



Students' Union President Report

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| <b>Outcome requested:</b>                                       | <p>QMUL Council is asked to <b>note</b> the Students' Union President Report and <b>consider</b> the information and requests under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junior Doctors and Dentists</li> <li>• Multi-Faith Provision</li> <li>• #CutTheCosts</li> <li>• Additional student members on QMUL Council</li> <li>• QMSE Recruitment Panels</li> </ul> |
| <b>Executive Summary:</b>                                       | <p>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.</p>  |
| <b>QMUL Strategy:</b>   | <p>Effective governance supports the achievement of all strategic aims.</p>   |
| <b>Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:</b> | <p>Education Act 1994 and related Code of Practice;<br/>QMUL Ordinance C5</p>   |
| <b>Strategic Risks:</b>   | <p>2. High quality student experience throughout the student life cycle</p>   |
| <b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>                              | <p>N/A</p>  |
| <b>Subject to prior and onward consideration by:</b>            | <p>N/A</p>  |
| <b>Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA</b>                        | <p>No</p>   |
| <b>Timing:</b>  | <p>The President reports on the activities of QMSU at each meeting of Council.</p> <p>The issues relating to Junior Doctors and Dentists, #CutTheCosts and Multi-Faith Provision are considered to be urgent.</p>   |
| <b>Author:</b>  | <p>Carolina Mantzalos, President 2015/16</p>  |
| <b>Date:</b>  | <p>20 October 2015</p>  |
| <b>Senior Management/External Sponsor</b>                       | <p>N/A</p>  |

# President's Report

QMUL Council, Tuesday 27 October 2015

## Junior Doctors and Dentists

On the 13 October 2015 Student Council passed policy to support junior doctors and dentists. Since then the Union has released a statement which can be found at <http://www.qmsu.org/news/article/6001/QMSU-Supports-Junior-Doctors-amp-Dentists> to express our opposition in the strongest terms to the efforts to impose unfair and unsafe contracts on junior doctors and dentists working for the NHS.

The Union is also taking part in a demonstration on Saturday 17 October and will continue to actively campaign against these proposed changes. The Union would like to encourage QMUL to take a similar stance and actively lobby the Secretary of State for Health to reconsider the imposition of these contracts.

## Multi-Faith Provision

The Union is continuing to receive significant pressure from Islamic students to provide a space for Friday Prayer. The support from the Vice Principal Student Experience and Teaching and Learning has been very positive in finding a solution, however there has been a delay and the space cannot be provided until the end of October due to the requirement to need a technician. The Union would like QMUL to find a permanent solution for the start of semester B and for future years to prevent this ongoing issue which is leading to student dissatisfaction.

## #CutTheCosts

The current government plans to scrap maintenance grants for full-time Higher Education students in England and replace them with a loans-based system – a move which will end non-repayable state support offered to hundreds of thousands of students from lower income households every year and saddle poorer students with yet more debt, should they aspire to study.

QMUL has a large number of students who receive maintenance grants which has been key in supporting them coming to university, specifically in London. The Union is taking part in the NUS #CutTheCosts campaign which is lobbying MPs to oppose these proposed changes. As President I have been in contact with local MPs and have met with Rushanara Ali MP to gain her support.

The Union would like QMUL Council and QMSE to take the same stance as the Union and use its contacts to further the aims of this campaign.

## Estates

There have been ongoing issues with some of the projects on campus which students have not been well enough informed about. Examples of this include the work done on Geography Square, the library roof and smoking shelters. These are all projects that were supposed to be completed over the summer and the smoking shelters are yet to be installed.

There are ongoing projects such as the BLSA Building, the creation of radio studio in the SU Hub, the introduction of gender neutral changing rooms and toilets along with a variety of maintenance issues which continue to cause problems. A key example of this is a lack of a working lift when the welcome fair was taking place which meant we were not able to provide disabled access.

The Union recognises that the Estates Department is very stretched at the moment which may be the cause of many of these issues, however we do feel some of these concerns require immediate attention.

