



Report on the delivery of the QMSU Strategy

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to note the report on the delivery of the QMSU strategy.
Executive Summary:	This report provides an update on the Students' Union's strategic impact at the beginning of the 2026/27 academic year. It introduces a revised format, with key updates highlighted at the start of the report and wider activity organised under the four pillars of the QMSU Strategy: • Authentic Student Voice, • Meaningful Connections, • Resonating with Every Student • Prioritising Students' Mental Health. A further Community A Community & Enablers section highlights work that supports our local community, partnerships and wider organisational impact. In future reports priorities linked to the QMUL 2030 Strategy will also be shared. The report focuses on significant achievements, outcomes, emerging challenges and activity demonstrating progress against our strategic priorities. Key updates include the 2026 National Student Survey results and the impact of Welcome, followed by evidence of increased participation, strengthened student representation, support for student wellbeing and growing community engagement.
Appendices	
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National Student Survey

82.1%

of students said the Students' Union effectively represents their academic interests, exceeding the sector benchmark.



1st
in London
Russell Group
Universities



3rd
overall in
London

Welcome Fair

Our biggest Welcome Fair yet



Over
10,000
attendees



Number 1
in the UK



35
performances
and demonstrations
from student groups



215
student
group stalls



48
partner
brand stalls



4,658
Welcome Packs
delivered to UK
home students



70+

student volunteers
helped with move-in
weekend and Welcome
Week activities

Welcome Events



70+
Welcome
Events



3
sell-out
Boat Balls



70%
of events
alcohol-free or
not alcohol-centred



49,454
tickets processed



500,000+
Instagram
video views



7,152

society memberships
purchased so far
(up from 6,896 last year)



£56,135.99

generated for societies
to invest in activities
for their memberships
(up from £47,633.01)



300+

participants at
Recreational Sport
sessions in Welcome Week



1,738
active gym
members



7,000+
gym visits
in September



1
new gender-neutral
changing facility
in Qmotion



38
charity partners
at our
Volunteering Fair

300+
event
attendees



Student Leader Training

1,065

society leaders
completed
finance training

832

events
training

738

Committee
Roles training

696

health and
safety training



1

new QMSU Co-op
store franchise
opened on campus



44

local children
participated in our
Summer Community
Sports Camps

President's University Council Report

Key Updates

National Student Survey

The National Student Survey (NSS) results, released in July 2026, represent a positive outcome for both the University and the Students' Union.

Of particular significance for the Students' Union is the continued improvement in Question 26, which asks students whether the Students' Union effectively represents students' academic interests. In 2026, **82.1%** of respondents gave a positive response to this question, exceeding the benchmark set by the Office for Students by 5%, this being the highest in the question set. This measure has improved year on year, up from 74% in 2023. We are now the highest-performing Russell Group Students' Union in London, and 3rd amongst all 22 Students' Union's in London.

We are proud of this excellent result that demonstrates the value students place on the Students' Union's representation and student voice work. One of our four strategic pillars is to build an authentic student voice, and the positive NSS result indicates that our strategic projects in this area are having a positive impact. In the academic year 25/26, we had more than 600 Course Reps, and we received almost 8,000 responses to our formal feedback collection activities. Through such initiatives, we aim to ensure that every student has opportunities to give feedback and have a voice.

We are also pleased to see further improvements across other NSS Student Voice themes, which increased for the third consecutive year. In collaboration with colleagues across the university, we have worked to enhance student representation at all academic areas over the last few academic years, and the positive NSS results indicate that our collaborative approach is effective. The results also demonstrate the impact of sustained partnership working between the University and Students' Union to listen and respond to student feedback.

During the NSS survey period, the Students' Union supported the promotion of the NSS to ensure the survey received a high response rate, for example we administered an incentive scheme for over 500 students and trained relevant Course Reps to promote the survey to their peers.

Welcome Week 2026

Welcome Week 2026 delivered another record-breaking start to the year, with the Students' Union playing a lead role in welcoming new and returning students, creating opportunities for connection and belonging, and helping students discover the wider Queen Mary community.

The [Welcome Fairs](#) at Mile End and Whitechapel were our largest Fairs to date, attracting more than 10,000 attendees across three days. Our ticketing provider reported Queen Mary's Welcome Fair as the number one event in the UK for student sign-ups across their 60+ university partners. The Fairs began at Whitechapel across the Garrod Building, The Griff and Blizzard Mews before continuing on Thursday and Friday at the Mile End campus, including the Great Hall, Octagon, Students' Union Hub, Qmotion and three outdoor spaces.

