



QMSU President's Report

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to note the QMSU President's report, the returning officer's election report and the minutes of the MoA Review Panel meeting held on 25 April 2023.
Executive Summary:	The report is an update from February on activity within the Students' Union. It includes the following sections: Key Updates Student Voice Student Opportunities
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Senior Management/External Sponsor	

President's University Council Report

May 2023

www.qmsu.org



President's Report

Key Updates

Spring Elections 2023

Our Spring Elections have now been concluded, and 73 students have been elected to represent their peers next academic year.

This year's elections saw 151 students submit a nomination (compared to 105 in 2022), and 4060 students voted (compared to 2459 in 2022). To achieve this increase in nominations and voters, the Elections Team in the Students' Union used a variety of promotional approaches, including targeted emails to subsets of the student population and a full on-campus campaign with posters, floor stickers, leaflets, banners and digital screens.

[The new Executive Officers](#) for 2023/24 are: Serena-Amani Al Jabbar (President), Matthew Beach (VP Communities), Tahmid Khan (VP Welfare), Amaan Abbas (VP Barts and The London), Jovani Palnoni (VP Humanities and Social Sciences) and Aisha Qadi (VP Science and Engineering).

The newly elected officers will officially start their term in office on 1 August 2023, with a period of training and handover taking place before then.

Education Awards

The Education Awards is part of the Students' Union's annual awards programme and celebrates the contributions of students and staff to improving the Queen Mary learning experience. This year, we received 505 nominations across all categories (compared to 180 nominations in the previous year) which were narrowed down to 3 shortlisted nominees and 1 winner per award category by a panel of student representatives.

The ceremony was attended by just under 100 staff and student guests from all faculties, and was co-hosted by Stephanie Marshall, Vice Principal Education, Adi Sawalha, President, Saynab Sharif, Vice President Humanities and Social Sciences, Muneer Hussain, Vice President Science & Engineering and Charlie Sellar, Vice President Barts and The London. The event was hosted at Drapers' Hall and included a speech from Gil Baldwin on the history of Drapers' Company and their work with Queen Mary University of London. The evening was a great success and provided an important opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding contributions made to the student experience this academic year.

Raise and Give (RAG)

Student charity fundraising has been at an all-time high this year with multiple student groups and sports clubs raising money for their chosen charities. When the earthquake took place in Turkey and Syria earlier this year, multiple student groups and sports clubs fundraised for charities supporting efforts to help those impacted. Groups and clubs raised a total of £9732.47, not including the amount of money raised through JustGiving links. There is an [article on our website](#) detailing the groups who have been fundraising for Turkey and Syria.

Student Group Awards

On 21 March we held our annual Student Group Awards where we celebrate societies and individual committee members for their hard work over the past year. 42 groups across Mile End and Whitechapel nominated themselves for a trophy award. 43 groups nominated themselves for student group awards. We awarded 9 society awards and 7 individual awards on the night. This year 7 groups received gold trophy awards, 22 groups received silver trophy awards and 11 groups received a bronze trophy award. The QMSU website has been updated with the winners and those who were highly commended on the evening.

Our Volunteering Awards will be taking place on Thursday 18 May where we will be celebrating our volunteering groups, student volunteers, brokerage service and give volunteering a go opportunities. A number of our volunteers won awards at Reach Out's award ceremony last month, there is an article on our website highlighting the winners.

Club Sport

Semester 2 has been incredibly busy in Club Sport as club activity comes to an end for the 22/23 academic year. Some of our biggest highlights have been the Sports Awards taking place on 25 March with 140 students attending and 14 awards given on the night to recognise the incredible achievements within sport this year. Feedback so far has been extremely positive, and we are gathering more in-depth feedback in the coming weeks to inform how we shape next year's event.

Merger Cup was our final Club Sport event of the year with 34 fixtures taking place over 7 days. An estimated 1500 students engaged in the events and it was an incredible week which saw BL win the cup after some exciting games. We raised £510 for the campaign's charity this year 'Women in Sport'.

