



**Senate**

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Education Quality and Standards Board 13 May 2020: Minutes</b>
<b>Outcome requested</b>	The Senate is asked to <b>note</b> the minutes.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	<p>The minutes of the Education Quality and Standards Board (EQSB) meeting held on 13 May 2020.</p> <p>For full papers and minutes, members are directed to the EQSB QMplus page: <a href="https://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6851">https://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6851</a></p>
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	None
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	Senate only.
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## Education Quality and Standards Board

### Minutes of a meeting held on 13 May 2020

#### Members present

Professor Stephanie Marshall (Chair)

Dr Rosemary Clyne	Dr Alan Cruchley	Sarah Cowls
Professor Maralyn Druce	Elizabeth Gillow	Professor Lucinda Hall
Professor Henri Huijberts	Professor Tony Michael	Dr Fariborz Motallebi
Jane Pallant	Christina Perry	Kate Price
Annika Ramos	Dr Lesley Robson	Professor Janet de Wilde

#### In attendance

Jill Belnikoff	Dr Katherine Bevan	Dr Helen Bintley
Robert Cashman	Mary Childs	Laura Coutts
Evan Dickerson	Alice de Havillan	Simon Hayter (Secretary)
Leigh Rooney		

#### Apologies

Professor Jo Brown	Salman Desai	Sheila Gupta
Professor Catherine Nash	Professor Sandra Nicholson	Dr Chris Phillips
Zaman Ali Raja	Professor Anthony Warrens	

#### Quorum and declaration of interests

2019.61 The Board **confirmed** that it met the quorum and that there were no potential conflicts of interest that could affect decision-making.

#### Minutes of the previous meeting (EQSB19-04-01)

2019.62 The Board **confirmed** the minutes of 19 February 2020 without amendment.

#### Actions and matters arising (EQSB19-04-02)

2019.63 The Board **considered** action points from the previous meeting. All actions had been completed with the exception or special note of the following:

2019.63.a “2019.51.b.iv: With a working group, develop detailed proposals on self-certification and the timing and authority for decision-making in cases of extenuating circumstances. Bring these to the May 2020 EQSB. Look at standards of evidence in use elsewhere, including evidence from advisors.” The group had met for the first time, but further consideration was required. The Board agreed to consider its recommendations by circulation.

**Action: Sarah Cowls**

2019.63.b “2019.53.e.ii ESAT to consider candidates and incentives for vacancies as appeal and academic misconduct Chairs and Deputy Chairs, and academic misconduct panel members.” and “2019.53.e.ii VP (Education) and VP (People, Culture and Inclusion) to discuss incentivisation and means of recognition (including workload allocation) for university-level roles such as appeal, academic misconduct, and DEB Chairs, including but not limited to as part of the promotions criteria.” The Chair had commenced discussions with the Vice-Principal (People, Culture and Inclusion). The scope had been expanded to include work to develop a pipeline of experienced staff to take on institutional and faculty level roles. The expanded action points were carried forward.

### Vice-Principal (Education)'s update (EQSB19-04-03)

- 2019.64 The Board **noted** an update from the Vice-Principal (Education), covering topics including:
- ◆ the ongoing response to Covid-19
  - ◆ the National Student Survey 2020
  - ◆ the UK Engagement Survey and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
  - ◆ the development of the QM Academy
  - ◆ Office for Students regulatory matters
  - ◆ Education Leadership
  - ◆ Student Engagement
  - ◆ the Education Enabling Plan
- 2019.64.a The Board **noted** the Vice-Principal's thanks to all who had been involved in the response to Covid-19, stepping up to leadership roles to ensure that Queen Mary could continue to deliver robust and high-quality educational provision.
- 2019.64.b The Board **noted** that the OfS had confirmed its intention to publish the 2020 NSS; this had been under review as there were questions over the usefulness of the data in light of the industrial action and, particularly, the impact of Covid-19 in 2019-20.
- 2019.64.c The Board **noted** that fora had been established for Directors of Education and for programme directors. These met fortnightly, for two hour sessions, and were helpful in shaping Queen Mary's response to Covid-19 in terms of 2020-21 provision.
- 2019.64.d The Board **noted** that SSLCs had continued to meet remotely, as one means of ensuring that student concerns and views were heard. Financial assistance had been increased, including funds for laptops to study during the period of campus closure; 28 students had accessed that funding, to date.