Student groups were at the heart of the Fairs, with a record 171 societies, volunteering groups & student media groups and 42 Sports Clubs at Mile End, alongside 102 groups at Whitechapel. The Fairs also featured [35 performances and demonstrations from student groups](#), including the K-Pop, Musi, Aerospace and Underground Music societies. A new interactive Try It Activity Zone gave students further opportunities to experience activities directly, with groups including Art, Baking, Lego and Table-Top Miniatures societies running hands-on sessions. New layouts were introduced across several spaces to improve navigation and

create a more welcoming environment, receiving positive feedback. The operational impact of the ongoing Godward Square works was significant, but the Fair ran smoothly and maintained a strong student experience due to forward planning for this.

Beyond the Fairs, the Students' Union delivered more than 60 events during the first two weeks of term across all London campuses and at venues elsewhere in the capital. The programme included the following,

- Headline events and attendances; Opening Night (700+), Back to the 00s (750+), Speed Meeting (300+), Commuter Socials (220+), Icebreaker (750+), Matcha events (600+), Postgrad Mixer (300+), Get Active Open Day (300+).
- Other events included live music and comedy nights, International Students' Welcome event, craft and planting workshops, 5K Glow Run, Glow Racket Sports Night, London walking tours and three sold-out Boat Ball events down the Thames with over 1000 attendees on-board.
- At the time of writing, overall attendance for events is still being reviewed, but most events saw attendance up year on year, with 49,454 tickets processed.
- QMSU also hosted a number of School Welcome Events, with 3020 attendees, alongside 500+ students at a Fries consent event at the Wellbeing Fair.



Our Try Something New programme provides another route for students to explore student life, bringing together welcome events, society and club taster sessions and QMSU's alcohol-free programme. The printed guide featured 159 opportunities, with more being added online daily by our student groups. Activity will continue throughout the semester, helping ensure opportunities to make friends, build communities and get involved extend beyond the Welcome period.

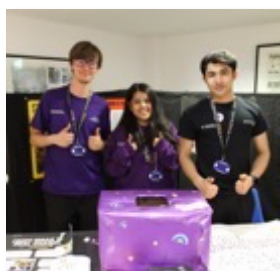
More than 70 student volunteers supported Arrivals Weekend and Welcome activity, helping students move into halls, navigate campus and settle into university life. QMSU also maintained a continuous presence in Library Square through an additional information point, providing visible support and signposting for students.

Communications activity also performed strongly; for example, QMSU content generated more than 500,000 video views on Instagram during September alone, extending the reach of Welcome activity beyond those attending events in person. QMSU also distributed 4658 Welcome Packs to UK home students, packed full of information of how students could make the most of their time here.

Overall, Welcome 2026 combined large-scale activity with a strong focus on connection, belonging and participation, giving students multiple ways to get involved in university life and creating a strong foundation for continued engagement throughout the academic year.

[Watch our QMSU / Student Life Welcome Week Instagram Highlights Video](#)

[Watch our Societies Welcome Fair Instagram Highlights Video](#)



Strategic Pillar 1: Authentic Student Voice

Course Representative Elections

QMSU has launched Course Representative Elections for undergraduate, foundation, degree apprentice and postgraduate taught students following extensive engagement with Schools and Institutes. At the time of writing, **647 students** had nominated themselves for a position and been fully approved by the first-round deadline. The Elections were promoted through induction talks, the Welcome Fair, dedicated drop-in stalls across all London campuses and the Students' Union's communications channels.

The Student Voice team has also worked with the Deputy Vice Principal for Education's team to strengthen arrangements for the year ahead. Improvements include revised training, simplified Student Voice Committee processes and automated monitoring of Course Representative engagement, supporting greater consistency as the University continues to strengthen its focus on student feedback.

www.qmsu.org/course reps

Strengthening Student Representation

The Student Representative Committee has completed induction and training for its 10 elected members and is now entering its second academic year following the Democracy Review. One of the changes introduced through the Review was a more flexible approach to student led engagement on emerging issues. Building on this, we are supporting students to establish the first Student Representative Committee subcommittee, with the proposed Accessibility Forum focusing on improving physical accessibility and access to learning resources and tools.

At the School of Medicine & Dentistry, the newly elected BLSA Board has also begun its term and received training. Its first major initiative was the BL Families event, which supports peer mentoring and helps new medical students build connections with returning students as they transition into university life. Over 300 students have taken part so far.