Clubs have completed their BUCS/LUSL leagues for the year with 8 teams winning their league and 6 teams winning a cup title which are amazing achievements. Semester 3 sees planning for 23/24 year in full swing, we are currently entering teams for the BUCS/LUSL leagues next year, running elections/AGMs, recruiting new members for the Club Sport Board, inducting our new Sports Officers and will be sending out Club Sport Development Plans in the next few weeks. We are also currently gathering feedback from club sport members from the year to use as the team develops the programme over summer. Our student Sports Marketing Intern has done some excellent work throughout this semester to promote and enhance our programmes and we have seen noticeable improvements in engagements with our social media as well as our programmes. She will be a key part of reviewing our marketing over semester 3 in order to develop this over summer ahead of the 23/24 academic year.

Student Voice

NSS Workshops

A team of officers and staff members from the Students' Union are taking part in the university's workshops about NSS. The first workshop covered student voice and academic support and gave the Students' Union a valuable insight into the ways schools and the Students' Union can work together to improve student voice. Following the first workshop, we are now working on implementing some changes and new initiatives to address some of the concerns that were raised by university staff members.

Wolfson Institute Research Support

We are supporting a study led by the Wolfson Institute of Population Health relating to student behaviours in their digital lives. The research will explore the impact of gaming and internet dependence on students' wellbeing and academic performance. The majority of the funding for the research was through the YGAM charity, which has enabled a research assistant to support the project. The Students' Union will work closely with the Wolfson Institute and others to deliver the recommendations, and this aligns with our new strategic plan and pillars. It is likely there will be further, and potentially more significant, researching funding opportunities once the government's white paper on 'gambling reform for the digital age' has been completed and subsequent legislation put in place.

Decolonisation

Saynab is leading the Decolonise Project, which took place in March. Saynab worked with students to create a collaborative gallery of creative work on their topics of interest and encouraged them to express their stories and highlight the importance of decolonisation for them. Saynab is creating a website where students will find a variety of resources, including links to accessing library resources, which they can meaningfully engage with and participate in open conversations about race and the legacy of colonialism through culture, creativity, and knowledge. The aim of the project is to bring students together to learn more about different perspectives and shining a light on the diversity of our students, via the gallery, resource hub, book club and film screening.

UCU Strikes

Saynab, alongside the other members of the Exec, has been supporting students during the recent Strike and Industrial Action, by offering drop-in sessions. Further support has included gathering feedback, signposting to information, and answering FAQs on the strike action and support available.

Digital and IT Accessibility

Saynab has been working with IT Services to identify provisions for Q-review recordings and lecture recordings to be uploaded to QMPlus, as well as ensuring subtitling is provided in all instances. They have also been exploring the division of recordings and whether they can be split into shorter clips or if timestamps can be included to help navigate the content.

Study Well

The summer Study Well period has begun. The events so far have had good engagement and received positive feedback from students. We have tried to incorporate events to support students with the Cost of Living so we will be handing out meal kits in the next few weeks. This will run alongside the return of our usual popular events such as the petting zoos and pick, paint and plant.

Cost of Living

We have been spending time analysing the Queen Mary specific data from the Russell Group Cost of Living survey to identify the key themes that should be focused on next to support our students. So far, a summary of the data has been shared with stakeholders at the university while we work on a more detailed set of priorities influenced by the data. The food pantry initiative is ongoing and getting frequent use by students.

Student Opportunities

Recreational Sport

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.

Since the beginning of the academic year, Get Active has had 6083 engagements across its range of activities. Our pop-ups that provide free and easily accessible activities such as badminton, table tennis and cornhole on Wednesday afternoons have engaged 1053 students. Over the course of the 2022/23 academic year, Get Active has seen a 29.4% increase in student engagement since the end of semester 2 in the 2021/22 academic year.

Inter-Halls Games

The Inter-Halls Games programme provides the opportunity for students to get involved in large scale sporting opportunities throughout the year as a way 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 Sport Department to oversee the events. Since the beginning of the academic year, the programme has run 4 events, with Badminton in February being the most highly attended event since the start of the programme in September 2021. This event engaged 45 students across 14 of Queen Mary's halls of residence. Since this success, the programme has run its first event in conjunction with a Queen Mary sports club, providing an Archery Tag event with the Archery Club. So far this year, the Inter-Halls Games programme has engaged students from 18 Queen Mary halls of residence.

Social Leagues

Social Leagues is part of our recreational sport offer at Queen Mary Students' Union. We offer friendly intermural competitive sport across 7-a-side Football, 11-a-side Football, Basketball, Cricket, and Netball.

