



Senate

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| Paper Title | Students' Union President's report |
| Outcome requested | Senate is asked to note the report from the President of the Students' Union. |
| Points for Senate members to note and further information | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study Well• Curriculum Review• Appeals Process and Student Support• Student Council• Student Groups• Sustainability• Hub Office Works• Big Change Survey• HEAR• Employability• Exercise Referral programme |
| Questions for Senate to consider | |
| Regulatory/statutory reference points | |
| Strategy and risk | |
| Reporting/consideration route for the paper | |
| Authors | Ahmed Mahbub, QMSU President |
| Sponsor | |

President's Senate Report

Queen Mary Students' Union
May 2019

www.qmsu.org



Introduction

The start of term 3 has seen the successful launch of this year's Study Well program in a joint effort by both the Vice President Welfare and Vice President Education. Term 3 also saw 3 of our student groups nominated for national awards, further work on student council policies, and the creation of the new Sabbatical Office.

Study Well

Study Well has been a popular and well attended campaign this year. We have almost completely run out of all of our study packs and have had really positive anecdotal feedback from students. As per usual, the stress relief dog petting had the highest engagement, and students have really enjoyed the free fruit, study materials, and the chance to play games in library square.

Curriculum Review

As part of the Going for Gold strategy, VP Education, Redwan Shahid has been leading a workstream on the "Inclusive Curriculum". There are two student interns helping us with this project. Currently, we are planning to pilot this in 4 different schools (Maths, Biological and Chemical Sciences, History, and Business Management). So far, we have analysed subject level trends from the NSS split metrics and have designed a core set of questions to ask focus groups within the various schools. In addition to this, we have some school specific themes that we would like to explore during the focus groups. We are also having a follow-up workshop with both academics and students to discuss any problems that were highlighted and work towards a collaborative approach. They will then work on a report that will be presented at the last EQSB of the academic year, with a generic framework of what makes education inclusive, that we will put forward to be adopted into the processes we have for module proposals.

Appeals Process and Student Support

The four Executive Officers have been meeting regularly with the ARCS team to work more collaboratively on the appeals and extenuating circumstances process at Queen Mary. We have been trying to identify solutions on how to improve this system following numerous issues raised by students regarding delays with the process and methods of communication. We are also working with university staff on areas where we can improve our advice and counselling service for students, including a higher number of BME counsellors, a greater number of counsellors and a wider range of services available on all of our campuses.

Student Council

The last student council of the year has taken place. A summary of all of the current Union policies passed by student council can be found here: www.qmsu.org/policy

Examples of recent policies are listed below.

Regarding Education:

- to lobby the University to ensure Wednesday afternoons are kept free for students to pursue their own projects,
- to commit to not holding lectures from 1-2pm on Fridays for Muslim students who will be praying at that time,
- to create part-time undergraduate courses,
- to adequately support students on co-taught programmes between SBCS and SMD.

Regarding student welfare and liberation:

- to lobby the University for funding for an intern to work with BME students,
- to commit publicly to opposing the Prevent agenda,
- to commit to providing alternative housing at equivalent cost if ever students are decanted from buildings.

Student Groups

Three of our Societies were shortlisted for National Societies Awards this year. BL Drama for Most Improved, QM Comedy for Best New Society, and PsiStar for Best Society. The competition was high, so we're really proud of their achievements!

Staff are currently analysing feedback collected from students involved in our groups this year and will provide some key insights in the next report.

Following policy passed in Student Council, Student Groups will be encouraged to have a Welfare Representative on their committees. These reps will have to attend compulsory training to prepare them for their role and will have clear lines of support to the Students' Union.

Sustainability

Carbon Challenge is an energy saving campaign we ran this year with the aim to 1) raise students' awareness and understanding of global warming and climate change and 2) provide them with information on what they can do to reduce their carbon footprint. Throughout the 6 month campaign there were numerous educational events across campuses, games, and competitions. 94 students pledged to change their behaviours to reduce their energy consumption and out of the 16 participating halls of residence, energy consumption was reduced, on average, by 25% compared to last year.

