



## Senate Report

<b>Outcome requested:</b>	To Note
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p>The report is an update from the end of September on activity within the Students' Union. It includes the following sections:</p> <p>Key Updates Student Voice and Education Welfare and Liberation Student Opportunities</p>
<b>Author:</b>	Adi Sawalha, Students' Union President
<b>Date:</b>	December 2022
<b>Senior Management/External Sponsor</b>	

# President's Senate Report

December 2022

---

[www.qmsu.org](http://www.qmsu.org)

---



# President's Report

## Key Updates

### Autumn Elections

In September and October, we held elections for more than 400 Course Rep roles (including PGR Subject Reps) and a small number of part-time officer roles.

Following the elections and co-option period, approx. 300 reps have started their roles. Many of the new reps have already undertaken training for their role, with further training sessions taking place throughout November.

We are working closely with colleagues in the faculties and schools to fill the positions that remain vacant, so all students have at least one representative for their cohort.

Our Spring Elections period begins in January to elect the full-time Executive Officer and part-time representative positions. Nominations open on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

### Course Rep Conference

The Students' Union hosted the Course Rep Conference 2022 in the Bancroft Building on the 12<sup>th</sup> November. This event was a return to an in-person training, skills and networking conference, which was last hosted before the pandemic in 2019-20.

A range of training sessions were held including: skills training on 'Inclusive Leadership' and 'Quality Feedback'; workshops on current issues such as 'Decolonising the Curriculum' and 'Assessments'; as well as a session about 'Working with Stakeholders', delivered by colleagues from the faculties. Several of the sessions were eligible for the QMSU Skills Award, throughout the day almost 100 Course Reps attended, and attendance was extremely encouraging across the sessions.

Feedback from the Conference has been clear, that there is a desire from reps to see another Conference hosted later in the academic year, with a greater focus on networking and building strong connections. Planning for this in Term 2 is taking place

### Graduation Fund

The Exec approved 104 students to have their cap and gown cost covered for the January graduations out of 252 applications received. This allowed us to approve the students most in need of help while reserving some money for the following graduations this year.

### Islamophobia Awareness Month

The month of November was dedicated to our Islamophobia Awareness Month campaign, that coincided with the national campaign. As part of this project, student representatives organised several exciting events including, Campus hijab day, Open Friday Prayer, Muslim Women in Healthcare workshop etc. The Students' Union has also worked towards promoting events and the campaign by designing webpage content and other promotional materials such as table talkers, banners, posters, badges etc. Further information can be found at [www.qmsu.org/iam](http://www.qmsu.org/iam)

### Disability Awareness Fortnight

The Students' Union's Disability Awareness Fortnight campaign takes place throughout December and coincides with the UK's national Disability History Month. The theme of this year's campaign is celebrating disabled people's achievements, despite the persisting barriers in our society. The campaign is led by the Disabled and SLD Representatives for Mile End and Barts and The London and features a series of activities and events for all students to get involved including an art competition, puzzle pages competition and talks and workshops. A series of educational communications and resources have also been shared via the campaign website and the Students' Union's social media channels. Further information about the campaign can be found at [www.qmsu.org/daf](http://www.qmsu.org/daf).

## Contemplation Space

With increased numbers of students on campus, student spaces are in high demand and concerns around capacity have arisen for several existing spaces. The Multi-Faith Centre in particular is seeing high levels of usage at certain times of the day with students waiting outside to use the space. Similarly, Friday Prayer held at the Students' Union for Muslim students is at full capacity. As part of Islamophobia Awareness Month, the Islamic Society held Friday prayer in Library Square with a capacity of 550 students permitted in-line with the fire risk assessment, this event also reached full capacity. Muneer Hussain, Vice President Science and Engineering has been collecting data on usage statistics for contemplation spaces and has also written a brief on extending contemplation space provision. Muneer will be liaising with senior members in the university to explore options surrounding this.

## Garrod Building Project

Work has continued with the University Projects team on the Garrod Building re-provision, which will be the new home of the Students' Union and BLSA. In October we hosted an all-day open exhibition to showcase plans for the spaces to students and staff. Over 250 people attended and were able to see all the layouts, design ideas and view the facilities that will be provided. Attendees were encouraged to provide feedback through a number of activities around the exhibition, and this feedback has now been reviewed and incorporated into the next stage of planning.