### Interruption of Studies Policy (EQSB19-04-04)

- 2019.65 The Board **considered** a proposed amendment to the Interruption of Studies Policy that would, in limited circumstances, permit students to interrupt and return within the same academic year.
- 2019.65.a The Board **noted** that such interruptions were not normally permitted as Queen Mary's programmes had always been designed on a linear basis and it was, eg, not possible to take semester two of a developmental year before taking semester one.
- 2019.65.b The Board **noted** that the introduction of programmes with multiple entry points in the year meant that there were now exceptions to that rule. Modules on those programmes ran more than once each year, and a student could pick up where they left off without waiting a full calendar year, without missing any content. These were primarily distance learning programmes, notably but not exclusively those in the Queen Mary Online portfolio. Students on these programmes were often in full-time employment or had other commitments that made them more likely to seek short-term interruptions than those in full-time study.
- 2019.65.c The Board **approved** the amendment, noting its strong support but also noting the limited scope of the amendment to programmes with multiple entry points. Clause nine of the Interruption of Study Policy would be amended as follows, to include the new text in italics:

“A student on a taught programme of study may not both interrupt and return from interruption during the same academic year (eg a student cannot interrupt for the semester one only returning in semester two) *except in cases where a programme has multiple entry points in the year and the student can rejoin at the equivalent point in the*

*programme that they interrupted.* This restriction does not apply to postgraduate research students, who may interrupt and return within the same academic year but can only interrupt for whole months at a time; more information is available from the Research Degrees Office.”

2019.65.d The Board **noted** that interruption could affect Student Loans Company funding and agreed to review whether this change would have any specific impact.

**Action: Sarah Cows**

#### Academic Regulations 2020-21 (EQSB19-04-05)

2019.66 The Board **considered** the Academic Regulations 2020-21, including a covering document detailing changes from the 2019-20 edition.

2019.66.a The Board **noted** that there were few proposed changes. These included:

- ◆ harmonisation of the LLB progression and award rules with those of other bachelors programmes, with the deletion of references to exceptions and alternatives for the LLB.
- ◆ a new research award of EngD (Doctor of Engineering).
- ◆ prohibition of all watches in examinations (rather than the previous ban on only electronic watches).

2019.66.b The Board **noted** that discussions with the Department of Law on changes to the LLB regulations were ongoing, particularly regarding the LLB Senior Status programme for which there was no direct equivalent. Final proposals would be put to the Senate, but these would align as closely as possible with the standard regulations.

2019.66.c The Board **recommended** a change not included in the covering document. Regulation 3.3 stated that students would be informed of the assessment scheme for a module ‘at the start of the academic year’. In view of the need to respond to the impact of Covid-19 and make changes for the year ahead, this was amended to ‘as soon as possible and no later than the start of the module’.

2019.66.d The Board **endorsed** the Academic Regulations 2020-21, and recommended approval by the Senate.

#### Academic Regulations for Research Programmes 2020-21 (EQSB19-04-06)

2019.67 The Board **considered** a summary of changes to the Academic Regulations for Research Programmes 2020-21, noting that these would also be considered by the RDPEB before going to the Senate for approval. Changes of significance included:

- ◆ supervisors to attend supervisor training every two years, rather than the previous four, to ensure that supervisors are briefed more regularly on changes to the Regulations, the Code, and good practice in supervision.
- ◆ a new requirement that a student and their supervisory team should prepare a “training needs analysis review” as a specific element in the materials required for the annual progression assessment.
- ◆ clarification that research students cannot interrupt during a placement or internship that contributes to the programme.
- ◆ expansion of the section on provisions where examiners cannot reach agreement or decide that they cannot take a decision, providing a framework for this situation but noting that the detail will always be case-dependent.

2019.67.a The Board **endorsed** the Academic Regulations for Research Programmes 2020-21, and recommended approval by the Senate.