At the end of Semester 2, Social Leagues had engaged 360 students, employed 19 student staff, and had 33 different teams competing across the leagues. Additionally, the programme has achieved its highest engagement of 1st and 2nd year students across our Football leagues since the reopening of the university post-Covid. Due to the success this year, a Women's Futsal league has been created to run during exam semester to increase the sports we offer for female participation.

Community Foundation

Due to staffing changes in the team Semester 2 has seen limited output for the Community Foundation, however, there has still been positive activity within the programme. Over 73 hours of voluntary sports

coaching has taken place through the Community Foundation this semester. Furthermore, the Foundation has awarded 6 students its Gold Award and 2 students its Platinum Award for engagement completed over the course of this academic year!

Looking ahead, we're getting ready for the return of our sports camp taking place in the summer holidays and beginning to think about restructuring the programme for the coming Academic Year.

Student Group Elections

Our student groups are currently in the process of electing new committees for 2023-24. Mile End Groups have held online elections and are now going through the handover process to ensure the new committees have all the information they need to work on their development plans. Our Whitechapel groups are currently hosting their online elections. The Student Engagement team are reviewing the summer induction we provide to committee members, this will be delivered in June.

Green Week

We supported the University on the annual Green Week held in February. Our biggest canal clean-up of the year was held during this week along with allotment planting, a sustainability skills award session and multiple other events involving student groups and university teams. We are now planning to start collections for our September reuse fair and we plan on recruiting brand new student sustainability champions to help run the fair and other sustainability events throughout the year.

Qmotion Sport & Fitness Centre

Qmotion has continued to grow this academic year. Semester 2 has seen Qmotion reach a peak of 3011 members, our highest membership base since 2018. We also have a high retention rate evident with just over 2700 members at the end of semester 2, which is the highest it has been at this stage since 2017.

Semester two has seen over 60,000 visits to the facility, with an average of 47% of our members visiting a minimum of four times per month, which research demonstrates is sufficient to receive the physical, social and mental benefits associated with taking part in physical activity.

Our group exercise offering has continued to remain popular amongst our members with 2287 engagements this semester, and our free personalized gym program service has been delivered over 300 times, providing our members with the confidence, knowledge and encouragement to keep more active!

Adi Sawalha
Students' Union President
11th May 2023

Returning Officer's Report

The Students' Union ran its main election which elects the Executive Officers, Student Trustees, Student Councillors and additional non-representative positions from 23 January - 16 March 2023.

Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer

The following were appointed by the Board of Trustees to be the Returning and Deputy Returning Officer:

Returning Officer: Service provided by National Union of Students
Deputy Returning Officer: Brad Coales, Queen Mary, University of London Students' Union

Election Statistics

Members of the Union: *27,536
**Figure from QMUL Power BI as at 1 Dec 2022*

2022-23

Number of candidates (in total) standing for positions this year: 151
 Total number of students who voted this year: 4,060
 Election turnout as percentage of membership: 14.7%

2021-22

Number of candidates (in total) standing for positions this year: 105
 Total number of students who voted this year: 2,459
 Election turnout as percentage of membership: 10.7%

Complaints

Number of formal complaints submitted to the (Deputy) Returning Officer:	1
Number of complaints upheld:	1
Number of complaints partially upheld:	0
Number of official warnings issued:	1
Number of candidates disqualified or removed from the election:	0

General Comments

The 2023 Queen Mary, University of London Students' Union elections were conducted by the QMSU elections team and Deputy Returning Officer, in accordance with the Articles of Association and Bye-Laws. They were overseen by an impartial third party Returning Officer from NUS. The Deputy Returning Officer has deemed the elections free and fair for voters. No formal complaints were submitted to the Deputy returning Officer. This means voters were able to vote freely and fairly in this election.

151 candidates nominated themselves for the 74 positions which were available.

Of the 151 confirmed nominations (compared with 105 in 2022) 23 were for the six Executive positions (compared with 23 in 2021). Student Council had 23 positions out of 54 contested compared with 15 out of 50 in 2022. There were 14 nominations for the four vacant Student Trustee positions.

