



QMSU President's report

Outcome requested:	Council is invited to note the QMSU President's report. The minutes of the last MoA review panel meeting are appended.
Executive Summary:	<p>The report is an update from May until the start of July on activity within the Students' Union. It includes the following sections:</p> <p>Key Updates Student Voice Student Opportunities</p>
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Senior Management/External Sponsor	

President's University Council Report

July 2024

www.qmsu.org



President's Report

Key Updates

Annual Student Meeting (ASM)

We received a petition from our two Islamic Societies to hold an additional ASM. This was signed by 322 students, the required number for the meeting to take place is 120. Following a conversation with the students about their petition, we set the date for the meeting (12th July) and the motion deadline, which has now passed, and then informed students. We have received 9 motions to be debated, these can be found on our website - <https://www.qmsu.org/studentmeeting/>

Education Awards

We hosted the Education Awards on the 29th May, at Drapers' Hall. The event was a wonderful success, with multiple students, course reps and officers being recognised for their outstanding work this academic year; as well as some of the academics responsible for excellence across assessment, employability, support and sustainability. Overall, over 300 nominations for the Education Awards were received, despite being open at a later stage in the academic year. Over 80 academics and students attended the event for afternoon tea, a drinks reception, and speeches given by the Executive Officers, Deputy Vice Principal Education, and the winners themselves. A full list of the winners is available here - <https://www.qmsu.org/awards/education/criteria/>.

School of the Arts

Monthly meetings have now been organised between senior staff in HSS and the Students' Union to update on the progress of the formation of the School of the Arts, and to ensure students do not have a poorer experience due to the changes over the next few years. Jovani Palnoni, Vice President Humanities and Social Sciences, will also attend a working group looking at the new educational offering and we have requested that our PGR Subject reps sit on the working group looking at Research Excellence.

Open Day

The Students' Union supported the main University Open Day events on 14th and 15th June to help showcase everything we have to offer to prospective students and their guests. We delivered a series of Student Life and Sport talks, gave tours of our facilities, provided sports and games for visitors through our Get Active pop-up, opened our venues including the Multi-Faith Centre for visitors and hosted our main Students' Union stall as part of the Information Fair.

We also supported our student groups to run several stalls, performances and demonstrations with groups including Formula Student, Art Society, QM Dance Company, HEMA Club, Alpine Club, Volleyball Club, Synthetic Biology Society, Biochemical Engineering Society, Psychology Society, Biology Society and Music Society taking part.

Westfield Nursery Closure

Tahmid Khan, Vice President Welfare, has been meeting with students and staff members following the announcement by the University of their intention to close Westfield Nursery. In a statement (available at www.qmsu.org), Tahmid made clear the Students' Union position that the nursery closure is a fundamental mistake which is not conducive to the University's aspirations of being: 'the most inclusive of its kind'.

QMSU acknowledges the financial position of the Westfield Nursery and the need for change. However, students, staff and QMSU itself have been left blindsided by the abrupt and rushed process that the University has undertaken in its handling of the closure. The announcement was made at the end of May, with the nursery due to close in mid-August. Students and staff members believe that there has not been enough notice, with female students particularly concerned about the impact that the closure will have on them. The concerns from the student and staff body have resulted in a highly public campaign to stop the closure, which

has damaged student perceptions of the University. The consultations and equality impact assessments surrounding the process have commenced at a very late stage and some have not even been concluded.

QMSU was also not given advanced warning of the intent to close the nursery – this was not appropriate considering the evident impact on the student body and the emotions surrounding the matter.

Tahmid has stated these concerns to Sharon Ellis, Chief Operations Officer, highlighting the missed opportunities that members of the Senior Executive Team (SET) had, to inform us over the past months. This includes at the Student Voice Sub-Board, which has been poorly attended by senior SET members. Tahmid also stated that the closure must either be stopped (with savings to be found elsewhere and appropriate financial viability measure to be implemented to facilitate this) or delayed allowing proper consultation to take place.

Tahmid further believes that the handling of the closure must be reviewed, to learn lessons and improve decision making processes surrounding issues which concern inclusivity at the University and are financially and reputationally sensitive.

