



Senate

Paper Title	Matters arising and Chair's action
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to note the detail of Chair's actions and matters arising since the last meeting of Senate, not covered as a separate item on the agenda.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>1. Assessment Handbook – Marking policy; late submission and marking turnarounds</p> <p>Following the discussion on the Assessment Handbook 2025-26 at the Senate meeting held on 12 June 2025, it was approved subject to two amendments to the Marking Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Consideration of a specific addition to the policy on marking turnaround times, to address large, end of module assessments;ii. An amendment to the late submission of assessment policy to introduce a late submission window and penalty for online exams. <p>The Education Quality and Standards Board (EQSB) convened in July 2025 and agreed the revised proposals.</p> <p>a. Email circulation for member's comments</p> <p>In August, Senate members were given a two week period to provide any comments by email in relation to the amendments.</p> <p>b. Chair's action request</p> <p>Comments were compiled and shared with the Chair, for consideration for approval.</p> <p>The full details of the Chair's action and the Marking Policy are provided for members' information in Appendix A. Approval was provided by the Chair on 15 August 2025.</p> <p>2. Decision by email - Queen Mary Medal</p> <p>On 17 June 2025, Senate members were asked to recommend to Council for approval the awarding of the Queen Mary Medal to Kate McFarlane. The number of approvals was 27, with the quorum being 24. No comments were made.</p> <p>The full details of the recommendation by email can be found in Appendix B.</p> <p>3. Decision by email – Reasonable Adjustments Policy</p>

	<p>On 28 July 2025, Senate members were asked, by way of email circulation, to approve the Reasonable Adjustments Policy which had been approved by the Policy Scrutiny Group and the Education Quality and Standards Board. The policy was put before Senate as a new policy, produced in the wake of the Equality and Human Rights Commissions’ note to the sector in June 2025. The number of approvals was 27, with the quorum being 24. There was 1 rejection.</p> <p>The full details of the approval by email can be found in Appendix C.</p> <p>4. Chair’s action request – Professional Capability Committee (PCC) membership update</p> <p>Following the updated and approved Fitness to Practise and Professional Capability Policy, the PCC’s membership had been revised. The revised membership was shared with the Chair for consideration for approval.</p> <p>The full details of the Chair’s action is provided for members’ information in Appendix D. Approval was provided by the Chair on 29 September 2025.</p>
Questions for Senate to consider	N/A
Regulatory/statutory reference points	N/A
Strategy and risk	N/A
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	N/A
Authors	Jane Pallant, Director of Governance and Legal Services
Sponsor	N/A

Senate Chair's action request: Marking Policy amendments

The Senate, in June 2025, approved the Assessment Handbook subject to revised proposals for marking turnaround times and late submission of assessment (specifically online exams). These amendments would be considered by Chair's action following an opportunity for Senate members to comment. The proposals were circulated on 23 July 2025; members were given two weeks in which to respond, and a reminder email was sent halfway through the period.

Six members sent comments, including at least one from each Faculty. These have been shared in full in a separate file and are summarised and discussed below.

Marking turnaround times

Five of the six respondents were happy with the text without any amendments, and several of them explicitly noted this was a positive amendment that addressed the Senate's comments.

The sixth respondent expressed several concerns, all relating to students' expectations for results release and suggesting that the policy would require schools to release exam and other marks piecemeal, creating confusion for students. That is not the case.

First, this is not a feedback policy or a policy for students about results release – this is a marking policy that sets out expectations for markers.

Second, the policy does say that marking (for those assessment types) will need to be completed in time for either the exam board or the next official results release date (and as directed by the Head of School). The respondent references exam boards (where the turnaround for staff is shorter) but not results release, stating: "The current wording fails to address the issues raised at Senate – all it does is say that EXM or EXN provisional marks must be released earlier than 15 working days if the relevant SEB happens earlier." This is not the case – the full sentence in the policy directly addresses that point.

The feedback was discussed with colleagues in DGLS, who felt – in common with the other Senate respondents – that the text was clear and was in any case not a results release policy.

