle, which seeks to ensure that decisions regarding research funding should be free of political or administrative constraints.

##### 1.3 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Teaching Excellence Framework would be introduced from 2017/18 with the first phase, or TEF1. This first level would be assessed on previous outcomes of the Quality Assurance Agency's review processes; QMUL had received assurance that it would qualify for TEF 1. The main anxiety for the sector would centre on discussions regarding the methodology for evaluating teaching excellence in future iterations of the TEF. The proposals for TEF 2 and beyond were highly contentious since it was very difficult to predict what the criteria might be used for measuring learning gain, arguably a difficult outcome to quantify.

##### 1.4 Response to the green paper

QMUL was formulating a response to the green paper in time for the 15 January 2016 deadline. QMUL continued to engage in discussions with Universities UK and the Russell Group on these proposals.

## **2. Research integrity**

Senate noted a report on research integrity which presented an anonymised summary of research integrity cases that had been reported to the Vice-Principal (Research). QMUL adhered to the following principles of the Universities UK 2012 Concordat to support research integrity:

- maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research;
- ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards;
- supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers;
- using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise;
- working together to strengthen the integrity of research and reviewing progress regularly and openly.

To this end, QMUL was committed to investigating all allegations of research misconduct and was in the process of reviewing the existing policy on Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing).

## **3. Teaching and learning initiative**

Senate received a presentation on future plans for invigorating taught programmes at QMUL. The concept of the QMUL Model (a working title) had been presented to Council at its annual conference and also to the Senior Leadership Group at QMUL. Senate noted that the initiative aimed to provide something distinctive that would help QMUL's students broaden their experience and support the development of their cultural and social capital. The plans were at an outline stage but it was likely that 10-15% of a student's programme would have a personalised element which would be co-created between the student and their academic advisor, enhancing their skills through a coherent annual plan that could be reviewed as the student's interests developed. A consultation on the initiative would be circulated in early 2016 with a view to launching the programme in 2017-18.

## **4. Honorary Degrees and Fellowships**

Senate approved nominations for honorary degrees and fellowships for recommendation to Council in the following categories: Fellow of QMUL, the award of Doctor of Sciences (DSc) and the award of Doctor of Letters (Dlitt). Council would consider these nominations at its meeting on 17 February 2016.

## **5. Suspensions of regulations**

Senate also considered one of its regular reports on recent requests to suspend the academic regulations for individual students. Senate monitors these requests to identify whether the circumstances leading to a suspension of regulations could be avoided in future. Each case is considered by the Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning) and the outcome is reported to Senate.

Members remained concerned about the number of requests, particularly those that could have been avoided, and agreed that a task and finish group would be formed to consider future approaches to suspensions of regulations.

Jane Pallant  
Deputy Academic Registrar  
January 2016