Student Voice

Postgraduate Research Students

Matthew Beach, Vice President Communities, continues to work on increasing representation and engagement infrastructure for postgraduate research (PGR) students. The Postgraduate Consultation Group has now concluded, and Matthew is working on preparing the report with the team. Plans to publicise the results include a new website article that is now live at www.qmsu.org/news and confirmed plans to celebrate the participants and release the results in mid-July as part of a 'PGR Palooza' event in the Graduate Centre Common Room and Terrace taking place on 10th July, 4pm-7pm. As part of the Enhancing Research and Innovation Cultures fund project work, a revised Postgraduate Hub is about to launch on our website, marketing materials have been ordered to place in postgraduate research spaces across Schools/Institutes, and an end-of-year PGR barbecue is being planned for the Charterhouse Square campus.

Cost of Living

We have begun providing multiple supermarket vouchers to students as part of a wider scheme that aims to help out students who continue to struggle financially. In addition, we are continuing our other welfare and cost of living support, such as welfare loans, as the academic year and other support schemes enter their wrap up period.

Study Well

The Summer Study Well Campaign has now drawn to a close, with highlights including an increase to the amount of events at our Whitechapel campus including a Pick, Paint and Plant session, a board game and pizza night and several giveaway stalls which extended this year's campaign and made it more of a consistent and extended presence at the Garrod Building.

Malta Elections

These elections were conducted under their own timeline this academic year, with support from Malta Medical School colleagues to create bespoke information and guidance for MMS students. 17 students nominated themselves for the positions and all vacancies were filled with 1038 votes cast by 141 individual voters. The elected PTOs will take up their role on August 1st alongside all our representatives.

Postgraduate Taught Students

Matthew completed a collaboration with the Deputy VP for Education wherein the pair created a TikTok-style video advertising the importance of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). The video was published collaboratively between the Students' Union and university's Instagram accounts. While a small achievement, it is notable in the context of working towards a co-delivered student communications plan between the Students' Union and university.

Decolonising Campaign

Matthew worked with the student voice team to launch a second iteration of the Decolonise Queen Mary campaign in June. This included promotional materials such as table talkers and bookmarks; several events including pop-up reflection stalls, book clubs, and film screenings; and a book stand collaboration with the Mile End library. The book club event saw its highest attendance to date, whilst the reflection stalls have seen lots of students contribute their thoughts.

Sustainability

Matthew has continued to deliver the events programming as part of his collaborative Cabinet Cultures: East London Ecologies project, including facilitating a tour of the Chelsea Physic Garden's cool fernery and a houseplant storytelling workshop which was part of the 2024 Peopling the Palace(s) Festival.

QStart

Jovani has met with faculty members from HSS to discuss QStart and how the Students' Union and faculty can work together to ensure the effectiveness of it. The programme aims to ensure students are as ready as possible for their transition to university, and are able to progress moving forward with their university careers.

General Election

A general election was called for the 4th July and our Communications and Marketing team have been working alongside Serena and Amaan, VP Barts and The London, to put together social media posts and videos, an article and emails to all students to encourage them to register to vote and inform them of information they might need to vote successfully, for example what voter ID they will need and how to apply for a postal vote. The campaign launch video on Instagram was a huge success with over 22k views and 550 likes, and a video made with an International student about international student voting rights saw a number of international students commenting on how useful the information in the video was as they didn't realise they were eligible to vote. Email communications was also successful with the all student email having a 31% open rate with over 8,100 students reading the email, which is a good rate for the time of year.

Lighting Improvement Project

£200,000 has been approved at the Infrastructure Steering group to support Tahmid's project to improve lighting across the university. This will fund improvement works that will take place across Mile End Campus over the summer, as well as some future sub-projects.

Whilst Tahmid has prioritised improving conventional lighting this year on safety grounds, for the coming year he aims to use the funds earmarked for future development to introduce light features on to campus.

The aim of this would be to improve the aesthetic appeal of the university further for students, but also to include students in the process of designing the features. Tahmid believes that this would help towards giving students a feeling of ownership over their campus environment.

