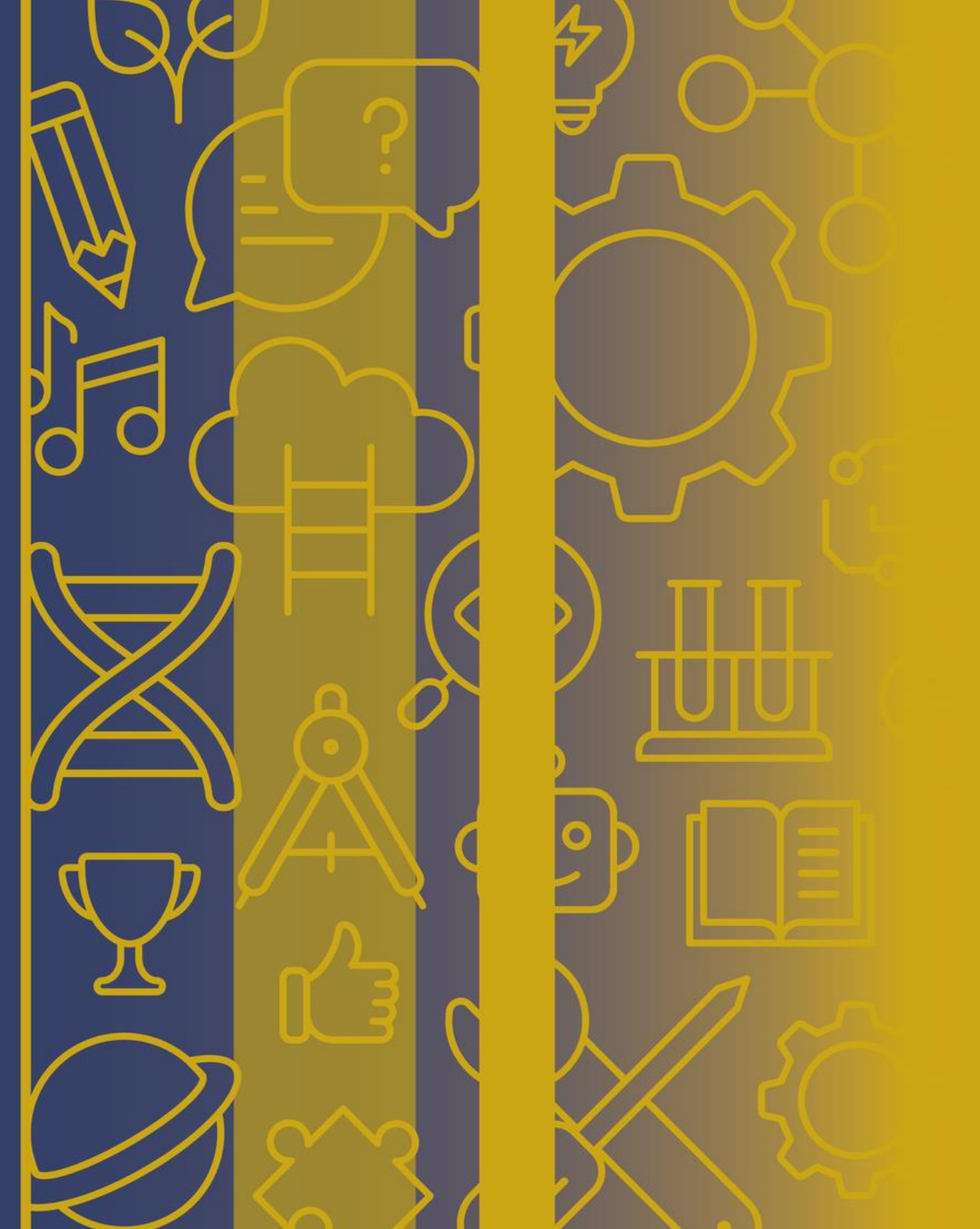


Who experiences Experiential Learning? Enhancing Inclusion in Experiential Education

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Experiential learning (EL) is either embedded, or currently being embedded, in most programmes across QMUL in line with the Active Curriculum for Excellence approach, the Student Experience Enabling Plan and the new Employability and Skills Framework. However, we continue to know very little about the hidden barriers to participation in EL and attendant issues of inclusion.

