



QMSU President's report

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to consider the QMSU President's report.
Executive Summary:	The report is an update from the start of the academic year on activity within the Students' Union. It includes the following sections: Welcome Week Key Updates Student Voice Sport and Physical Activity Student Opportunities General
Appendices	
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Senior Management/External Sponsor	

Presidents University Council Report

Welcome 2025

Welcome Fair Events 2025

The 2025 [Welcome Fairs](#) at Mile End and Whitechapel were our best yet, bringing together more than 11,000 attendees across three action-packed days. The Fairs started at Whitechapel, with this year's Fair spanning multiple spaces in the Garrod Building including the Old Library and The Griff, and outdoors on the Blizzard Mews. The atmosphere with electric, with over 90 of our student groups showcasing opportunities and welcoming new members.

At Mile End, the energy continued the Thursday and Friday across the Great Hall, Students' Union Hub, Qmotion Sports Hall and outdoor spaces. Due to a record number of student group sign-ups (182) and a need to also increase attendee capacity we also utilised The Octagon for the first time, as this is no longer used for enrolment activities. We were pleased to welcome several members of the University Senior Leadership Team, including the Principal, who joined students in exploring over 200 stalls from our Clubs and Societies, University services and external partners. Alongside this were several give-it-a-go activities and two performance and demonstration areas offering a full schedule across the two days. Despite the significant construction works on campus – most notably the current closure of Godward Square, normally a key festival zone as part of the event – the Fair ran very smoothly and received excellent feedback from both attendees and stallholders.

The Welcome Fair is fully delivered internally by the Students' Union as part of existing staff roles alongside their normal responsibilities. Due to sponsorship secured as part of the event, all event costs such as equipment hire, security and stewarding are covered by this – delivering an event that is not only memorable and enjoyable but also ensures excellent value for money. We are very grateful to our colleagues in Estates & Facilities for their vital support with logistics and set-up, and to our dedicated staff team and student volunteers whose hard work made the Welcome Fairs possible. Together, we created a memorable and impactful start to the academic year for thousands of new and returning students.

See our Welcome 2025 highlights section on Instagram @QMSU for some photos and videos that give a flavour of the Fair and wider Welcome Week.

Welcome Crew and Help Squad

Over 80 student volunteers gave up their time during Arrivals Weekend and Welcome Week to ensure new students felt supported and at home across our London campuses.

Easily recognisable in their standout Here to Help uniforms, provided by QMSU, the Welcome Crew were a friendly and reassuring presence throughout the week. From assisting with move-in and carrying luggage, to signposting opportunities and helping students navigate our campuses, they played a vital role in shaping a positive first impression of Queen Mary.

Their enthusiasm, energy and commitment set the tone for a welcoming, inclusive start to the year. We are hugely grateful for the time and effort they gave, and we look forward to celebrating their contribution at our upcoming Thank You Event. Across the week, we received brilliant feedback from everyone involved: *'I really loved this volunteering opportunity, I had so much fun and met so many new people' 'It was really nice to see campus busy and everyone having a good time. This was my first time volunteering, and I will definitely be partaking again'.*

Welcome Events

We delivered a packed and diverse programme of events for Welcome Week and Week 1, with over 7,500 paid tickets snapped up by new students for centrally delivered QMSU events, excluding the Welcome Fair and student group tickets. In addition, thousands more students took part in free, just turn up, non-ticketed events and activities across the first two weeks, with the programme ensuring there was something for

everyone. Nearly all comparable events saw increased attendance year-on-year and many sold out completely, despite additional capacity being added wherever possible.

Events spanned the three central London campuses, as well as various off-campus locations across London. Highlights included our speed meeting sessions, commuter socials, on-campus club nights, live music and arts evenings, international students welcome, craft & plant workshops, 5K Glow Night Run, walking tours of central London and East London and our ever popular, sold out Boat Ball events on the River Thames – increased from 2 to 3 boats this year. It was also encouraging to see the new Postgraduate Boat Ball sell out, alongside over 450 students attending our Postgraduate Mixer event – a key demographic group we are seeking to boost engagement with in line with our QMSU 2030 Strategy. Late-night club event attendance was generally up on the previous year, bucking some trends we have seen in recent years, whilst demand for alcohol-free and daytime activities grew again, reflecting evolving student preferences and indicating our events programme is flexing to these and resonating with students.