Student Opportunities

Sport Update

We are preparing for the QMSU Summer Sports Camp, scheduled for July and August. The camps, targeting children aged 8-11, will run on weekdays from 9am-5pm and will be staffed by student coaches and volunteers. Recruitment efforts have successfully resulted in the employment of three coaches and three volunteers. Local schools are assisting with promotion through flyers and newsletters, and information has also been shared with university staff as an affordable childcare option. All staff are undergoing DBS checks, with safeguarding and duty of care training planned for the week before the camps begin.

In early June, the team conducted initial committee training over two days, which was attended by over 200 new committee members. These sessions introduced participants to their roles within our affiliated sports clubs, providing a foundational understanding of club operations and expectations. Role-specific training will follow before the academic year starts. Additionally, 14 hours of bookable drop-in sessions were made available for committee members to discuss the Club Sport Development Plan (CSDP).

This year, the CSDP process has been restructured into three parts with separate deadlines. This segmentation allows for the earlier provision of actionable information and a more manageable distribution of tasks. Part one of the CSDP has been completed by the clubs, enabling us to begin building the sports clubs' timetable. This process involves liaising with external facilities and the Qmotion team, fostering new relationships while maintaining existing ones. Clubs have received their space allocation information earlier than in previous years, aiding in planning and budgeting for non-grant funded activities.

Part two of the CSDP has been distributed, along with guidance for its completion. This section will gather crucial information on budgeting for the 2024/25 club operations, forming the basis for grant funding allocations and determining membership prices.

Student Groups

As we say goodbye to our current cohort of student leaders, we had the pleasure of inducting the new leaders in June, putting on 13 staff led training sessions for the incoming committees. This was very well attended with over 150 attendees between both days, and with 89% of students rating the training at a 4 or 5, on a scale of 1-5. All of the sessions are recorded and accessible to students throughout the year to help them at every point of their journey.

Serena–Amani Al Jabbar
Students' Union President
4th July 2024

**QMUL / QMSU MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT REVIEW PANEL
25 June 2024**

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:

Serena-Amani Al Jabbar	Amaan Abbas	Dr Dominique Gracia
(Chair)		
Dr Philippa Lloyd	Ian McManus	Chris Shelley

In attendance:

Brad Coales	Tahmid Khan	Alvin Ramsamy
Kaya Wiles (Secretary)		

Apologies:

Mike Wojcik

Part 1: Preliminary Items

1. Welcome

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

2. Minutes and Actions

2.1 The Panel **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 01 May 2024.

2.2 The Panel **noted** the following updates to the action table:

- 2022.31 was ongoing.
- 2023.13 was ongoing.
- 2023.14 was ongoing. A Dean for Education and Student Experience was being recruited. It was hoped that having this position would help to progress the work.
- 2023.15 was ongoing. Discussions around infrastructure would be taken to the next Malta Operations Board.
- 2023.16 was ongoing. The Queens' Building renovation project had been paused. The Queens' Building Project Board were considering options and there would be further discussion with SET. A key aim was to protect the student hub and the impact on student experience as much as possible.
ACTION: Ian McManus and QMSU to arrange a meeting for QMSU to provide input into the options for the Queens' Building renovations.
- 2023.17 was ongoing. The faith space survey would be shared shortly after the meeting.
- 2023.18 was complete. The ITS Partnership Agreement was on the agenda for this meeting.

- 2023.19 was complete. The HR Partnership Agreement was on the agenda for the September meeting.
- 2023.20 was ongoing. An update would be provided at a future meeting. Comments received on the documents were minimal, though positive. Mike Wojcik would take the agreement forward with the Doctoral College and report back to the Panel.
- 2023. 21 was ongoing. The external speaker booking review was ongoing. An update would be provided at a future meeting.

