



Senate

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Winter Graduation and Academic Year dates 2026/27 and 2027/28</b>
<b>Outcome requested</b>	<p><b><i>Erratum notice</i></b></p> <p>Senate is asked to:</p> <p><b>Agree</b> to a change in the academic year dates <b>for 2026/27 only</b> in order that we can deliver Winter Graduation on campus in that year.</p> <p>We will bring the matter of 2027/28 to a future Senate.</p>
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	<p>Further information for Senate:</p> <p>The academic year dates are ratified by Senate up to 7 years in advance. The dates for the academic years 2026/27 and 2027/28 do not allow for the delivery of Winter Graduation on the Mile End campus.</p> <p>Theoretically, we could resolve these challenges by cancelling or moving online a significant amount of the teaching in the last week of Semester 1, moving the venue for January exams (either online or off campus) or delivering Graduation off campus. However, each of these mitigations presents significant challenges to education delivery and student experience and also attracts significant additional costs. (Approximately £1m in the case of off-campus delivery of Graduation.)</p> <p>Therefore, we believe the most expedient way to remove the problem is by changing the dates of these academic years. However, at least in the case of 2026/27, we would need to formally adopt this change within Semester 1 of 2025/26 in order to minimise the impacts on applicants and related operations.</p>
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	n/a

<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	n/a
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	<p>Strategic risks apply in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alumni engagement</li> <li>2. Financial viability</li> <li>3. Student experience</li> </ol> <p>The paper aligns with our strategies in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alumni engagement</li> <li>2. Student experience</li> </ol>
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	SET approved the proposal on 30 September 2025. Ahead of SET approval, we consulted with the Director of Registry Services.
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<b>Sponsor</b>	Maggie Leggett, Director of External Relations

## 1. Academic Year dates and the challenge for Winter Graduation

### 1.1. Academic Year dates 2026/27 and 2027/28

Queen Mary’s academic year dates are currently confirmed until 2030/31. In all cases apart from 2026/27 and 2027/28, there is sufficient space between the end of Semester 1 teaching and Christmas, and between the New Year and January exams to deliver Winter Graduations.

However, as the following table shows, for the years 2026/27 and 2027/28, there is currently insufficient time to deliver Winter Graduation on campus between these moments.<sup>1</sup>

	December														January															
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
24/25			w	w						w	w					w	w						w	w	*	*	*			
25/26		w	w						w	w						w	w					w	w						w	w
26/27	w	w						w	w						w	w						w	w						w	w
27/28	w						w	w						w	w						w	w						w	w	
28/29					w	w						w	w						w	w								w	w	
29/30				w	w						w	w						w	w						w	w				
30/31			w	w					w	w							w	w					w	w						

Key:

- Blue = Semester 1 teaching
- Red = Graduation delivery
- Green = University closure days (predicted)
- Purple = Exams
- w = weekends
- \* = arranged alternative exam venue for these days

<sup>1</sup> Currently, Winter Graduation requires 6 days of ceremony delivery with up to 3 days for set up and exit either side.



**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (1) Agree to a change in the academic year dates for 2026/27 in order that we can deliver Winter Graduation on campus in that year.

ENDS