

COUNCIL
Thursday 10 October 2024
CONFIRMED MINUTES

Present:

Lord Clement-Jones CBE	Professor Colin Bailey CBE	Gil Baldwin
Ken Batty	Professor Kavita Datta	Patricia Gallan QPM
Malcolm Hitching	Isabelle Jenkins	Tahmid Khan
Maryanne Matthews	Dr Natalie McCloskey	Professor Mangala Patel
Dr Anthony Phillips	Dr Alix Pryde	Melissa Tatton CBE
Peter Thompson	Rob Whiteman CBE	

In attendance:

Dr Sharon Ellis	Rahma Hegy	Karen Kröger
Dr Nadine Lewycky	Jonathan Morgan	

For m.2024.011: Celeste Bright

Apologies:

Professor Yang Hao	Indy Hothi
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Welcome, apologies and declarations of interests (QM2024/01)

2024.001 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Council **noted** the register of interests of members and regular attendees.

Chair's update

2024.002 Council **received** a list of the Chair's recent activities. The Chair said that he attended the UK Social Mobility Awards 2024, organised by the charity Making the Leap, which recognises the achievements of organisations and individuals across the UK in advancing social mobility. Professor Bailey was presented there with the Outstanding Contribution award for promoting Queen Mary as a world-leading university with a commitment to social mobility. Council congratulated Professor Bailey on this significant award.

President and Principal's Report (QM2024/02)

2024.003 *Minute 2024.003 is confidential.*

QMSU President's report (QM2024/03)

2024.004 Council **considered** the QMSU President's report. The following points were noted in the discussion:

- [a] The Welcome Fair events at Mile End and Whitechapel had been a great success with over 11,000 attendees across three days. There had been over 200 stalls from student clubs and societies, University services and external organisations. QMSU had also launched a successful welcome communications campaign for new students which had high open rates. Over 8,100 students had signed up for volunteering opportunities on the QMSU website. Students were undertaking safeguarding training so that they could start volunteering.
- [b] The consultancy firm Counterculture had been commissioned to undertake a review of the Student Council. Counterculture had experience in the sector and would be able to share best practice.
- [c] QMSU had released a statement about the crisis in Lebanon and was working with the University to ensure that all students felt safe on campus.
- [d] The QMSU Vice-President Welfare was working to mitigate the impact of increases in the cost of living by expanding the provision of food packages for students at the Whitechapel campus and by advocating for a review of fee payment deadlines and late payment charges for self-funded students.
- [e] The QMSU Vice-Presidents for Science and Engineering and Humanities and Social Sciences were leading a working group looking at actions identified in the previous year around employability in the curriculum.

Mid-strategy review (QM2024/04)

2024.005 *Minute 2024.005 is confidential.*

Strategic Risk Register and KPIs (QM2024/05)

2024.006 *Minute 2024.006 is confidential.*

Finance and Investment Committee minutes (QM2024/06)

2024.007 Council **noted** the minutes of the Finance and Investment Committee meeting held on 25 September 2024.

Draft financial outturn for 2023–24 (QM2024/07)

2024.008 *Minute 2024.008 is confidential.*

Update on student recruitment and financial management for 2024–25 (QM2024/08)

2024.009 *Minute 2024.009 is confidential.*

Audit and Risk Committee minutes (QM2024/09)

2024.010 *Minute 2024.010 is confidential.*

Gift Acceptance Policy (QM2024/10)

2024.011 Council **considered** the updated Gift Acceptance Policy. The following points were noted in the discussion:

- [a] The Director of Development and Alumni Engagement said that the proposed policy reflected current good fundraising practice, including the requirements of the Charity Commission, the Fundraising Regulator and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, as well as learning from a benchmarking review of similar policies at other research-intensive universities in the UK.
- [b] The proposed policy stipulated that the University would not accept gifts derived from the proceeds of the sale of tobacco, as this would create an unacceptable conflict of interest in relation to the University's work on cancer. Council discussed whether the Gift Acceptance Policy should also restrict other sources of finance, mirroring the Investment Policy, so that stakeholders could see the University's approach on issues such as environmental sustainability. It was noted that the Investment Policy needed to be more prescriptive, as decisions on individual investments were made on the University's behalf by external investment managers, whereas decisions on gift acceptance would remain at the discretion of the University. The proposed principles required consideration of reputational risks when accepting gifts. The Director of Development and Alumni Engagement said that she was in contact with QMSU to organise opportunities for students to engage on the issue.
- [c] Council asked whether the £1m threshold for gifts to be considered by the Gifts Review Committee was set at the right level. The Director of Development and Alumni Engagement said that the equivalent thresholds were typically set much higher at other Russell Group institutions which had more embedded processes in relation to acceptance of major gifts. The proposed policy also provided scope for gifts under the £1m threshold to be escalated to the Gifts Review Committee where due diligence indicated that this was appropriate.
- [d] Council noted that, while it would be a requirement for the identities of donors to be known to the University, it was for the donors themselves to decide whether they wanted public acknowledgement of their gifts. The University already published the aggregated sum of gifts received annually within the Financial Statements. More granular detail could potentially be requested by individuals under the Freedom of Information Act subject to any relevant exemptions.
- [e] Council **approved** the Gift Acceptance Policy.

Update on the recruitment of the next Chair of Council (QM2024/11)

2024.012 Council **noted** the update on the recruitment of the next Chair of Council.

Minutes of the last meeting (QM2024/12)

2024.013 Council **confirmed** the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2024.

Matters arising (QM2024/13)

2024.014 Council noted the matters arising from the last meeting.

Decisions taken and use of the Common Seal since the last meeting (QM2024/14)

2024.015 Council **noted** the decisions taken and use of the common seal since the last meeting.

Draft agenda for the next meeting (QM2024/15)

2024.016 Council **noted** the draft agenda for the next meeting on 21 November 2024.

Dates of Meetings 2024–25

- Thursday 21 November 2024 at 1600 hours.
- Thursday 27 March 2025 at 1600 hours.
- Thursday 15 May / Friday 16 May 2025 – Annual conference including Council meeting.
- Thursday 10 July 2025 at 1600 hours.