[View Student Representatives for 2026-27](#)

Society Champions

We have continued to strengthen student voice within our student group communities through the Society Champions programme. The first meeting of the year brought together society committee members to review feedback from the 2025/26 Student Group Survey and share their experiences of running societies. The programme involves student leaders in decisions on development funding and student group improvement projects, helping ensure student groups can contribute directly to future developments and enhancements.

AI Skills, Literacy and Guidance

Riley, Vice President for Science and Engineering, is progressing work on AI skills, literacy and the student experience, building on recommendations from QMSU's 2026 Student Experience Forum (SEF) on generative AI. Riley and a member of the Student Voice team have also joined the AI Advisory Group for the Centre for Excellence in Artificial Intelligence in Education, connecting this work with university priorities including Curriculum 2030 and the development of graduate attributes.

A key focus is improving students' confidence and capability in using AI. 26.6% of Queen Mary students report receiving no AI training, and QMSU is exploring opportunities with our Skills Award programme and Library Services to strengthen provision. There is also a need for greater clarity around acceptable AI use. QMSU research found that uncertainty around University policies and guidance is a significant barrier, with

70.3% of students reporting that they avoid using AI. Improving the visibility and clarity of guidance will therefore be important if students are to develop AI skills confidently and appropriately alongside their studies.

Strategic Pillar 2: Meaningful Connections

Societies Participation

Student engagement with societies has remained strong, with 7,152 society memberships purchased so far this academic year, compared with 6,896 at the same point last year. These membership sales have generated £56,135.99 for societies to invest in activities for their members, an increase from £47,633.01 at the same stage last year. A further £15,500 has also been allocated through the first round of the Societies Development Fund to support growth and enhancement projects across student groups.

www.qmsu.org/clubs-socs

A more welcoming Recreational Sport offer

QMSU Sport has redesigned its Recreational Sports programme to prioritise social connection and belonging, using sport as a low-pressure way for students to meet people and build friendships. During Welcome Week, free sessions, tournaments and events, including the Get Active Open Session and Social Leagues Welcome Tournament, recorded more than 300 attendees. Additionally, pop-up activities across Mile End and Whitechapel engaged many students who may not otherwise have participated in sport. The programme has also introduced women-only sessions and future activity is being designed in collaboration with liberation reps and student groups to ensure opportunities remain accessible and inclusive. Early feedback describes the sessions as friendly, welcoming and beginner friendly.

www.qmsu.org/sports

Strategic Pillar 3: Resonating With Every Student

Sport Employability Academy

The Sport Employability Academy enables students to gain coaching and officiating qualifications through volunteering in sport, helping to develop employability skills alongside practical experience. This year, the programme has been expanded to include new student-led training courses delivered by sports clubs, creating additional leadership opportunities for student volunteers while increasing the range of sporting activities available to students.

www.qmsu.org/sea

Strategic Pillar 4: Prioritising Students' Mental Health

Qmotion Sport & Fitness Centre

Qmotion has experienced a strong start to the 2026/27 academic year, with membership increasing by 738 members since the start of September to reach 1,738 active members. The facility also recorded more than 7,000 gym visits during the month, reflecting strong engagement with physical activity, health and wellbeing at the start of the academic year. Engagement will grow further in October as more students sign-up.

To support this growth, Qmotion has expanded its activity offer with a range of new classes and programmes designed to increase accessibility and encourage participation from a broader range of students. Additional induction and support programmes, including the LearnQ programme, have also been introduced to help students build confidence in accessing fitness facilities and engaging in regular physical activity.

Supporting student wellbeing, inclusion and belonging remains a key priority. A new gender-neutral changing room has been introduced, while partnerships with student groups, Advice and Counselling Services, and liberation campaigns are helping engage students who may not traditionally access sport and fitness services. These initiatives use physical activity as a route to improved wellbeing, social connection and a stronger sense of belonging within the Queen Mary community.

A key challenge remains workforce stability, with the planned departure of two experienced team members creating short-term operational pressures. Recruitment and workforce development activity is underway to maintain service quality and support continued growth throughout the academic year.

www.qmsu.org/qmotion

Club Culture and Welfare

We have introduced mandatory Club Culture training for all sports club committees for the first time, covering inclusive decision making, peer pressure, welfare and the responsibilities of student leaders. Development meetings have also been introduced with every club at the start of the year, enabling earlier identification of potential issues and more proactive support for student-led clubs.