Our Try Something New series further enhanced our central events programme. This programme brings together welcome events, meet & greets and taster sessions led by Clubs & Societies, alongside alcohol-free, one-off activities curated by us. This programme will continue to run throughout Semester One, ensuring opportunities for students to connect and get involved with us continue well beyond Welcome Week.

On the international student support front, Hassam, Vice President Liberation, International & Postgraduates, Samarth, Vice President Humanities and Social Sciences and Diya, President, took part in two virtual Pre-Departure sessions hosted by Global Engagement. This was an initiative Diya started in her time as International Representative last year, and she is pleased to see it now embedded into the wider university teams. In addition, we also organised a dedicated International Students Social and participated in the university-led International Student Late Arrivals Fair.

Welcome Communications & Marketing

We introduced the Students' Union to new students through our Welcome communications campaign. Launching on A-Level Results Day and running through to the end of September, the campaign was fully segmented again for this year. All UK home undergraduate and postgraduate students received a QMSU Welcome Pack in the post. This was supplemented by a series of email communications split by undergraduate/postgraduate taught/postgraduate research, campus location, home/international and associates. The segmentation resulted in very high open rates, averaging at over 80% and click-through rates higher than 30%. These are above the sector and industry averages. There was also a strong social media campaign fronted by our student reps and Exec and dedicated online webpages to welcome new students. Meanwhile, our collaborative videos with the University Marketing team filmed during Welcome Week generated over 30,000 views per video – and will provide valuable content for future student recruitment campaigns too.

Our Communications and Marketing team also worked in partnership with the university to help deliver the wider University Welcome Week programme, including having a continuous presence in Library Square throughout Arrivals Weekend and Welcome Week with a QMSU Information Point, supporting the Wellbeing Fair hosted by QMSU in the Students' Union Hub and by working with several schools to host social activities and welcome events across our spaces including offering food and drink, games and craft sessions and other icebreaker activities.

www.qmsu.org/welcome

Key Updates

Democracy Review Implementation

Following the Democracy Review that was approved by Student Council in Spring 2025, we have been working on implementing the recommendations from the review before the beginning of the new academic year. The implementation has required significant updates to our bye-laws, which have now been approved by our Board of Trustees.

Over the summer, we have undertaken additional student consultation among the Course Representatives to help us determine what the new Student Representative roles should be, and we have now confirmed what the 10 new roles are. The roles cover all aspects of the student experience – including education, welfare, employability, the campus experience and events – and have been designed to ensure that we have strong student representation from a diverse range of students.

We have also been working on the plans for our democratic meetings – the new Student Representative Committee and the updated All Student Meetings – to ensure these meetings provide effective and engaging ways for students to take part in democratic decision making. The first Student Representative Committee is scheduled to take place in late October, followed by the first All Student Meeting on November 17th.

KPI Reporting

Our annual KPI reporting process for 2024/25 has been completed, and we have seen excellent progress against most of the KPIs, including the proportion of students that feel part of a community supported by the Students' Union and the proportion of students that feel the Students' Union listens to them.

The only KPI that hasn't met the annual target is the KPI relating to the proportion of students that report that feeling stressed and overwhelmed is one of their biggest concerns. The qualitative data from the KPI survey also highlighted that the cost-of-living crisis continues to have a significant negative impact on many students' ability to engage fully with their studies and extracurricular opportunities. In response to these findings, we have launched two Strategic Focus Groups to identify opportunities to address these challenges.