In the evening, we hosted a special event for elected student representatives and student group leaders to view the exhibition, followed by a presentation and Q&A session presented by Charlie Sellar, Vice President Barts and The London, Rob Tucker, former Vice President Barts and The London who is currently supporting the project, as well as the University Director of Strategic Projects and a representative from Kendall Kingscott.

We also attended a furniture tour across several London-based suppliers with the architects from Kendall Kingscott, reviewing options for each of the new spaces. Our preferred options are now being incorporated into the design brief.

The final tender document is due to be released shortly.

## Student Voice & Education

### Queen Mary Senior Executive Team and Students' Union Leaders event

On Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November, the University's Senior Executive Team (SET) came together with student leaders at an event hosted by the Students' Union, the second event of its kind following a successful launch of the initiative last year. The meeting provided an opportunity for student leaders to meet with SET members in small groups to discuss student feedback and hear about students' experience, engaging in positive, student-focused dialogue. The event welcomed over 25 student leaders, including part-time officers from schools and representatives from welfare and student groups as well as elected Executive Officers.

Topics brought forward by students included student wellbeing, sustainability, inclusivity, student funding and priorities in student experience and extra-curricular activities. Group discussion was followed by open networking between leadership groups.

### Campus Spaces Survey

The Students' Union and University Estates and Facilities team working on a joint survey during November to gather student feedback on campus spaces to inform future developments. The Students' Union led on the communications campaign for the survey and incentive strategy. Around 2500 individual student responses were received. The data collected will now be analysed by the University and shared with the Students' Union to inform future recommendations.

### Exec Listening Exercise

The Exe have been 'on tour', hosting stalls at a range of student spaces on campus, across Whitechapel and Mile End. The aim of Exec on Tour is to speak directly with students, increase the awareness of the Exec Officer roles and portfolios and gather feedback on specific or upcoming topics.

Each Exec on Tour session features different pairings of officers, allowing for understanding across all of the different roles, and allowing a range of projects to be discussed. The Exec have had some positive conversations with students, which will be used to inform their projects and work going forward. The Executive Officers will host another tour of campus in the second semester.

### **Decolonisation**

Saynab, Vice President Humanities & Social Sciences, is working on a decolonisation project to better understand what students want from the University in decolonising the curriculum. Saynab will be working with students to create a collaborative showcase of creative work on their topics of interest, encouraging them to express their story and highlight the importance of decolonisation for them. Saynab is working to facilitate meaningful engagement, involvement and feedback loops for students to directly input into discussions on curriculum reform.

On the 12th November, Saynab hosted a session at the Course Rep Conference alongside the Welfare and Liberation Coordinator, to inform course reps of the importance of decolonising the curriculum, and crucially, how course reps can get involved at a programme level, and participate in this project

In addition, a motion on decolonising the curriculum was featured at the Annual Student Meeting. This motion was passed.

### **Education Away Day and Staff Presentations**

Last month, Charlie attended the SMD Education Away Day, to provide input in to the overall education strategy of the entire faculty. Charlie presented to staff on the topic of the importance of successful co-creation with students, engaging with representatives and pitfalls to avoid when working with student focus groups. This presentation also highlighted the importance of working in partnership with the BLSA, as well as the wider Students' Union on larger projects, and utilising its structure to interact with specific and engaged pools of students.

This was successful with BLSA seeing a marked increase in interactions with the University which is leading towards positive change. Charlie also gave a presentation at a recent SMD Staff Forum, where he highlighted some of the challenges that students face as a direct result of reputation changes within the University, including: recruitment and admissions, biases whilst on placement with students from other Medical Schools, and career prospects in Healthcare.

### **Accessibility and Support Services**

Saynab is working on a project to encourage inclusive and accessible teaching adaptations and ensuring that advisors are trained in what specific learning differences are and the needs for supporting these students. Saynab has set up a focus group to gather more feedback from student reps and students who are neuro-diverse, the barriers they experience with learning content and the issues relating to the accessibility of services and tools such as QM Plus. Reps have been involved in ensuring accessibility within the Library making E-Books user-friendly, raising awareness on disabilities and specific learning differences in general and providing their feedback on services. Saynab aims to encourage inclusivity and accessibility within teaching, establish appropriate adaptations and ensure that all staff are up-to-date and receive training in how to recognise and support the needs of students.

