

## President's Report [QMSU]

<b>Outcome requested:</b>	QMUL Council is asked to <b>note</b> the QMSU President's report President's report.
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p>The Students' Union President submits a report to every meeting of QMUL Council which highlights some of the projects the Union is currently working on and the key successes since the last meeting. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QMUL Access Monitoring Group</li> <li>• Westfield Fund</li> <li>• Sustainability.</li> <li>• Volunteering</li> <li>• QMSU Life membership</li> <li>• Project Search</li> <li>• Governance update</li> </ul>
<b>QMUL Strategy:</b>	<p>1.2 Support students to ensure that they can succeed and match their own and the university's high expectations for their academic and personal progress, providing both academic support and co-curricular development.</p> <p>3.1 Encourage all students to achieve their potential by ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment, and student support are optimised, with the provision of appropriate levels of resource.</p>
<b>Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:</b>	<p>Education Act 1994 and related Code of Practice QMUL Ordinance C5 Memorandum of Agreement between QMUL and QMSU</p>
<b>Strategic Risks:</b>	<p>Risk 2: Student experience: teaching, learning &amp; assessment Risk 13: Maintain effective and constructive governance</p>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	The report describes the work being undertaken in relation to student wellbeing and the impact of bursaries. This work will consider equality and diversity issues.
<b>Subject to prior and onward consideration by:</b>	N/A
<b>Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA</b>	No
<b>Timing:</b>	The President reports on the activities of QMSU at each meeting of Council.
<b>Author:</b>	Yasir Yeahir, President 2017–18
<b>Date:</b>	03 July 2018
<b>Senior Management/External Sponsor</b>	N/A

# QMSU President's Report

Queen Mary Council, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## QMUL Access Monitoring Group

The Students' Union has been supporting two major pieces of work, a research project and the Student Wellbeing Fund.

### Research Project

The Students' Union is working with an OFFA subgroup to commission a research project, which aims 'for QMUL to better understand the holistic impact of financial bursaries on its Widening Participation students'. In the current Access and Participation Plan, the University have committed to this research: "we have agreed we will commission a piece of research to review the sector evidence about the impact of bursaries across a range of comparable institutions, as well as looking further at evidence of the local impact at Queen Mary" and have committed to delivering "an informed bursaries strategy based on measures evidenced through robust research, sector best practice and data analysis". A research brief has been developed and will be circulated to academics who work in this field from 1st July until 3rd August. Research commences on 1st September, and a draft report will be delivered on 1st December. The budget available for this project is £20k.

The Research Objectives are as follows:

- To understand the impact of investing university funds in bursaries on 1) student retention, 2) achievement (degree outcomes), 3) wellbeing (definition to be quantified by agency in partnership with QMUL) and 4) employability
- To understand the effectiveness of sector best practice relating to non-financial or 'low financial' support in relation to the four areas above
- To establish how (and if) QMUL's bursary offer should be nuanced based on the kind of institution it is and its students (including the implications for students with no household income, very low household income and low household income)
- To conduct a literature review, outline initial findings to the above questions and provide a gap analysis for primary research (using both qualitative and quantitative measures) to understand nuances and implications for QMUL. This is likely to involve making informed assumptions which will be further investigated through primary research

The Students' Union has influenced these objectives by encouraging a focus on wellbeing, further analysis of the demographics of the student population as compared to Russell Group and London Universities, and the importance of allowing researchers to do their own primary research if necessary. We have also encouraged a mixed methods approach that accounts for qualitative data, based on having received high quality qualitative survey responses from students on the issue. We will continue to shape this research through the working group, and review draft findings.