Over the last academic year, we have undertaken significant work to improve the data quality for KPI reporting, in particular data about engagement patterns. This work means that our data quality has improved significantly, and we now have data that enables us to track engagement patterns more accurately and design tailored interventions to improve our reach among underrepresented groups.

www.qmsu.org/strategy

Russell Group Students' Unions Conference

We were proud to host the Russell Group Students' Union's (RGSU) Annual Summer Residential Conference in August, welcoming around 80 student leaders and 16 Chief Executive's from across the UK's leading universities and Students' Unions. Hosted in the Garrod Building, Old Library and The Griff, the residential offered a valuable space for collaboration, knowledge sharing and discussion on the key challenges and opportunities facing students in higher education. It was also a fantastic opportunity to showcase Queen Mary and our local community, whilst highlighting our role in shaping the collective voice of the 700,000 Russell Group students RGSU represents. We led on several sessions including presenting a workshop focussing on good practice through partnerships and working together, where we were joined by senior colleagues from Queen Mary. The national priorities for the year were also agreed: Improving Student Finance & Funding, International Student Rights and Social Justice, Climate Change and Ethical Investments. As QMSU President, Diya is co-leading the third priority group with a particular focus on Freedom of Speech, Ethical Investments and Supporting Victims of Gender-Based Violence. The event was a resounding success, strengthening connections across the network and driving forward ideas for the year ahead for positive change across the sector.

Societies

Our Student Engagement Team began the new academic year by delivering training to our student group committees, elements were split between online and in person as to enable them to build a community of leaders and meet the team. The training received excellent feedback *"Many thanks once again for your support and for putting together such an insightful training session today. [We] both found it very helpful and informative, and we look forward to working under your guidance in the coming year."*

The Welcome Fairs were a huge success with 141 Societies attending at Mile End along with three Media Outlets and four Volunteering groups. 70 Societies attended the Whitechapel fair, along with one Media Outlet and 10 Volunteering Groups. We also received great feedback from the day, for example: *"Thank you so much for all your support during the Welcome Fair! We really appreciate it, I also wanted to let you all know that we have received 81 members in less than 48hrs, which is a great achievement knowing that we have*

only just joined the students' union! It means so much for SU to give us the chance to be a part of this success."

We are starting the year with 225 societies and an additional 33 groups in Malta.

We have also welcomed our new Reward and Recognition Intern who will support us focusing on how we can improve recognition of our student groups.

To support our student groups deliver events to a wide range of people despite monetary constraints and rising costs in London, we receive four free bookings of the Great Hall and four free bookings of the Octagon from the university per academic year. Student Groups were able to apply through a simple but competitive application form and four spaces have now been allocated for Semester 1. Finding space is always difficult on campus, and being able to use these iconic venues free of venue charge makes a huge difference for our groups. This will enable groups to reach a wider audience as well as keep costs down for attendees. The approved events are a mix of performances and large-scale academic events that would otherwise not be able to be accommodated in our onsite spaces.

Club Sport Development and Training

Committee training took place at the start of September with 187 attendances recorded across four training sessions, focusing on BUCS (British Universities & Colleges Sport) administration, Welfare and Finance. Our partnership with the Student Life team enhanced Welfare Training delivery, providing students with comprehensive understanding of available services and appropriate signposting pathways. 89% of respondents felt more informed following the session, with an average rating of 7.7 out of 10.

Finance training was restructured this year, introducing a foundational Sway document and quiz to establish baseline understanding while serving as an ongoing reference resource. This innovative approach enabled deeper exploration of finance impacts on clubs and committees during live sessions. The enhanced format achieved exceptional results, with 100% of respondents agreeing they felt more informed, found the training engaging, and received coverage of desired topics, resulting in an outstanding average rating of 9.4 out of 10.

Welcome Week demonstrated the vibrancy and diversity of our sporting community, with 35 clubs participating at Whitechapel and 40 at Mile End. The addition of 16 sport demonstrations showcased the extensive variety of opportunities available while directly engaging prospective members. Following Welcome Week, 53 clubs committed to conducting trials and taster sessions, with feedback indicating highly positive outcomes in recruitment and engagement.

Volunteering

The new academic year has started with a new volunteering group being accepted at Mile End bringing current volunteering groups to 12 in total. Memberships have started very strong as well, reaching 319 at the time of writing.