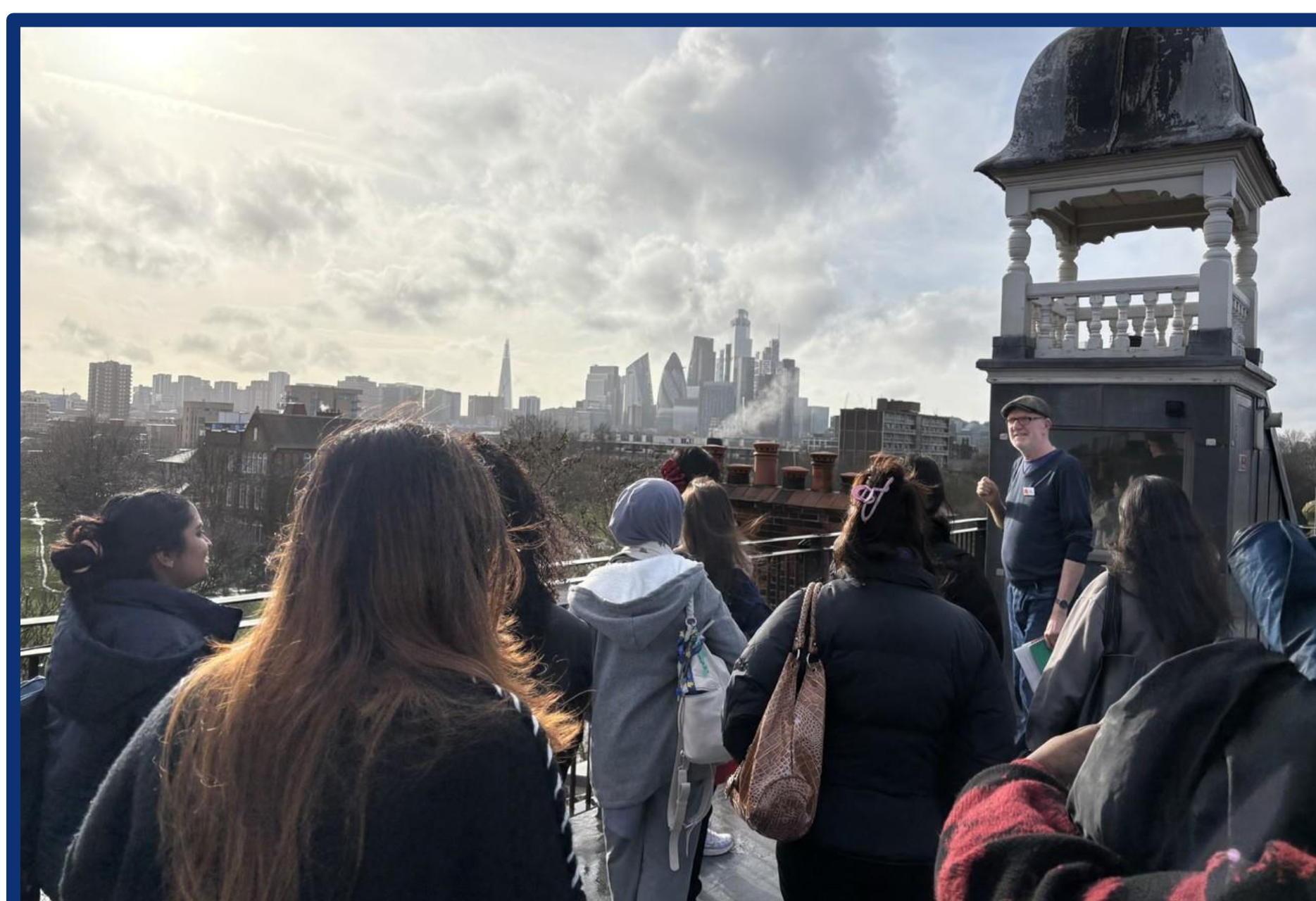
This project is investigating the barriers, exclusions and inequities that students and educators experience in experiential learning.

Between December 2025 and March 2026, we distributed two online surveys across multiple QMUL Schools. The surveys remain open; this analysis includes responses received up to 31 March 2026. The staff survey (21 responses) asked what helps or hinders inclusive EL. The student survey (33 responses) asked about participation, barriers, and what students need. Students who had not taken part were asked why. We analysed numerical responses using simple statistics and analysed written responses by identifying common themes.

- Staff are willing but unsupported: the most cited barriers are lack of time, funding, training, and difficulties finding partners. Only three staff agreed that QMUL provides adequate institutional support.
- Among students, 73% have participated in EL, but 63% faced barriers, most commonly anxiety, travel, and lack of time.
- Among non-participants, 78% are very or extremely interested in future EL, citing lack of awareness, time, opportunities, and confidence.
- A satisfaction paradox emerged: 88% rated their experience as very or completely inclusive, yet qualitative data revealed significant exclusion. Students felt invisible, undervalued, or unwelcome, including international students reporting suspected discrimination based on nationality.

- Staff ranked toolkit priorities as funding guidance, followed by a partner directory, case studies, an auditing framework, templates, and lesson plans.
- Students want better communication, flexibility, clearer expectations, no prior experience requirements, and support for invisible disabilities.

The project is co-producing an Inclusive Experiential Learning Toolkit and creating an Experiential Learning Network. This poster presents preliminary findings shaping the toolkit, which aligns QMUL's Strategy 2030 ambition to be the most inclusive university with the drive towards experiential learning in ACE. Any educators who are interested in experiential learning and shaping future outputs please feel free to get in touch.



Students participating in the experiential learning programme qHeritage with local partner organisation Oxford House