



Executive summary of Senate on 15 March 2018

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to note the executive summary of the meeting of Senate held on 15 March 2018.
Executive Summary:	The summary provides Council with an update on business considered by Senate.
QMUL Strategy: strategic aim reference and sub-strategies [e.g., SA1.1]	n/a
Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:	n/a
Strategic Risks:	n/a
Equality Impact Assessment:	n/a
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	n/a
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA	n/a
Timing:	n/a
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Date:	3 April 2018
Senior Management/External Sponsor	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

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Date of Meeting: 15 March 2018

Main Items Discussed

1. Industrial Action

1.1 There was an extensive discussion on the current industrial action by the University and College Union over proposed changes to the USS pension scheme, the occupation of the Octagon by a group of students in protest over future changes to undergraduate bursaries, and on relations within the university. The President and Principal will discuss these matters at the forthcoming Council residential conference.

1.2 Senate also received a report from the Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group. The Group had been established by Senate to monitor the industrial action and issue guidance in order to safeguard academic standards and minimise the impact on students as far as possible.

2. Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

2.1 Senate received an update on TEF 5 (2019-20) which would be the next time that QMUL would submit itself for assessment. It was anticipated that subject-level TEF would be introduced for TEF 5 and preparations for an internal subject-level pilot at QMUL were underway.

2.2 Members noted that all subjects at QMUL would participate in the pilot which would use subject-level data (core, split and supplementary metrics) to inform school action plans with measurable improvement targets. Schools would also include the student voice in their pilot submissions.

3. Annual Report on Student Casework 2016-17

Senate considered the Annual Report on Student Casework for 2016-17. This report comprised details of all types of casework undertaken within the Academic Registry and Council Secretariat (academic appeals; non-academic appeals; assessment offences; complaints; discipline and fitness to practise). Members noted that there had been an increase in both academic appeals (36%) and assessment offences (25%) during 2016-17; there did not seem to be any distinguishable factors to account for these increases although casework volume would be carefully monitored. Council will receive the Annual Report on Student Casework at its meeting in July 2018.

4. Semester-based examinations

Senate considered some possible models for the inclusion of semester-based examinations. Currently formal written examinations are held for the most part

at the end of the academic year. The provision of an additional examination period in January would enable students to receive feedback on their progress following the completion of modules taken in Semester A and would help prepare them for the second examination period in May. A semester based approach could also lead to a reduction in the number of external venues required in the main examination period; further, a delayed start to Semester B would create an opportunity to use the teaching estate for other activities, including compressed learning, short courses and Continuing Professional Development. Senate agreed to consult with schools and institutes on the proposed models to incorporate this additional period of assessment.

5. Late work penalties

Senate considered three options to assist with a review of the system of penalties applied to marks for the late submission of work. Members agreed that schools and institutes would be consulted on these models with a view to implementing a single scheme (there are currently two in use) across QMUL.

6. Is promotion policy and procedure impacting staff from minorities adversely?

Senate members were invited to consider proposals for a review of promotion policy and procedure and its impact on BME staff. The item came from a member of Senate who wished the issues to be considered by Senate in the first instance. It was agreed that the paper would be considered in depth by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group and that reports on progress (including the recommendation for a working group to be established) would be made to Senate.

7. Access for disabled students to teaching and learning

Senate considered some recommendations from QMSU, previously considered by the Education Standards and Quality Board, in relation to disabled students' access to teaching and learning resources. A number of recommendations were approved, while recognising the fact that differences in teaching style and academic discipline would need to be taken into account, provided that students were not disadvantaged.

Jane Pallant
Deputy Academic Registrar
March 2018