Over 250 students attended our Volunteering Fair to meet our brilliant partner organisations, of which 35 joined us for the day. This has been the highest turnout in several years. We are currently recruiting for volunteers for our first Give Volunteering A Go event of the year, RBC Race for the kids, and have already received over 30 applications. Due to the successful recruitment, we have expanded numbers to support the organisation even more.

Alongside this, we have completed several major updates to our Volunteering website, including a refreshed homepage, improved user journey, improved discoverability of opportunities, better search functionality and enhanced student volunteer profile tools – such as improved volunteering hours logging, automatic award notifications and much more. We are now working towards phase two of the improvements.

www.qmsu.org/volunteering

Liberation

We have begun recruiting seven students as paid Community Organisers for the various liberation campaigns. The first student is already in post for our first campaign, [Black History Month](#), running throughout October. The Community Organiser, along with students, Exec and our staff team have planned several

events, including a 5k run featuring landmark stops reflecting resilience, pride and the spirit of the Black community, waist beading workshop, movie night, society events with debates and a cultural showcase, with the month finishing with a cultural food sharing event. We have also begun to plan Islamic Heritage Month and Disability History Month.

Student Voice

Executive Officer Handover and Training

Our new Executive Officers started their induction programme in July, before officially taking office on 1st August. During the induction period, the Officers receive comprehensive training about their role, the Students' Union, QMUL and the higher education sector. They also receive training on a wide range of transferable skills to help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in their role.

Cost of Living

The cost of living continues to be a crucial issue for students. We have been continuing our financial support efforts, giving out over 60 supermarket vouchers for students this year, alongside continuing to support students through short-term welfare loans. We continue to work within the Students' Union and University to look at the support available, finding areas we can improve the situation further for students.

Eshwinder, Vice President Welfare, is focusing on tuition fee deadlines and penalties and prepared a benchmarking report comparing Queen Mary with other Russell Group universities in London (e.g., UCL, LSE, KCL, Imperial). The report shows that other institutions often use more flexible approaches such as, proportionate late charges, and formal "time-to-pay" arrangements, while Queen Mary currently applies a £150 flat penalty.

Goes Continental Campaign

The team have been supporting Maria, Vice President Barts and The London, with The "Goes Continental" campaign, which is a cross-campus cultural enrichment project designed to spotlight global perspectives through liberation, discovery, sport, culture, and art. Each month, a different continent will be explored through curated audio, visual, online content and specialty drinks lists, creating accessible points of engagement for students across campuses. The design, content collection, and playlist development have been completed, and the campaign is scheduled to launch on 1 October in line with Black History Month, ensuring an impactful and relevant launch.

Wellbeing Events & Support Initiatives

Eshwinder is leading on a new programme of wellbeing events throughout the year to improve student mental health and sense of community.

In September, he hosted an event in partnership with Advice & Counselling as part of the Driving Change project for students with caring responsibilities. This created a safe and supportive space for carers to discuss challenges and learn about available support.

Future wellbeing events will focus on the cost of living and academic pressures, ensuring students feel heard and supported. The programme will also include a Women's only well-being walk led by Diya and Maria.

Consent Training

We have been working closely with the University Student Life team to ensure compliance with E6, which requires all institutions to implement more robust procedures and prevention measures around sexual misconduct and harassment. As part of this, over 8000 flyers were printed and included in all welcome bags and we filmed a video for social media that was released during welcome for the Consent Education Campaign. Alongside this, an initiative was run at the Wellbeing Fair which saw students receive a free box of fries provided by Drapers in exchange for completing the consent training. This was linked to the FRIES model of consent (Freely Given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, and Specific). Completion rates to date

are significantly higher than any previous year and we will continue to support the university in ensuring further students complete the module.

Sport and Physical Activity

Sports Employability Academy

Our [Sports Employability Academy](#) has continued to expand its reach into the local community and diversify its workforce development offer to students. Over the Summer, the programme has successfully secured a £6,000 Grant from the Centre for Public Engagement to continue to grow and develop our sports-based community outreach and workforce development projects. This is also being supported by further £1,000 grants that we have secured from both Barclays and BUCS.