### **TEF Student Submission**

As part of the new TEF process, the Students' Union is preparing to submit our student submission. Adi Sawalha, President, is leading on the creation of the submission, which will include data from the past few years as well as new data from current Course Representatives and Part-Time Officers.

### **Supporting students into Research**

Muneer is planning to hold an event inviting home PGR students that are from a BAME background to discuss their experiences and why they pursued research. The aim of the event is to help students from a similar background who normally wouldn't consider a career in research, as well as students who are thinking about pursuing a PhD. The event also aims to offer insights into the process of becoming a PGR student and life as a PGR student.

### **Focus Groups about Exams and Extenuating Circumstances**

Jojo Croft, Vice President Welfare, held a focus group to gather feedback about the challenges and barriers during the exam period, which she is including in her presentation on how exams can be more accessible

especially when extenuating circumstances occur. This information will be used to engage key stakeholders to further her project on making exams more accessible.

### **PGR Representation**

Radhika, Vice President Communities, is working closely with PGR students and reps to lobby the University to support PGRs during the cost of living crisis. This includes lobbying the University to improve stipends for PGRs and also to provide bursaries/financial assistance for parents and carers who may find it difficult to make ends meet on their stipends.

In line with student demand, Radhika is working with PGR representatives to organise two social events for PGRs. The first event will focus on enabling parents and carers amongst the PGR community to network and socialise. The second event is a walking tour of East London exploring its history followed by a social event. These events are planned to happen in December and January.

### **BLSA Representation and Restructure**

Charlie, alongside his Education Reps across all institutes, has been working on revitalising the structure of the BLSA and wider QMSU Student Council, to better represent the student body. Currently, the engagement across PGT and PGR focussed institutes is varied and needs to be better supported, and to resolve this Charlie has begun by holding talks with these reps to identify barriers and potential solutions.

Furthermore, Charlie is also discussing the 'Pre-clinical' and 'Clinical' Rep roles for IHSE, and understanding how best the nature of the MBBS can be reflected and supported via the BLSA elected reps. With future curriculum change incoming, changes to the course and teaching delivery is aimed to be reflected in these roles.

### **Annual Student Meeting**

The Annual Student Meeting was held online on Monday 28 November. Over 550 students registered to attend the meeting, with around 300 students present in the meeting at any one time. A series of motions were discussed and voted on by the students present. The outcomes will now be considered by the Students' Union's Board of Trustees and next steps communicated to students and stakeholders in due course. The motions discussed can be viewed on the Students' Union's website at [www.qmsu.org/studentmeeting](http://www.qmsu.org/studentmeeting).

### **Library Leisure Collection**

The Students' Union is working with the Library Services team to collect student feedback on the proposed Library leisure collection. The aim of the collection is to offer students a space to unwind, relax and enjoy non-academic texts. Book recommendations are currently being collected, as well as feedback on the new name and logo of the collection.

## **Welfare & Liberation**

### **Visibility of Advice and Counselling Service**

Jojo spent two days on the Mile End and Whitechapel campuses sharing information about the Advice and Counselling Service with students and giving out informative flashcards with details about the service. During this time she also collected information about what the current struggles for students are and where they feel as though they are lacking support. The information cards are also available virtually on the Advisor Hub for Academic Advisors and students to access.

### **Increasing Frontline Staff of Advice and Counselling Service**

Jojo worked alongside Advice and Counselling Service managers to support them in their bid for two more frontline staff with the intention of making the student experience of using the service more fluid as these staff are responsible for greeting and triaging many students.

### **Disability Awareness Fortnight**

The Students' Union's Disability Awareness Fortnight campaign takes place throughout December and coincides with the UK's national Disability History Month. The theme of this year's campaign is celebrating disabled people's achievements, despite the persisting barriers in our society. The campaign is led by the Disabled and SLD Representatives for Mile End and Barts and The London and features a series of activities

and events for all students to get involved including an art competition, puzzle pages competition and talks and workshops. A series of educational communications and resources have also been shared via the campaign website and the Students' Union's social media channels. Further information about the campaign can be found at [www.qmsu.org/daf](http://www.qmsu.org/daf).

### **Advocacy and Support**

Given the increased number of plagiarism cases, appeals and resit cases that are being dealt with by university appeals team and Students' Union Advocacy Service, Radhika is undertaking research to understand whether the current system of support within the Students' Union is sufficient. She is also trying to research alternate measures that can be undertaken to support students through their academic and other disciplinary proceedings.