The Re-Use campaign has re-launched and across three campuses we'll be collecting unwanted items from students moving out of halls of residence until mid-June. Due to lack of space on campus, we're having to pay for donations to be stored off-campus over the summer. A huge thank you to everyone, across the organisation, who has been involved in supporting this project so far!

Following findings from a survey we ran this year, as part of a national research campaign on students' views on sustainability, our Sustainability Coordinator will work with our VP Education next year to explore ways of embedding sustainability in the curriculum. Most QMUL students we surveyed want sustainability to be embedded in the curriculum, regardless of the course.

Hub Office Works

A new office space for our Executive Officers and Part Time Officers is under construction in the Hub. This office will promote visibility of our Executive Officers and will provide them with their own space to meet with students.

Big Change Survey

The survey received 1021 responses and was undertaken to understand current student needs and priorities, inform a number of the Going for Gold workstreams, and to inform priorities and decisions in relation to the Sticky Campus initiative and associated funding decisions. The following topics were covered by the survey;

- Campus life, facilities, indoor/outdoor environment; including what spaces students want to see more of, how they are using current spaces and how they rate them
- Study & social spaces; including what factors are important when choosing a space, what features make a good study/social space, what is currently missing on-campus etc.
- Food & drink options on campus
- Understanding what facilities and services students are currently going off-campus for that could be provided on-site
- Sporting provision & future investment priorities
- Security & personal safety
- Extra-curricular activity, barriers to participation and sense of community and belonging
- Employability
- On-campus events provision

The survey also included a number of freetext questions, such as "What one big (or little) change would you make to your campus?" that have generated thousands of comments from students. The survey responses

and data can also be split down by a variety of demographics including campus of study, year group, faculty and fee status, and are now being used to inform and develop the projects and planning of a number of Students' Union and University departments. So far we have distributed the relevant survey data and freetext comments to;

- The Sticky Campus Working Group – the data will be used to inform investment priorities of this group for the 19/20 academic year
- Estates & Facilities, including Capital Projects and Security
- IT services
- Going for Gold workstreams, including providing the data to the recently recruited Student Interns to inform their ongoing research work
- Students' Union departments, including informing the work of the Executive Officers, development of the Qmotion expansion bid, budget/investment priorities, sports provision, value for money in our venues and spaces, and food & drink provision on campus
- The Careers & Enterprise department

HEAR

We have put forward a proposal for the following Students' Union awards and activities to be included in this year's Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR): QM Skills Award completers, Education Awards, Societies and Student Media Awards, Volunteering and RAG Awards, and Sports Awards. This means that students' achievements outside their academic activities will be recorded alongside academic achievements. HEAR transcripts can sit alongside CVs and job application statements as a complimentary document to provide official evidence of the range of knowledge, skills and experience developed at university.

Employability

Skills Award 2018/19 has now finished. More than 300 students signed up to take part, and 119 students completed all of the requirements (taking on a role of responsibility in the Students' Union; attending three training sessions; attending a reflection session). The Skills Award winners have received their Skills Award certificates at the Students' Union's award ceremonies and will have their achievements recorded in their Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). The Skills Award is now being evaluated, and feedback from students will be used to improve Skills Award 2019/20.

Exercise Referral programme

The Queen Mary Exercise Referral project is a joint pilot project that is designed and delivered by the Sports Development Team and the Disability and Dyslexia Team. We have designed the programme for students who suffer from mild to moderate levels of anxiety and depression. The programme aims to use exercise and good nutrition as a tool to tackle their symptoms, allowing students to cope better with university and general life, increasing all-round wellbeing and retention at university. We appointed a student intern to deliver the programme for the 2018/19 academic year; their responsibilities include all of the measuring and reporting, and producing all of the support documents. Students are engaging well with the project, with over 10 students involved this semester. We have a target of 20 students per semester; something we are hoping will increase by having a variety of departments referring across the university.

Ahmed Mahbub, Students' Union President, 30th May 2019