## Additional student members on QMUL Council

Many other universities across the country have more than one ex-officio place on their equivalent of QMUL Council for student members. QMUL Council is a large body and makes major decisions that impact on the lives of students and it is the view of the Union that there should be an increase in the number of student

members. The Union would like QMUL Council to consider making the position of Deputy President an ex-officio member.

## QMSE Recruitment Panels

The Union has a really positive working relationship with the Principal and the other members of the Queen Mary Senior Executive. QMSE makes decisions every week that can have a dramatic impact on the student experience and the Union wants to ensure the members of QMSE remain student focused. Recently there has been a high turnover in the members of QMSE and the Union has not always been allowed to play a key role in selecting all the new members. The Union would like QMSE and QMUL Council to ensure that a member of the Union Executive Committee always forms part of the panel for recruitment of new members to QMSE. This should also be considered for other student focused positions such as the Director of Student Services.

## Highlights

### Elephant in the Room

In the UK, 1 in 4 people will experience mental health problems each year, with young people being increasingly affected. The Vice President Welfare, Miranda Black, and I have been working with the QMBL Mental Health Awareness Society on an 'Elephant in the Room' campaign, bringing mental health issues to the Mile End and Whitechapel campus with a twist. The campaign is called Elephant in the Room because mental health is an important issue that is recognised but people don't want to talk about. This then creates stigma around the topic as people make assumptions about what mental health means without sharing their experiences or listening to others.

### A New Look for [www.QMSU.org](http://www.QMSU.org)

In August 2015, as part of pre-arrivals planning, the Union launched a redesigned website. The contemporary site features responsive design, reformatted news and events, prominence of the officers, large images, and a clearer layout for ease of finding information. Analytic reports are showing a greater increase in both users and sessions. As part of the new web design, the Union launched a new student email template allowing for a more visually appealing presentation of information, as well as open rates to be tracked.

### Welcome Fair

On September 23rd and 24th the Union hosted the Welcome Fair. Over the two days the Hub, Hive and Ground Cafe saw a record 10,000+ attendees visiting the over 200 stalls. Space was at a premium this year without the sports hall or a marquee and there were some issues with crowding that were alleviated with queuing and crowd control. To date memberships are already up over last year at this time and we will be assessing the students and stallholders experience at the fair.

### Raise and Give (RAG)

The Raise & Give Relaunch project is progressing well with new branding released over the Welcome period. Over 550 students have signed-up so far to Mile End RAG alone, with more sign-ups still coming in – far above any previous figures.

From 8<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October RAG hosted their Annual Nominated Charity Vote. RAG want students to have their say and help choose the charities who will receive thousands of pounds this year. Six charities were shortlisted and more information can be found [www.qmsu.org/rag/charityvote](http://www.qmsu.org/rag/charityvote).

The RAG Adopt a Charity scheme has also launched. The Union are encouraging Student Groups (Societies, Volunteering, Sports Clubs etc), Halls Reps and groups of students to adopt a charity for the year. Those who sign-up to the initiative will be offered extensive support with fundraising for their chosen charities, training and skills development opportunities and will be entered onto our leader boards with termly prizes up for grabs.

### Students' Union Crew and Barts & The London Help Squad

This year over 75 students volunteered their time and participated in our two teams that ensured new students had the best possible welcome here at QMUL and the Union. Their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm throughout Arrivals Weekend and the Welcome period made a real difference to those arriving onto campus; helping them to settle in, find their way, stay safe and make their experience the best it could possibly be. Countless bags of luggage were carried and hundreds of enquiries were answered across the 3 main campuses.

**QM Skills Award**

So far 161 students have registered, 70 of which are logging their activity hours and booking for training sessions (there are 17 to choose from during Semester 1) [www.qmsu.org/employability/qmskills](http://www.qmsu.org/employability/qmskills) QM Skills Award helps students recognise, strengthen and market the employability skills that they are developing through their dedication to the Union.

**The Big Hello**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 209 student groups across Societies, Sports, Volunteering and Student Media were trained on how to run and lead their groups effectively.

**Carolina Mantzalos**, President 2015/16