## Assessment Handbook 2020-21 (EQSB19-04-07)

- 2019.68 The Board **considered** the Assessment Handbook 2020-21, including a cover sheet detailing changes from the 2019-20 edition.
- 2019.69 The Board **noted** that a review of the Handbook had been planned but had not been possible during the response to Covid-19. Instead, the Handbook had been reformatted and tidied up, with only a very small number of changes. These were:
- ♦ removal of references to special regulations for the LLB award, which from 2020-21 entry would adopt the regulations common to other bachelors awards.
  - ♦ addition of sections on examination board membership, which previously appeared in the Academic Regulations.
  - ♦ removal of some content on academic appeals and academic misconduct. Short sections remain, but readers are instead directed (with links) to the relevant policies to avoid unnecessary duplication and the risk of error.
- 2019.69.a The Board **endorsed** the Assessment Handbook 2020-21, and recommended approval by the Senate.

## Appeal Policy (EQSB19-04-08)

- 2019.70 The Board **considered** amendments to the Appeal Policy. Specifically:
- ♦ a new paragraph advising students to try to resolve issues informally in the first instance.
  - ♦ expansion of one of the grounds for automatic dismissal, to qualify what is meant by a ‘frivolous’ appeal: “vexatious or frivolous appeals, and appeals with no evidence or grounds for the claims made.”
  - ♦ an amendment to say that where an appeal was rejected as a challenge to academic judgement, ARCS would ask the school/institute to provide the marking trail to the student, rather than obtaining it and providing it via ARCS.
  - ♦ an amendment to state that Completion of Procedures Letters would only be issued after the Final Review stage had been completed, in line with OIA policy.
- 2019.70.a The Board **noted** its support for these amendments but recommended that the paragraph on informal resolution be expanded to ask students to engage with ‘results surgeries’.
- 2019.70.b The Board **endorsed** the amendments to the Appeal Policy, and recommended approval by the Senate following the amendment detailed above.

## Academic Misconduct Policy (EQSB19-04-09)

- 2019.71 The Board **considered** amendments to the Academic Misconduct Policy. Specifically:
- ♦ addition of a formal definition of academic misconduct (from the Academic Regulations).
  - ♦ addition of unauthorised access to an examination paper as a specific named offence.
  - ♦ addition of text explaining students’ appeal options, and a link to the Appeal Policy.
- 2019.71.a The Board **endorsed** the amendments to the Academic Misconduct Policy, and recommended approval by the Senate.

## Student Complaints Policy (EQSB19-04-10)

- 2019.72 The Board **considered** amendments to the Student Complaints Policy. Specifically:
- ◆ Stage 3 renamed from ‘appeal’ to ‘final review’ to distinguish it from the wholly separate appeals process.
  - ◆ expanded those who can consider a Stage 3 complaint from the Vice-Principal (Education) (or, where they cannot act, another Vice-Principal) to any member of senior staff nominated by the Principal and President, in order to spread the caseload for staff and expedite the process for students.
  - ◆ addition of text explaining that Stage 2 Complaints Assessors are appointed on the authority of the Vice-Principal (Education).
  - ◆ visual and stylistic changes, including reformatting, updated terminology, and the removal of gendered language.
- 2019.72.a The Board **endorsed** the amendments to the Student Complaints Policy, and recommended approval by the Senate.

## Code of Student Discipline (EQSB19-04-11)

- 2019.73 The Board **considered** amendments to the Code of Student Discipline. Specifically:
- ◆ addition of an outcome to require a student to complete training or awareness activities even where a case is not proven, with no implications as to guilt or innocence.
  - ◆ clarification that a student can bring up to two additional people to a Panel hearing; the previous text was unclear as whether the two people included the student or not.
  - ◆ clarification that, within the Code, ‘Vice-Principals’ refers also to Deputy Vice-Principals.
  - ◆ addition of provision for disclosing limited details of case outcomes to parties other than the responding student where there is a legitimate interest.
  - ◆ visual and stylistic changes, including reformatting, updated terminology, and the removal of gendered language.
- 2019.73.a The Board **noted** that the power to require students to undertake training or awareness activities was intended as a restorative measure. Examples might include consent training, or instruction in proper online behaviour. Student and Academic Services were developing consent training for all students and enhanced training could be developed and delivered on a bespoke basis, if required.
- 2019.73.a.i The Board **noted** that where a student failed to undertake the activity (in cases where it was stipulated as an absolute requirement, rather than a recommendation), Queen Mary had the power to take additional disciplinary action as the student would be in breach of an institutional policy (clause 17.a of the Code).
- 2019.73.b The Board **noted** that the new clause on disclosure of outcomes to parties other than the responding student had a limited scope. It applied only to the details of the current, disciplinary case, and only to details that could directly affect the other party, eg in safeguarding (eg, in a case of harassment the reporting party might be informed if a restriction of activity had been imposed on the responding student, so that they could safely avoid one another). The details released would be strictly limited to those that were required.
- 2019.73.c The Board **endorsed** the amendments to the Code of Student Discipline, and recommended approval by the Senate.

## Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations (EQSB19-04-12)

- 2019.74 The Board **considered** amendments to the Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations. These were limited to visual and stylistic changes, including reformatting, updated terminology, and the removal of gendered language.
- 2019.74.a The Board **noted** that the School of Medicine and Dentistry intended to make a substantive change to the Regulations, to increase the powers of the Chair to act outside of the Panel meeting to respond more quickly and effectively to new concerns. This would be considered by the Senate, using the amended document considered by the Board as a base. The Board supported the principle of that proposed amendment.
- 2019.74.b The Board **endorsed** the amendments to the Professional Capability and Fitness to Practise Regulations, and recommended approval by the Senate subject to the additional amendment being found satisfactory by the Senate.

## Degree Outcomes Statement (EQSB19-04-13)

- 2019.75 The Board **considered** a draft of Queen Mary's Degree Outcomes Statement. The UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) had, in response to governmental concerns over a marked national increase in the proportion of so-called 'good honours' degrees, required all institutions to publish a document detailing and reflecting on their degree outcomes and measures taken to protect the integrity and standards of those awards.
- 2019.75.a The Board **noted** that the draft statement was incomplete and required additional text in certain sections, as indicated in the paper, but was satisfied with the completed sections.
- 2019.75.b The Board **noted** that the statement only related to classified honours degrees at academic level six. Due to restrictions in the reporting tool the data presented included level seven MSci and MEng awards, which could have fractionally distorted the figures for Science and Engineering – this would be amended prior to publication.
- Action: ARCS**
- 2019.75.c The Board **noted** that the section titled 'Institutional degree classification profile', which included statistical data on degree outcomes over the past five years at institutional level and at faculty level, required additional explanatory text to comment on the reasons behind the increase in 'good honours'. This would include:
- ◆ reference to changes in our average admissions tariffs (for classified level six awards) over the same period.
  - ◆ reference to Going for Gold and TEF initiatives including work to narrow attainment gaps.
  - ◆ reference to and explanation of figures for particular schools/institutes if they distort the institutional/faculty-level data.
- Action: ARCS to coordinate, Janet de Wilde and Tony Michael to draft**

- 2019.75.d The Board noted that a short section titled 'Teaching practices and learning resources', needed to be drafted from scratch. This would include: investment in staff training and work to achieve HEA/AdvanceHE recognition, library resources, the internet making education and resources accessible than in past decades, sticky campus, investment in buildings and resources, and enhancement activities (eg teaching and learning lunchtime workshops, the Teaching and Learning Conference, and the Drapers' Awards and other means of recognition and reward). It would describe any discernible effects of enhancements to teaching practices, learning resources, student support, curriculum and assessment design on our degree classifications.

**Action: ARCS to coordinate, Sarah Cowsls, Janet de Wilde and Kate Price to draft**



- 2019.75.e The Board **noted** that most institutions would have an internal and an external version of the document and agreed that Queen Mary's external version would not include school/institute level data, or the optional section on risk. The optional section on good practice would be embedded within the other sections rather than being a section in its own right (and an example of this, on longitudinal data review by some SEBs, would be redrafted for clarity). The internal version would include Russell Group comparison data when completed, though this version was not required for the same deadline as the external version.
- 2019.75.f The Board **endorsed** the Degree Outcomes Statement subject to completion of the actions listed above and noted that it also required consideration by the Senate and Queen Mary's External Member to the Degree Examination Boards prior to its sign off by the Council. The Statement needed to be published online by the end of the 2019-20 academic year (no later than 31 July 2020).