### **Careers in Sustainability**

Saynab is working with careers to organise a panel event for students to learn more about career roles in the field of sustainability. This would allow students to find out more about different organisations and alumni work in areas related to sustainability. This project aims to encourage students who are interested in sustainability to attend and generate ideas of how they can get involved and give them ideas about roles that exist that they could see themselves pursuing. =

### **Pakistan Floods**

We released a statement on the Pakistan floods, expressing its solidarity with the people there who have experienced untold suffering and the loss of many lives. The statement aimed to support those students either directly or indirectly affected by the ongoing situation and share with them key support links and resources.

### **BLSA Malta**

Charlie recently took the opportunity to visit the Malta Medical School, primarily to meet with the newly-formed BLSA Malta Board (previously the Gozo Society, underneath the BLSA in London).

This new board of students has allowed the students studying in Malta to raise issues far more easily, and whilst there, Charlie worked with them to discuss raising concerns on whilst on placement and see the campus and facilities first hand, to understand their concerns around the student experience.

Charlie also organised a larger meeting between the BLSA Malta Board, and their University of Malta Medical Students' Association (MSA) counterparts, to discuss a system whereby they are able to raise concerns on joint placements such as Mater Dai hospital on the main island.

## **Student Opportunities**

### **Club Sport**

Club Sport has had a busy start to the semester with all clubs returning to training and league matches with more teams than any year previously entered into the BUCS/LUSL leagues. In addition to team competitions, we have also had over 30 individual students signed up to BUCS events already this year with more to come as we approach BUCS Nationals in February.

A great deal of campaign work has been undertaken by Sports Clubs including events and fundraising as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Movember.

Two Club Sport Board meetings have taken place and two new clubs have been affiliated: QM Historical European Martial Arts Club and QM Baseball Club. This board also approved funding, 30 applications have been either part or fully funded in the first round with £4,692 spent so far this year to support club projects and resources.

Club Sport secured Westfield Funding for the Financial Support Fund which exists to aid students getting involved with sport at Queen Mary where financial barriers prevent them from doing so. The fund covers membership, kit and or travel costs and there have been 9 fully funded applications so far this semester.

All Welfare Officers have received full training during September, including a new 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' training workshop run in conjunction with our Student Engagement Team. Two Personal Professional Development Sessions have also taken place this year which have been a Sponsorship

Workshop and a Disability Awareness in Sport Course open to all club members. The next is a first aid training course happening this month which is already at capacity and we are looking to grow this next year due to the interest in it.

This Girl Can Week took place week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> November. A variety of Club Sport, Get Active and Qmotion sessions were held, as well as an external talk delivered in partnership with FITr on menstruation in sport. Several case studies were also shared about our amazing women in sport at Queen Mary.

### **Community Foundation**

The Community Foundation has been shortlisted as a finalist for the London Sport 'Enhancing the Workforce Award'. The winner will be announced during the ceremony at Guildhall in March. Our Sport Workforce & Employability Manager has also been selected as London Sport's Community Champion for October.

Our new Community Foundation Intern has joined the Sports Development Team and will support general operations of the sub-programmes and will raise awareness of opportunities to engage a wider demographic of students. They will also lead on the celebration of the programme's 10<sup>th</sup> year.

### **QM Skills Award**

180 students have registered for the Skills Award so far this semester. There have been over 135 training engagements from 62 students so far. In comparison to the 1<sup>st</sup> semester last year, the number of sessions has seen a 180% increase and the attendance rate has seen a 36% increase. More information about the Skills Award can be found at [www.qmsu.org/employability/qmskills](http://www.qmsu.org/employability/qmskills).

### **Social Leagues**

Social leagues have got off to a fantastic start with a total of seven leagues running across four different sports (Basketball, Cricket, Football and Netball). Currently there are 13 student staff supporting the programme, including a Social Leagues Intern. There are total of 35 teams and over 500 participants. Of the 35 teams, 18 signed up for the first time to the Social Leagues.

### **Get Active**

Get Active is a part of our recreational sport programme, offering a timetable of weekly sporting activities that students, staff and alumni can get involved with for just £2.50 per session. We offer a range of sports such as Badminton, Volleyball, Fencing and Basketball.

After successfully supporting the university across Arrivals Weekend and during the Students' Union Welcome Fair, Get Active has also provided activities for students and family members attending the University Open Day in October, engaging 621 students. In addition to this, our weekly free pop-ups in Library Square have engaged 354 students as of October.