6 posts (2 of which are non-rep operational posts) remain unfilled and the Union will run a by-election in September/October for the following positions:

- LGBT+ Rep (BL)
- Barts Cancer Institute Rep
- Blizard Institute Rep
- Secretary (S&E)
- RAG Officer (ME)

- RAG Officer (BL)

The three PGT positions were deliberately held over until the autumn to maximise the number of eligible candidates.

The results for the Executive Officer positions are:

President - Serena-Amani Al Jabbar

Vice President Barts and The London - Amaan Abbas

Vice President Communities - Matthew Beach

Vice President Humanities and Social Sciences - Jovani Palnoni

Vice President Science and Engineering - Aisha Qadi

Vice President Welfare – Tahmid Khan

Four new Student Trustees were elected to replace Trustees coming to the end of their terms of office.

The New Student Trustees are:

Rahma Hegy

Ahmed Mohamed

Liam Nicholson

Eshwinder Singh

If you wish to find out more about the candidates and those who have been elected, please go to www.qmsu.org/elections and follow the links.

Confirmation of Fair Election

I hereby declare that this election was run in a fair and democratic manner which satisfies the stipulations as laid out within the 1994 Education Act.

Deputy Returning Officer



Position: Deputy Returning Officer

Name: Brad Coales

Date: 3 May 2023

**QMUL / QMSU MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT REVIEW PANEL
25 April 2023**

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:

Adi Sawalha (Chair)
Charlie Sellar

Dominique Gracia
Chris Shelley

Dr Philippa Lloyd
Mike Wojcik

In attendance:

Brad Coales

Kaya Wiles (Secretary)

Apologies:

Dr Sharon Ellis

Maryanne Matthews

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 02 November 2022 and the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 08 February 2023.

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

- 2021.30 – Pending. The action would be handed over to Charlie Sellar and an update would be provided in due course.
- 2022.02 was pending. A meeting would be held with Sharon Ellis and team in May 2023. It was also hoped that the Garrod Building partnership agreement would be considered at a meeting of the Space Management Group in June 2023.
- 2022.09 was pending.
- 2022.10 was pending. The update would be provided at the next meeting.
- 2022.11 was pending.
- 2022.12 was complete. The pilot 'student-focused foodbank' had been launched but would not include The Curve yet. Updates would be provided at future meetings as part of the CEO report.
- 2022.13 was complete.
- 2022.14 was complete. The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) would be updated in tandem with the partnership agreements to make sure they align.
- 2022.15 was complete.
- 2022.16 was pending. A timetable for updating the partnership agreements would be shared at the next meeting.

- 2022.17 was complete. The extraordinary meeting convened on 08 February 2023.
- 2022.18 was complete. The update was provided with the meeting papers for this meeting.
- 2022.19 was complete.
- 2022.20 was pending. An update would be provided at the next meeting.
- 2022.21 was pending.
- 2022.22 was pending.

Part 2: Matters for Discussion

3. Report from the QMSU CEO

- 3.1 The Panel **noted** that the March Group management accounts were completed and on target.
- 3.2 The Panel **noted** that the Garrod project was on schedule and progressing well. An operations plan was being developed to look at Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), business plans and scheduling. There had been discussions around the availability of lockers in the Garrod building. It was noted that there would be lockers, but it was not yet clear whether these would be solely for student use or whether they would be open to the wider public. The cost of lockers had not been factored into the current capital programme.

ACTION: Mike Wojcik to contact Sara Crema, Director of Strategic Projects Life Sciences, to discuss arrangements for the lockers in the Garrod building.

- 3.3 The Panel **noted** a student survey had been sent to students. Focus groups had also been held to facilitate discussions with staff members.
- 3.4 The Panel **noted** that the strategic plan had progressed well and would be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration and approval in May 2023. A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dashboard was being developed using the Theory of Change model. There would be a version of the strategic plan developed for stakeholders which would be published in the June/July 2023. The public facing version would be launched in the autumn.
- 3.5 The Panel **noted** that two new trustees had joined the Board of Trustees.
- 3.6 The Panel **noted** that the social enterprise enabling plan had been developed with three key strands; long-term student staff, long-term partnerships, and procurement.

