



**Student Experience, Teaching and Learning:
Update from Professor Stephanie Marshall, Interim Vice-Principal (Education).**

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to note the update.
Executive Summary:	This paper provides an update from the Interim Vice-Principal (Education) on key issues and work to address major issues impacting on the student experience, teaching and learning, the TEF and League table performance.
QMUL Strategy: strategic aim reference and sub-strategies [e.g., SA1.1]	<p>QMUL <u>Strategic Aim 1:</u> to recruit students and staff of the highest intrinsic talent and potential, and to nurture their careers. <u>Strategic Aim 3:</u> to provide all our students, wherever based, an education that is judged internationally to be of the highest quality, and which exploits innovations in teaching, learning and assessment</p> <p>The update also address all aims of the SETLA Strategy.</p>
Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:	N/A
Strategic Risks:	<p>Strategic Risks: 1.01 Student recruitment 1.02 Student experience, teaching, learning and assessment SETLA Risks 1.01, 1.02 Student recruitment (UG and PG) 2.01 Student satisfaction 2.02 student engagement and retention 2.03 student employability 3.01 High quality teaching staff 7.01 Design and delivery of high-quality portfolio of programmes</p>
Equality Impact Assessment:	The strategy and priorities are focused on delivering a high-quality student experience and enabling success for all students, through curriculum design, teaching excellence and related support.
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA:	No
Timing:	N/A – this is an update on progress and priorities
Authors:	Professor Stephanie Marshall, Interim Vice-Principal
Date:	6 July 2018
Senior Management/External Sponsor:	

Update on the Student Experience, Teaching and Learning

This paper sets out the key issues and subsequent work undertaken by Professor Stephanie Marshall, further to her appointment as VP (Education) from 19th June 2018 to address major issues impacting on the student experience, teaching and learning, the TEF and league table performance.

1 Key Issues

Further to analysis of key data sets (eg NSS, Guardian league tables), a series of one-to-one discussions (20 in total) were undertaken with key Queen Mary stakeholders as to what they felt were three key areas that needed to be addressed immediately to reverse the downwards trend in educational metrics, with some suggested quick wins. As a result of these one-to-ones, the notion of a **'Going for Gold'** project emerged, which was 'tested' at the TEF working group. This group, comprised of all Heads of School and their TEF leads (and to include School Student Representatives from the autumn), Deans for Teaching and Learning, Faculty Student Experience Managers, and a number of Professional Services staff, visibly welcomed this approach. In summary, concerns that were expressed repeatedly were the need to:

- 1.1. **Get back to basics:** greatest concern was in the area of teaching quality, retention, assessment and feedback, and attainment (to include graduate employability). All mentioned the need for leadership in this space, and the need to 'bottom out' the basics, suggesting that 'if we could just crack retention, teaching quality and assessment and feedback, it would take us a long way'.
- 1.2. **Share best practice:** almost to a person, all wanted help in examples of how things were done elsewhere in the sector as they wanted to know 'what success looks like'.
- 1.3. **Promote the collective ambition to excel:** rekindle a passion for teaching and learning and a sense of pride in the discourse around education throughout the University.

2. Addressing the key concerns: The 'Going for Gold' project

2.1 Infrastructure.

Infrastructure for taking the agenda forward has been evolving rapidly. Basically, there are monthly meetings of the TEF Working Group (a 'community of practice'). There are fortnightly lunchtime catch up meetings with the Deans of Teaching and Learning to support their in-Faculty work. A series of 22 school visits (based on the Department for Education subject headings for TEF 5) are planned, to consider individualized action plans – in a diagnostic and dialogic manner. A 'mind the gap' analysis will underpin the discussion as to where they need to put their emphasis in terms of raising their metrics in the 4 key areas of retention, teaching quality, assessment and feedback, and employability for graduates. Later in the autumn, schools will be requested, further to an appropriate developmental activity, to write their '2019 narratives', presenting what they are aspiring their position to be. The 'mind the gap' analysis will subsequently be revisited.

2.2 Masterclasses, trips, national networking groups and commissioned projects.

To support everyone in their understanding and ability to determine and address what needs to be done, planning is underway to ensure that the support is there to raise the metrics. The VP

(Education) has arranged that the first **masterclass** will be presented by Professor John Grattan, former interim VC (**Aberystwyth University**). Under his leadership, he was determined to reverse the spiralling downwards trend of Aberystwyth's metrics, and introduced a pan-university culture change project. The reversal of this trend, plus the important requisite culture change which led to a great wrap-round narrative, led to Aberystwyth being awarded a Gold in TEF 3. The first **visit** will be to **Aston University**, which has a broadly similar demographic to Queen Mary. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Helen Higson, attributes their achievement of a Gold in TEF and a finalist in the Global Teaching Excellence Award, as being down to a change of culture which used HEA Fellowships as the driver for change. This visit will involve the Deans of Teaching and Learning and a member of the Students Union (yet to be confirmed), who are keen to learn more about what they might do at the Faculty level. Joining in **national network projects** such as the HEA Business Schools retention project and the second year of the HEA London Retention project (which City University stated made a major impact on their retention) is underway. Finally, we will involve students in exploring constructive interventions to aid their success. For example, it has been proposed to engage students in key research projects (further to the offering of a training session on undertaking such projects), such as 'issues facing commuter students' with subsequent recommendations. This has been discussed with the Students Union, greatly welcomed, and is in line with their ambition to increase the student voice. We await the autumn term to get this important work fully underway.

3. Key success indicators

The time frame for the Going for Gold Project is to have made significant progress by January 2019. The guiding 4 core metrics (in terms of 'back to basics') at the institutional, aggregated level at present are:

Metric	Present rating	Benchmarked	Gap	One positive flag will require: + x
Continuation (retention)	93.7%	95.2%	-1.5%	+3.5% on a 3 year average
Teaching Quality	85%	86.5%	-1.5%	+c 3.5% on a 3 year average
Assessment and Feedback	68.3%	71.3%	-3%	+5% on a 3 year average
Employability (higher skills)	74.5%	76.4%	-1.9%	+ 3.9% on a 3 year average

Obviously there are differing 'gaps' in terms of this benchmarking. In terms of individual subjects (identified as 22 at QM), the purpose of the School visits is to explore not only the 'gap', but also where a negative flag (deviation of 0.7 from the benchmark) has already been identified. This is the purpose of the individualized approach to driving up performance, and which will be reported in more detail, to include agreed KPIs, at the October meeting of Council. The collective spreadsheet will inform where support needs to be ramped up, but also greater engagement with students and a strengthening of the student voice will assist with the monitoring of progress.