### Programme approval and review (EQSB19-04-13)

- 2019.76 The Board **noted** updates on proposed changes to the processes for programme approval, and for programme review.
- 2019.76.a The Board **noted** that a programme review exercise to ensure portfolio coherence and constructive alignment of content delivery and learning outcomes within programmes had been piloted in a number of schools in place of the existing Annual Programme Review process, but the pilot had been paused due to the need to respond to the impact of Covid-19. A wider review of all provision for 2020-21 in response to Covid-19 was underway and included a strong focus on constructive alignment and programme level learning outcomes.
- 2019.76.b The Board **noted** progress in the review of the programme approval process, and considered a paper that outlined a new, two-stage programme approval process in which the principal change was to move the first approval stage to the Faculties, ahead of institutional approval at the second stage. This would make the process more business focused, while also addressing rigour, quality and standards issues. Workshops had taken place to review these issues, and the Taught Programmes Board would consider the details in full.
- 2019.76.b.i The Board **noted** that the revised process aimed to ensure that new programmes added value to the portfolio before being put forward, and that existing programmes were regularly reviewed to ensure that the portfolio retained coherence and currency.
- 2019.76.b.ii The Board **noted** that the revised process included an increased role for Student and Academic Services from the earliest stages to aid in resource planning, especially for Library Services.
- 2019.76.b.iii The Board **noted** a desire for additional detail on the sites of approval for research degree programmes and – in particular – professional doctorates, which had taught elements that in some cases overlapped with those for taught programmes, and required joint consideration for resource planning.
- 2019.76.b.iv The Board **considered** whether the term 'approval' should be removed from stage one of the process, as it could lead a proposer to believe that the process was complete.
- 2019.76.b.v The Board **agreed** to gather comments and views on the two points above, and to communicate the outcomes by circulation (seeking approval, if appropriate).  
**Action: Katherine Bevan (to coordinate responses and discuss with Jo Brown)**



### Periodic Review (EQSB19-04-14)

- 2019.77 The Board **noted** an update on discussions about the Periodic Review process, following conversations at the previous meeting in which the Board had stated the importance of its having a central role in any decision to amend the process, as the institutional body with responsibility and authority for educational quality assurance and academic standards.
- 2019.77.a The Board **noted** that the proposed 'strategic review' was a holistic review of a school/institute that monitored performance against the Strategy. It was not clear whether it did (or should) also include the programme review aspect that Periodic Review also included. The need to maintain a discursive element to focus on quality, alongside the data-based strategic elements, was strongly expressed (either as part of the strategic review or as a separate process).
- 2019.77.b The Board **noted** that the introduction of additional and amended review exercises should not result in an increased burden for schools/institutes in terms of data collection and preparation. The Strategic Planning Office would provide standard data packs including baseline data, and much of the data could be used in more than one setting without the need for revisions.
- 2019.77.c The Board **noted** a need for further clarity on the processes, and requested sight of the QIPPR, so that it could see how the proposed processes aligned with each other\_ and compared to the current system to establish whether programme review could be included or whether a separate process was required. The Board restated the importance of EQSB taking a central role in the review process and agreed that information would be gathered and disseminated to members by circulation, but also agreed that full discussion in a formal setting at its next meeting would be required.

**Action: ARCS**

### QMSU Vice-President (Education)'s report (EQSB19-04-15)

- 2019.78 The Board **noted** a written update from the QMSU Vice-President (Education), covering topics including discussions on potential compensation for industrial action, learning resources, discussions with the Careers Service over potentially extending support for students from two to three years beyond graduation, and the Education Awards.
- 2019.78.a The Board **noted that** the Study Well campaign had launched as an online-only, due to restrictions related to Covid-19. However, levels of student engagement had been extremely positive. Activities had included online yoga, themed playlists, and tea and talk sessions with the executive officers.
- 2019.78.b The Board **noted** that support for student representatives and SSLCs had been a focus during remote study. QMSU, with the Queen Mary Academy, had produced a document outlining student expectations for online materials and levels of support that was also circulated to course reps to help them with their roles; the Vice-President extended particular thanks to the Director of the Queen Mary Academy and the Head of E-Learning for their help with this work.
- 2019.78.c The Vice-President (Education) **noted** that this had been her final meeting with the Board, and thanked members for welcoming the student voice in all settings and working positively with QMSU to try to find approaches that worked well for all parties.
- 2019.78.d The Board **noted** its gratitude to the Vice-President (Education) for her excellent work and engagement throughout the year, including her important work with the many groups responding to the impact of Covid-19. The Board offered its sincere best wishes for the future.