Part 2: Matters for Discussion

3. Update on the EAF masterplan

- 3.1 The Panel **noted** the update on the EAF masterplan and the prioritization framework.
- 3.2 The Panel **noted** the short-term, medium term and long-term plans for Charterhouse Square, Whitechapel and Mile End.
- 3.3 The Panel **noted** the medium-term plans to re-provision Charterhouse Square student accommodation and close Dawson Hall. The decision had not yet been finalized and the direction of travel would need to be agreed by SET. It would be important to have engagement with the QMSU members who were on the residences steering group. The University were taking a holistic approach to deliver business value whilst also addressing the condition of the estate.
- 3.4 The Panel **noted** that Tower Hamlets Local Authority were consulting on plans to raise the percentage of private rental developments that needed to be classed as affordable housing from 35% to 50%. It would be difficult to secure funding for new student accommodation if the percentage increased to 50%.
- 3.5 The Panel **noted** that the plan to relocate the students' union hub was a long-term plan. There were not immediate actions being put in place.
- 3.6 The Panel **noted** that QMSU members of the Panel were not aware of some of the existing plans. More frequent meetings to discuss estates planning would help QMSU have higher levels of input at the appropriate stages. It would be helpful to also have Chris Shelley in attendance as many areas also impacted on the student experience.

ACTION: Serena-Amani Al Jabbar, Ian McManus and Chris Shelley to arrange periodic meetings to discuss estates plans in relation to student experience.

4. Report from QMSU

- 4.1 The Panel **noted** that QMSU had begun their democracy review. The review was being conducted by an external company who would be using stakeholder interviews, workshops and desk-based research to inform the review. The Student Council model would be reviewed to enhance its relevancy and engagement.
- 4.2 The Panel **noted** that QMSU had been contributing to the work on to Russel Group Student's Union manifesto. The manifesto sets out the biggest issues facing students, such as the cost of living, with the aim of highlighting these issues to political parties ahead of the General Election. The manifesto would also consider the experiences of international

students. In addition to being a document for political parties to consider, it would also help QMSU to reaffirm their key priorities for the upcoming year.

4.3 The Panel **noted** that QMSU had sent a letter to Council addressing the encampment.

4.4 The Panel **noted** that QMSU had published a statement on their website regarding the Westfield Nursery closure.

5. Block Grant Tracker

5.1 The Panel **noted** the Block Grant Tracker.

5.2 The Panel **noted** that Mike Wojcik would be meeting with Karen Kroger, Chief Financial Officer, in July 2024 to begin drafting the Block Grant letter.

6. Partnership agreements

6.1 The Panel **noted** that the ITS partnership agreement had been through several feedback rounds and would hopefully be finalized and signed off soon.

7. QMSU Articles of Association

7.1 The Panel **noted** that the Articles of Association were being reviewed, for approval in November 2024. Two minor amendments were being considered. The first was to amend references to Student Council to instead read representative body. This would allow some flexibility should the outcome of the democracy review lead to a change to the Student Council. The second would be to amend specific wording around student trustees, how many there were and the faculty they represented. The updated Articles of Association would seek to reference the number of student trustees without naming the faculties. A draft version of the Articles of Association would be presented to the Board of Trustees in October 2024 and brought to the MoA Review Panel in November 2024.

8. University Ordinances: Ordinance 13: The Students' Union

8.1 The Panel **noted** that the University was in the process of updating its Ordinances. QMSU had initial concerns around the replacement of Ordinance C5 with Ordinance 13, however QMSU had met with Jonathan Morgan, Chief Governance Officer and University Secretary, and had agreed to new wording which satisfied both parties.

9. Student Voice Sub-Board update

9.1 The Panel **noted** that the Student Voice Sub-Board had met twice, with the initial meetings focusing on the operation and processes of the board. Future meetings would focus on student-centered projects and priorities. A key role of the board would be hearing any issues raised by QMSU and escalating these appropriately.

10. For information: Indicative annual plan

10.1 The Panel **noted** the indicative annual plan for 2024-25.

11. Any Other Business

- 11.1 The Panel thanked Serena-Amani Al Jabbar and Amaan Abbas for their contributions to the work of the panel over the past year.

Part 3: Other Matters

12. Meeting dates for 2024-25

- 12.1 It was noted that the Panel would meet on the following dates in 2024-25:
- Friday 27th September 2024, 10am – 11.30am via Microsoft Teams
 - Tuesday 5th November 2024, 3pm – 4.30pm via Microsoft Teams
 - Tuesday 4th March 2025, 2pm – 3.30pm via Microsoft Teams
 - Wednesday 30th May 2025, 11am – 12.30pm via Microsoft Teams
 - Wednesday 25th June 2025, 11am – 12.30pm via Microsoft Teams