We will be providing free Sports and Physical Activity provisions delivered by our students, to increase participation from traditionally underactive groups within the borough of Tower Hamlets. (e.g. children and young people). These free sessions will be used to educate participants on the benefits of sports and physical activity, as well as collecting and measuring qualitative feedback on the effects of these provisions on participants (or participants' parents where applicable) mental, social, and physical health and wellbeing.

Students involved in this project will also be professionally upskilled with sports-based qualifications, ensuring they are more employable and are suitably prepared for life post-graduation. The positive impact of this programme on students can be seen within this testimonial, *"Being part of this programme has hugely enriched my student experience by giving me opportunities to lead, volunteer, and connect with diverse communities. It has strengthened my confidence, teamwork, and communication skills, which I know will support my future career in medicine. Most importantly, it has allowed me to give back to the student community while building a strong foundation for my employability".*

Performance Sport

A new structure to our [Focus Team programme](#) has been launched for this academic year, including new processes and services to remove as many barriers to participation in sports and physical activity as possible. This year, Strength and Conditioning sessions will be free to attend, relieving student-athletes of further financial pressures whilst studying at Queen Mary and living in London. As well as this, all Focus Teams will be provided with a "performance bursary" to be spent on performance support mechanisms, giving student-led clubs more autonomy in club-wide game models and performance philosophies.

[Talented Athlete](#) recruitment is now underway. We will continue to provide Dual-Career support and academic flexibility opportunities to our athletes, in line with our TASS (Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme) Agreement with the University. Our partnership with UEL Sportsdock has also been renewed, this will see all athletes on the programme receive heavily discounted Sports Therapy Treatment throughout the year at UEL's Sports Facilities. In addition, we will be setting up a new Sports Medicine Clinic, in conjunction with the School of Sports Medicine on our Mile End Campus. This will see our Talented Athletes receive free Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation, and Performance Testing from experienced staff and placement students – allowing peers to network and create sense of community, leading to a more positive student experience and increased presence on campus.

Community Outreach Programs

Supported by the Sport England Movement Fund, a comprehensive two-week multi-sport camp was delivered to children aged 8-11 years, maximising utilisation of Queen Mary's University sports facilities over the summer break. The diverse timetable featured badminton, table tennis, dodgeball, pickleball and numerous other activities, with sessions running from 9am-5pm, combining indoor and outdoor skill development with engaging recreational activities designed to introduce new sports and enhance fundamental movement skills.

The programme attracted 45 participants, with 78% representing children from Tower Hamlets or with parents/guardians from the borough, demonstrating significant commitment to supporting the local community. Parent feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% agreement that children enjoyed the camp and appreciated the variety of sports and activities provided. The programme delivered substantial

wellbeing impacts, with 75% of respondents reporting improvements in children's mental health and social skills, 83.3% noting physical health improvements, and crucially, 83.3% expressing their child's desire to continue with sport beyond the camp.

A particularly meaningful success involved a child who initially experienced significant anxiety and wished to leave but ultimately embraced the full four-day experience. Parent feedback highlighted the programme's impact: *'This was more than summer childcare - it was a huge boost for my son's confidence. I really appreciated their kind and nurturing approach, and the way they ensured all the children were kind and respectful towards each other. I would highly recommend this camp'*. Four student coaches were recruited to deliver sessions across both weeks, with funding enabling completion of Emergency First Aid at Work and Paediatric First Aid courses, equipping them with essential emergency response capabilities. Two additional student volunteers supported daily operations, while all staff and volunteers received UK Coaching premium memberships, providing free access to professional development courses including 'Duty to Care' and 'How to Plan, Coach and Reflect'.

Get Active Programme

The [Get Active programme](#) has launched with a comprehensive weekly timetable featuring 14 pay-and-play sessions accessible to both students and staff. Session offerings include badminton, pickleball, yoga and volleyball, with all activities priced at £2 or less to maximize accessibility and encourage broad participation. The programme creates opportunities for socialising and sport exploration while supporting mental health and wellbeing through physical activity engagement.