### Library Services update (EQSB19-04-17)

2019.79 The Board **noted** a written update from Library Services, including library usage figures during the period of industrial action.

### Student Survey Results 2019 (EQSB19-04-18)

2019.80 The Board **noted** a written report on the main trends seen in the 2019 NSS, UKES, PTES, PRES and module evaluation surveys. This expanded upon the high-level paper considered by the Board in autumn 2019 by providing additional detail and context.

### Covid-19 contingency arrangements (EQSB19-04-19)

2019.81 The Board **noted** a document that laid out the measures taken by Queen Mary to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 in respect of assessment, progression and award for 2019-20. The arrangements had been developed and considered individually and in detail by the Education Support Group (which shared members with the Board) and considered and approved by the appropriate bodies and individuals where appropriate.

2019.81.a The Board formally **endorsed** the document as a complete package of the arrangements.

2019.81.b The Board **noted** its thanks to all who had been involved in developing Queen Mary's response, and especially to the Deputy Vice-Principal (Education – Strategic Projects) for his leadership of this complex work.

### English Language Policy (EQSB19-04-20)

2019.82 The Board **considered** a number of proposed small amendments to the English Language Policy. These were primarily technical, for example clarifications of text, and also included references to new tests that had been designated as acceptable by UKVI (Pearson PTE, and Language Cert International ESOL).

2019.82.a The Board **approved** the amended English Language Policy.

## Actions

2019.53.e.ii	ESAT to consider candidates and incentives for vacancies as appeal and academic misconduct Chairs and Deputy Chairs, and academic misconduct panel members.	Stephanie Marshall (with ESAT)
2019.53.e.ii	VP (Education) and VP (People, Culture and Inclusion) to discuss incentivisation and means of recognition (including workload allocation) for university-level roles such as appeal, academic misconduct, and DEB Chairs, including but not limited to as part of the promotions criteria.	Stephanie Marshall (with Sheila Gupta)
2019.63.a	Present the recommendations of the EC working group to the Board for consideration by circulation.	Sarah Cowls
2019.65.d	Confirm whether the change to the interruption policy that allows students on programmes with multiple entry points to interrupt and return in the same year has any specific impact on SLC funding.	Sarah Cowls
2019.75.b	Seek data on degree outcomes excluding level seven programmes, for the Degree Outcomes Statement.	ARCS

2019.75.c	Draft additional text for the Degree Outcomes Statement on general changes that could account for an increase in good honours (eg admissions tariffs and work to eliminate attainment gaps).	ARCS / Janet de Wilde / Tony Michael
2019.75.d	Draft additional text for the Degree Outcomes Statement on 'Teaching practices and learning resources' that could account for an increase in good honours.	ARCS / Sarah Cowls / Janet de Wilde / Kate Price
2019.76.b.v	Gather views on (i) appropriate sites of approval for programme proposals for research and professional doctorate programmes and (ii) whether use of the word 'approval' at the end of the proposed stage one was appropriate.	Katherine Bevan / Jo Brown
2019.77.c	<p>Seek early sight of the QIPPR, its remit and its intended outcomes. Once obtained, map it against the existing Periodic Review so that EQSB can undertake an options appraisal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. endorse the QIPPR, with confidence that the new system covers off all elements Queen Mary needs to be assured are covered off;</li> <li>2. or, if EQSB sees gaps, ensure these are addressed by another approach which takes account of the QIPPR;</li> <li>3. or, if EQSB is not confident that the QIPPR meets the intended outcomes of the existing periodic review, retain the current system.</li> </ol>	ARCS