### Student Wellbeing Fund

The Students' Union is working with the Bursaries, Grants and Scholarships Office to establish a Student Wellbeing Fund, financed by the £260k in transitional funding. This will give low-income students who are starting in 2018/19 and have been adversely effected by changes to the QM bursary scheme access to funding to participate in activities, clubs and societies offered by QMSU in order to enhance wellbeing and the student experience of being at Queen Mary. Applications for activities not offered by QMSU (e.g. specialist sports for students with disabilities) will be considered on their merits. The Bursaries Office will administrate the process, and decisions will be made at panel meetings with Students' Union representatives.

Students' Union teams have worked with the Bursaries, Grants and Scholarships Office to develop 'bandings' for each activity, and how much a student could claim from this Fund for taking part. For example, a student who takes part in football would be able to claim a figure that covers the nominal

fee of travel, kit and cost to join the club. They would also report back at the end of the year how this fund helped them to get more involved in the club, for purposes of monitoring. Going forward, the Students' Union will monitor how much of this money is claimed by students and publicise this fund through our student leaders and interactions with students at Open Days and Welcome Talks.

## Westfield Fund

The Students' Union were successful with a number of submissions for the Westfield Fund. This included funding for a student leaders' residential, an important new initiative to train and develop skills of elected student representatives and volunteers. I am equally excited by the support for the funding of our website redesign, which will be a major exercise in the coming year. The other projects funded are to increase the recreational sport offer and a Community Sport social cohesion project that looks at tackling prominent issues in the community.

## Sustainability.

The Students' Union received 'Very Good' in the NUS Green Impact accreditation, improving on last years 'Good' award, and increasing our total points awarded by 35%.

The Re-Use scheme received a huge amount of donations from 89 students moving out of halls (on the Mile End and Whitechapel campuses)! Due to space shortages on campus, finding a suitable location to store donations (including bedding, crockery, cutlery, and storage equipment) before they are given out to new students moving into halls in September was a challenge. Thanks to support from Nicola Lee, Head of Events and Ceremonies at QMUL, donations will be stored in People's Palace basement over the summer.



Since signing up to use the **Too Good to Go** app, 174 meals from Students' Union outlets have been saved from the bin. This equates to 165kg of CO2 avoided or 15 days of electricity household consumption for one household.

## Volunteering

40 people attended the **Volunteering and RAG Awards** on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May.

Future Frontiers and ReachOut won Community Organisation of the Year for the second year running. New Volunteer of the Year, Becky Brice, and Volunteer of the Year, Naimah Haque, both volunteered for these charities. Liya Lokman who won New Volunteer in her first year won Leaver Volunteer of the Year for her continued efforts across the volunteering service throughout her time at Queen Mary, particularly with QMSU Bow Foodbank Volunteering Group. Djouhar Belgaid won the Unsung Hero Award for leading MMD ROCK projects which engaged students to volunteer over 450 hours throughout the year.

So far this academic year, **Community Sport** leaders have facilitated over 1000 hours of sport and physical activity to a record participant throughput of over 9100 in the local community.

## QMSU Life membership

The Students' Union are developing life memberships for graduating students. Students will have the opportunity to stay connected to The Students' Union by from joining our clubs and societies and giving back through our employability initiatives, fund raising opportunities and extending the reach of the QMSU Community.

## Project Search

We are progressing with a partnership with Phoenix School in Bow on their Project Search programme; a programme which provides employability and transferable skills to young people with autism. We've had a couple of constructive meetings, which have included local charity employability and skills charity, Tower Project, <http://towerproject.org.uk/> , and Tower Hamlets Council management, who are very supportive of this. QMUL would be the first partner University in England.

## Governance update.

The QMSU Services Ltd (subsidiary commercial company of the QMSU) Articles Review is completed, and the Board of Trustees will be considering the revisions.

## Final words

It has been an honour and privilege to represent Queen Mary students in these meetings. We continue to ensure that the student voice and representation is at the forefront of all the work we do and I am glad to see this passion shared by the University. Thank you to all the departments within the University for delivering on a number of projects we wanted to achieve this year and we hope to have sown the seeds for future years.

Yas Yeahia  
QMSU President  
2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018