4. Block Grant conditions

- 4.1 The Panel **received** the Block Grant letter for 2022-23 and supporting documents relating to the Block Grant and assurances required by the University.
- 4.2 The Panel **noted** that Block Grant Letter Assurance Tracker was provided in Appendix 3. The first assurance related to the MoA and Articles and the Code of Practice complying with the Education Act 1994. The MoA and minutes of the MoA Review Panel meetings were shared with Council. The Partnership Agreements would also be shared with Council once drafted. Assurances were also made around financial conduct. The QMSU CEO was working with Karen Kroger, Chief Financial Officer, to create a five-year financial forecast. In relation to QMSU activities and facilities supported through the Block Grant, all were compliant, and assurance given to Council and the

MoA Review Panel biannually. It was suggested that examples of joint clubs and cross-campus activities could be provided in the tracker.

ACTION: Mike Wojcik to add examples of joint clubs and cross-campus activities to the Block Grant tracker.

Maggie Leggett, Director of External Relations, led a working group which was considering how the names of the founding institutions could be celebrated within the scope of the Block Grant condition. There was QMSU representation on the working group. Some clubs included the Barts and The London name in brackets to reference the association.

ACTION: Mike Wojcik to add to the Block Grant tracker a reference to the working group, led by Maggie Leggett, that was considering ways to celebrate the founding institutions while complying with the Block Grant condition.

The fourth assurance concerned being an ethical employer. The QMSU CEO was working with Sophie Harris, Assistant Director of HR (Organisational Effectiveness), on this condition. There were no known issues in this area. It was noted that confirmation of HR's satisfaction with the contracts QMSU offer and that QMSU offer the Living Wage could be added to the tracker. QMSU offered a contract type that was a hybrid between a zero-hours contract and a casual contract. Safeguards were in place to comply with the University's values. The Assistant Director of HR (Organisational Effectiveness) was also working with Charlotte Kendrick, QMSU Deputy Managing Director, to pilot fixed-term contracts. Work was also being done to establish a new type of contact.

ACTION: Mike Wojcik to add a statement around HR's satisfaction with the contracts QMSU offer and a reference to the Living Wage to the Block Grant tracker.

To provide assurance around the Code of Practice complying with the Education Act 1994, the QMSU financial statements and the mid-year management accounts had been presented to the Finance and Investment Committee (FIC). The Returning Officers Report, following the recent QMSU Elections, would be presented to Council in due course. There were no known issues or complaints.

- 4.3 The Panel **noted** that a draft version of the 2023-24 Block Grant Letter had been shared with QMSU CEO.

5. For information: Student Experience review updated – December 2022

- 5.1 The Panel **received** an update written by Robert Hall, Interim Director of Student Services at the time, outlining the status of the Student Services Review in December 2022.
- 5.2 The Panel **noted** that a review plan was being developed with the hope of launching it in Summer 2023. Colleagues from the Directorate of Student Experience would consult with colleagues across the university as part of the process. The Directorate had taken a deep dive into some of the challenges which had helped frame the work already being done and add further substance to other actions. The plan was being considered internally by the Directorate, but would be shared wider in due course.

6. Any other business

6.1 The Panel **noted** that the QMSU CEO was writing a paper on Multi-Faith Centre provision to be shared with the Space Management team. It was suggested that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group (EDISG) could consider the experience of those who might use the space and work towards defining and outlining what the University's ambition should be. The QMSU CEO would work with the Director of Student Experience to take the paper through EDISG. It was noted that there had been some discussion at the Sticky Campus meeting and Emmanuel Nibo, Senior Project Manager, was considering the scope of future provision. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team were also looking at the provision of faith and wellbeing spaces from an EDI perspective. It was noted that there were both wellbeing and community engagement aspects that impacted staff and student satisfaction with the Multi-Faith Centre provision. Initial feedback obtained by QMSU indicated that there were different reasons for dissatisfaction. It would be good to use the feedback when developing the future plans. It would be important to make sure there were strong lines of communication between the EDI team, the Directorate of Estates and Facilities and QMSU while working on Multi-Faith Centre provision.

ACTION: Philippa Lloyd to discuss next steps for Multi-Faith Centre provision with Louise Lester, Director of Human Resources, and Sharon Ellis.

Part 3: Other Matters

7. Meeting dates for 2022-23

- 7.1 It was noted that the Panel would meet on the following dates in 2022-23:
- May/June TBC via Microsoft Teams
 - Wednesday 21st June 2023, 10.30am – 12pm via Microsoft Teams