Get Active utilises 13 newly recruited and trained student Sport Activators who facilitate sessions while serving as participation ambassadors. This student-centered approach encourages authentic feedback conversations and programme insights that inform future timetable development and planning to better meet student needs.

A strategic partnership with Club Sport has encouraged club involvement in session delivery, implementing a whole-sport approach that enables skill development and creates clear progression pathways for continued engagement. This collaborative initiative provides clubs with funding opportunities and employability academy participation, contributing to the development of a more extensive and experienced student workforce while enhancing overall programme sustainability and impact.

Student Opportunities

Alumni Engagement, Student Voice & Employment

Earlier this month, we announced our first Career Catalyst event featuring alumni from the Big Four firms led by Samarth. Within just a week, over 250 students signed up. The level of interest reflects the appetite students have for direct access to alumni working in competitive industries. Beyond the immediate success of sign-ups, the event demonstrates the value of combining professional insight with peer-driven networking opportunities, strengthening our employability offer while building a culture of aspiration across the student body.

Alongside this, work is underway on a student survey exploring whether elective outcomes influence elective choices. The aim is to provide a clearer evidence base on how students make academic decisions, and whether grade distribution, perceived difficulty or career alignment play a role. The findings will not only inform Students' Union advocacy but also support the University in designing electives that are both academically rigorous and aligned with student priorities. This project ultimately seeks to give students greater voice in shaping their academic experience, ensuring choices are driven by opportunity and not uncertainty.

Tushar, Vice-President Science & Engineering, has also collaborated with many of our societies and held several career events to date. Many of the speakers at the events were Queen Mary Alumni. These events aimed to connect students with industry leading employers and to also increase students' confidence when applying for jobs.

Sustainability

This year's Reuse Fair was a great success. Working closely in partnership with Queen Mary Residences and Estates & Facilities, we reached 400 students and diverted over one tonne of items from landfill. This is a great initiative making sure that we support our students when and how they need it.

The funding for our Sustainability staff member has ceased, so we have scaled down our offering and recruited a new student Sustainability Intern that has joined us to focus on sustainable volunteering opportunities within the Students' Union, such as the Big Green Canal Clean and Climate Action week. The next Big Canal Clean is planned for the 29th October 2025.

Student Media

All four of our Student Media Outlets attended our welcome fair with great successes, raising their memberships to 50. The annual Media Law, Libel & Defamation training has been booked in as well to ensure all groups are supported and ready for the year ahead.

General

QMSU Perks – Loyalty App

Our new QMSU Perks loyalty app has launched in the App Store and Google Play Store, with the student launch due to take place imminently. The aim of the app is to enhance student engagement with QMSU outlets and services, and to reward participation in our charitable activities – such as student group membership or voting in our Elections. The platform will offer students digital rewards, exclusive discount in QMSU outlets and tailored promotions – aiming to increase footfall, improve student value for money and enhance the on-campus student experience. Testing has been completed and now we will be focussing on the rollout of the app.

UMixD App

We have been working closely with a recent Queen Mary graduate receiving support from QM Careers & Enterprise, to develop and pilot the new UMixD app that is being launched with our support. The app helps us deliver many aspects of our Strategic Plan including supporting students to develop connections with others, collaboration and community-building. Designed as a peer-to-peer networking and event discovery tool, it enables students to find like-minded peers, join interest groups, follow their Clubs and Societies and engage in QMSU and university activities. Onboarding has recently been completed with our Societies, and the initial pilot is underway with students registering during the Welcome Fair. Insights are being gathered to inform the next stage of development and wider rollout.

Data & GDPR Improvements

Significant progress has been made recently in strengthening our data protection procedures across QMSU. We have updated our Data and Privacy page to provide students with clearer, more accessible information on how their data is processed, alongside introducing new online forms for Subject Access Request and Data Breach reporting. Internal processes around data handling, consent management and retention periods are also being reviewed, to ensure we continue to comply with GPDR requirements, and that best practice is embedded across all aspects of QMSU's operations.

Diya Mary Selastin
QMSU President
30th September 2025