Since September, Get Active has launched its full timetable of activities and has had 2019 engagements as of October, across a range of sports including some new sport offers such as Cheerleading and Dodgeball. The full timetable can be viewed at [www.qmsu.org/getactive](http://www.qmsu.org/getactive)

### **Inter-Halls Games**

The new Inter-Halls Games programme provides the opportunity for students to get involved in large scale sporting opportunities throughout the year to meet other residents and make friends in an active and social environment. It is funded by the Residential Life Team who work closely with the Sports Department to oversee the events.

Since the start of the semester, Inter-Halls Games has hosted its first two events of the year – Zorb Football and Dodgeball. The programme is looking to expand into offering more niche sporting opportunities for students such as an inflatable obstacle course and archery tag to provide a truly unique offer for residents.

### **Employability**

Radhika, is continuing the Alumni Cafe events in collaboration with the Global Engagement Team. The events aim to improve alumni engagement with the University and improve employability amongst our current students. The first event took place on 30<sup>th</sup> November, with capacity being increased due to student demand.

### **Volunteering**

Engagement in volunteering is growing again, and the two student interns funded additionally through the block grant have enabled this to happen. The Volunteering Fair in October received positive feedback from



charity partners and had a great turn-out from students and our low-level commitment programme of opportunities, Give Volunteering a Go, has seen consistent high levels of sign-ups. The team are currently working with Volunteering Champions to organise Volunteering Week for February.

### **Societies**

Two of our societies, Legal Innovation and Hyperlink, have been shortlisted for Bright Network's Society of the Year Award. Within the Innovation Award category, these societies have been shortlisted for their innovative use of new technology and modern thinking on campus. Hyperlink, a group of students passionate about the hyperlink, aim to produce London's first running pod. Legal Innovation Society aim to keep members up to date with the impacts of technological developments within the legal industry whilst equipping them with the skills to thrive as a lawyer in the new digital age. We look forward to finding out the results in December.

### **Sustainability**

We coordinated activities as part of the Sustainability Week in collaboration with the University, supporting events led by student reps, student groups and the Sustainability Coordinator. We'll be working with other staff involved to evaluate and build on the campaign in future. Upcoming sustainability activities include a clothes swap in December, a sports trainers donation scheme in partnership with JogOn, and an upcycling event in January. The latter event will replace the January Reuse Fair, with plans for the scheme to return in September.

### **Events**

Following Welcome Week, our Venues and Events team have begun delivering our regular on-campus events, including our weekly club nights Monday's Calling, Tables and In Real Life, and our other frequent events including Hail Mary, E1 and Shake & Serve. We also delivered special events for Oktoberfest and have started delivering our new "Drapers Live" and "Griff Inn Live" series of live events that include spoken word, open mic nights, bingo and quiz nights.

### **Talented Athlete Programme**

The Talented Athlete programme has welcomed 16 student-athletes on board, which is the highest number ever accepted. The programme had over 50 applications, the highest on record to apply. The student-athletes all compete in the top 10 within their sport or represent their country. One of the student-athletes has already won an event, the BUCS Hill climb in cycling during October. The Students' Union will be releasing a press release on the programme and further information about our talented athletes so keep an eye out for this on the @qmsu social media pages and our website.

The programme has been working with the Skills Award to give student-athletes to give the students access to free training sessions and career reflection sessions.

During November, FITr also delivered a lecture on the menstrual cycle which had over 20 students and staff in attendance and has now been made accessible to all Talented Athletes, Coaches and Club Sport members at the Students' Union.

### **Q Motion**

Qmotion is the Students' Union's Sport and Fitness Centre. We offer a wide range of equipment, classes and fitness services in a welcoming and inclusive environment. With fully qualified staff on hand to help at all times, and flexible, affordable membership options.

Since September, we have seen a peak membership base of 2539, this demonstrates an increase of 31% when compared to the start of semester 1 2021/22. We have also seen an average weekly number of visits of 3139

. Further to this, on average, 48% of our members visit the facility 4+ x per month which research shows is the amount of time recommended for users to achieve the physical, social and mental benefits from taking part in physical activity.

We have also successfully continued the reintroduction of our group exercise and gym service programme with over 250 classes delivered and more than 100 gym programme and gym inductions.

**Adi Sawalha**  
**Students' Union President**  
**8<sup>th</sup> December 2022**