



QMSU President's Report

Outcome requested:	Council is requested to note the QMSU President's report dated 12 May 2016.
Executive Summary:	The Students' Union President submits a report to every meeting of QMUL Council which highlights some of the projects the Union is currently working on and the key successes since the last meeting. The report also identifies some areas that the Union would like QMUL Council to be aware of, provide advice on or take action on.
QMUL Strategy:	Queen Mary, University of London Strategic Plan 2014–19 - SA2.2 - EA1.1
Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:	Education Act 1994 and related Code of Practice; QMUL Ordinance C5
Strategic Risks:	2. High quality student experience throughout the student life cycle
Equality Impact Assessment:	The report highlights the ongoing concerns regarding the provision of space for multi-faith activities.
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	N/A
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA	No
Timing:	The President reports on the activities of QMSU at each meeting of Council.
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Date:	12 May 2016
Senior Management/External Sponsor	N/A

President's Report

QMUL Council, Tuesday 17th May 2016

Multi-Faith Provision

The Union is continuing to receive significant pressure from Islamic students to provide a space for Friday Prayer. There have been continued discussions regarding the search of an appropriate space for Friday Prayer with Rebecca Lingwood, and the potential of using the Sports Hall has been raised. However, the Sports Hall is fully booked due to the sporting activities held there, especially those through the Get Active recreational sports programme, funded by Sports England. The lack of space for Sport is ever increasing, and thus an alternative space for Sport may need to be found if the use of the Sports Hall were to be used for Friday Prayer.

In addition to this, the Sports Hall is used as an exam venue every year during Semester 3, which highlights the issue that there is no suitable place for Friday Prayer during the examination period. The Union would like QMUL to find a solution to this.

The Union would like to reiterate their disappointment in great delay in correspondence from Estates & Facilities regarding the updates on the Great Hall, impacting the use of this space throughout both Term 1 and 2 of this academic year. Students have alternatively highlighted the use of the Octagon as a space instead of the Great Hall. This has had significant pressures on both the Union and the students whom have required space for Friday Prayer.

Concerns regarding Estates & Facilities

The Union would like to raise concerns regarding certain proposals within the Estates and Facilities team. Last academic year 2014/15, the Estates & Facilities team proposed increasing the fees for the Halls of Residence at QMUL by 5%, due to a maintenance backlog. Due to the HEA Conditions of these halls having declined over the past years, QMSU did not support this and welcomed discussions around where the increase in money was distributed. Finally, the increase was lowered to 3%.

Early on in Semester 2 of this academic year, it was mentioned through various channels, that Estates and Facilities were to propose an additional increase of 2-2.5% for Halls of Residence to QMSE and that QMSU would be asked for comment, with the help from Mike Shepard. After agreeing this, the paper was delayed in being circulated to QMSU in order to respond, and has caused delays in proposals going to QMSE. The proposals from both QMSU and Estates and Facilities are due to go to QMSE on Tuesday 17th May.

The Union's concerns are that there has been no long-term plan and continues to be no long-term plan on how to address the maintenance backlog, and it is in fact the students' whom suffer from the increase in rent, year on year, as a result to this. The Union was not involved in any discussions about the redistribution of the revenues from the increase in fees this year, and that is also a matter of concern.

Highlights

Union Annual Survey

The Union conducts an annual survey as one of the ways it measures the Union's performance against its strategic plan and also to gather more general feedback on its services and issues that students want the Union to be working on. This year, the Union received its highest response rate to date. Over the summer, the Union will be analysing the research and drafting a report. Relevant recommendations will be shared with QMUL when this has been completed. The response statistics are as below:

1416 started the survey (and at least answered some questions) / 996 completed the full survey
37% Male / 62% Female / 1% prefer not say
40% Year 1 / 24% Year 2/ 24% Year 3/ 8% Year 4/ 4% Year 5+
20% SMD / 48% HSS / 30% SE / 2% Associate
80% UG / 13% PGT / 6% PGR / 1% Non-award Bearing
67% Home / 33% Overseas

QMUL Students to lead on Graduate Centre Café name

The Union is greatly looking forward to facilitating a student competition in order to name the new café that will be present in the new Graduate Centre, opening January 2017. This competition will encourage students studying at QMUL to name the new café, and to increasingly feel part of this great project on campus.

The Union have also submitted a case for management of the Graduate Centre Café, and we are enthused by the potential of expanding activities in building the post graduate community, particularly around a community fund model, and increasing recreational and social programs.

QMUL/QMSU Sports Strategy Task & Finish Group

A QMUL/QMSU Joint Sports Strategy Task and Finish Group has been set up. The group is being chaired by Professor Rebecca Lingwood, and is tasked to review the previous joint Sports Strategy 2010-2015, in order to draft a new strategy by autumn 2016.

The Strategy has been primarily focused on growth in participation levels and opportunities to access physical activity. It was reported that participation levels increased by 66% from 4426 participants within sport in 2010/2011, to 7345 participants in 2014/2015, and increasing attendances by 46% from 148,545 in 2010/2011 to 217,181 in 2014/2015. There has also been a significant increase in the number of coaches and officials from 178 in 2010/2011 to 504 in 2014/2015.

QMUL/QMSU Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group

The first QMUL/QMSU Anti-Social Behaviour working group met on the 26th April, where an action plan was drawn up. This will be looking at anti-social behaviour and sexual harassment, and the information that is provided both by the University and the Union regarding the reporting of these incidents, as well as information made available. The group is due to meet a few more times before June, where recommendations will be drawn up for the Campus Security Group.

Assessment Offences

The Union is taking an active role in promoting common causes of assessment offences over the exam period. This includes sending out information to students as well as providing greater detail in a simplified format through the Union website. The Union hope this will lead to greater awareness and reduce the risk of students accidentally committing offences.

Study Well

The Union has been running the Study Well campaign, working with both Residences and Student Services in order to deliver programmes that facilitate the examination periods for students across our campuses. This campaign has created more study and social space for students, is holding events such as massages, meditation and petting puppies in order to provide stress-free activities for students. More information can be found on our website: <http://www.qmsu.org/studywell/>

This is a campaign that has successfully been run over the past few years, and one which greatly adds to improving the examination period for students and preparing them to study well.

Carolina Mantzalos, President 2015/16