Societies Training and Student Safety

We continue to prioritise training and support for student leaders, with strong engagement across our development programme. So far this year, 1,065 society committee leaders have completed finance training, 832 have completed events training, 738 have completed Committee Roles and the SU training, and 696 have completed health and safety training. Welfare training was launched in September, and we have already recorded 123 students completing it.

The changes made to the training model last year have continued to improve participation, with finance training already exceeding the total number of students trained during the whole of the previous academic year. Strong engagement across all training areas helps ensure student leaders are equipped to deliver safe, well managed and inclusive activities for their members.

Commuter Experience & Cost of Living

Riley, Vice President for Science and Engineering, is exploring the impact of timetabling and commuting on the student experience, including the implications for wellbeing and participation. This work draws on recent Queen Mary and Office for Students research, with journey time and travel cost emerging as key challenges for commuter students.

The work is also considering how commuter students are defined and supported, recognising that broad categories can mask important differences in individual circumstances, including issues linked to widening participation and disadvantage. These findings will inform the next stage of work, including consideration of additional spaces, facilities and other practical support for commuters.

Alongside this, the Students' Union continues to provide food pantries at both Mile End and Whitechapel. We are currently reviewing how this support can be made sustainable in the longer term, including options to part-fund provision through income generated on selected products in QMSU's commercial outlets.

Community & Enablers

Centre for Volunteering and Outreach

We launched the new Centre for Volunteering and Outreach in September, bringing together community volunteering partners, student volunteers and members of the Queen Mary community. The launch recognised the contribution of student volunteers while setting out plans to expand volunteering and outreach opportunities, enabling more students to develop skills through social impact projects that benefit local communities.

[Read the article here for more details](#)



Volunteering Fair

The annual Volunteering Fair welcomed 38 charity partners from across London and attracted more than 300 students, over 100 more attendees than the previous September. The event connected students with a wide range of community and volunteering opportunities and received highly positive feedback from participating organisations, reflecting the strength of our partnerships across the voluntary sector.

www.qmsu.org/volunteering

Summer Sports Camp

In August, we delivered a two-week, low-cost sports camp for local children and children of Queen Mary staff. The programme provided affordable holiday activities for local families, supported staff with childcare during the summer period and created paid employment opportunities for student coaches. 44 children participated, and parent feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of respondents agreeing that the camp offered good value for money and an average recommendation score of 9.2 out of 10.

The Shield at Charterhouse Square re-opens

The Shield space at Charterhouse Square re-opened in time for Arrivals Weekend, after an extended closure period of around 18 months, marking an important step in strengthening the student experience at Charterhouse Square. Our aim is for The Shield to become the community heart of Charterhouse Square, a welcoming space built around connection, belonging and student life, and the first place students think of when they need somewhere to meet friends, study, eat, work or relax.

While food and drink remain an important part of the offer, the wider purpose of The Shield is to create a genuine community space where students can meet others, build connections and spend time on campus outside of the classroom. The venue will also provide a flexible space for student-led events and activities, while offering academics and professional services staff an informal setting for meetings, gatherings and events.

The re-opening forms part of a wider enhancement of the Charterhouse Square offer, with the new Dance & Fitness Studio adjacent to The Shield recently opened and in use by students and student groups.



New Student Village store

Students told us they wanted more choice, better value, longer opening hours and a better overall shopping experience within the campus. In response, the former Village Shop has now become the QMSU Co-op bringing a significantly enhanced retail offer to the Mile End campus. The new store provides hundreds of additional products, including a significantly enhanced fresh food and food-to-go range, improved Meal Deal and dinner options and expanded free-from selection. It also offers greater choice across international, vegetarian and vegan ranges,

directly reflecting ongoing feedback from our diverse community.

Affordability has been a key focus as part of our Cost-of-Living work. The QMSU Co-op introduces Aldi Price Match on a range of everyday essentials, alongside a much greater range of offers and promotions at high-street prices, designed to provide better value for students. Longer opening hours have also been introduced in direct response to student feedback collected by the Students' Union and Residential Life.

The store itself has had a full refurbishment, creating a brighter, more modern and enjoyable space at the heart of the Student Village and Mile End campus. Importantly, while the shop may have changed, the purpose of the shop has not. It remains QMSU-branded and continues to be managed by the Students' Union, with our staff and student staff teams providing the service. Our not-for-profit ethos also remains central, with income generated through the store reinvested into QMSU, helping us improve activities, services and the wider Queen Mary experience.



Vishwajeet Singh, QMSU President

1st October 2026

View our full 2030 Strategy at www.qmsu.org/strategy and find out more about our impact at www.qmsu.org/impact