Notwithstanding this, a version of the text suggested by the respondent has been added to point 1.2 to further clarify the approach. This does not change the meaning or intent of the previous proposal.

Recommendation: approve the policy on marking turnaround times with the amendment to 1.2.

Late submission (of online exams)

No specific concerns were raised over the proposed new late submission policy for online exams.

Two respondents made constructive suggestions for minor clarifications to other parts of the policy, to make more explicit (a) that penalty deductions applied to the element of assessment and not to the module as a whole, and (b) that the point at which a mark of zero was applied for late assessments for which feedback had already been released to the class was the point at which the feedback was issued.

Recommendation: approve the late submission policy including the two amendments outlined above (which clarify the text without affecting intention or meaning).

Other points

Members commented on a number of points that were not directly part of the consultation.

- One member suggested that the late submission policy for non-exam assessments (which has not been changed) should be amended to reduce the permitted window of late submission from seven days to one day. They noted that students with good and valid reasons for late submission under the extenuating circumstances policy would be unaffected, but that the policy for those students who submitted late without good reason was overgenerous and overcomplex for students and staff to operate. DGLS could undertake additional benchmarking in 2025-26 if there is an appetite to reconsider this policy
- A second member advocated for further clarity on time for upload of online exams *within* the exam period vs the ten-minute late submission window that has been introduced. This work is planned and will be undertaken under EQSB's authority with a view to standardising multiple exam processes. This member also provided additional comment and context on the intersection of late work penalties with universities' responsibilities to students with specific health conditions, noting the difficulty of balancing duties that could sometimes seem to conflict with each other.
- A third member provided comment on a point raised by another Senate member at the meeting in June, relating to students who submitted incorrect versions of assessments and did not address this until after the submission deadline had passed. The respondent noted that there is already technical facility in QMplus through which module organisers could support students in ensuring that they had uploaded the correct file. It is not currently proposed that Queen Mary alter its policy – to do so would conflict with the 'fit to sit/submit' principles that underpin our assessment policies – and the detail of this additional functionality is helpful in supporting the continued application of the existing policy.

Chair of Senate's comments and approval/decision

Appendix A

- Based on the recommendations above, and consideration of the feedback, I am happy to approve the policy.

Colin Bailey

15th August 2025.

Marking turnaround times

1. Marking must be completed within a defined period:
 - i. for all assessments other than those specified in point ii, below, marking must be completed to allow for provisional marks to be returned to students within 15 working days of the assessment date or deadline. "Working days" are defined as weekdays, excluding institutional closure periods and bank holidays. Where a student makes an accepted late submission, Queen Mary will make a best effort approach to return provisional marks within 15 working days of the submission or as soon as possible thereafter.
 - ii. the following must be marked in time to process the marks for *either* the scheduled release of provisional results *or* the examination board, whichever is sooner and as defined by the Head of School/Institute Director:
 - a. summative assessments taking place in designated examination periods; and,
 - b. projects with no immediate feed-forward point; and,
 - c. dissertations.

Feedback and provisional marks for these assessment types will be released after the end of the examination period.

2. Heads of School/Institute Directors are responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy. A Head of School/Institute Director may agree a turnaround time longer than 15 days as a reasonable adjustment within the scope of the Equality Act (2010); this should not normally exceed 20 working days. Reasons for a longer turnaround should be recorded by the Head of School/Institute Director for future review.
3. The Head of School or Institute Director must agree and record any exceptions where it is not possible - for good reason, in the view of the Head of School or Institute Director - to return marks within the defined period; in such cases, students should be advised of the delay and of updated expected return dates.

Late submission of assessments

Assessments submitted after the published deadline will be marked as late and will receive a penalty, unless a student has approved extenuating circumstances. The penalty depends on the type of assessment:

1. Examinations

- a. Late submission is not possible for in-person written exams or for online exams where answers are uploaded automatically in real time. In these cases, the work will be marked as it stands at the exam's scheduled end time.
- b. Online exams that require students to manually upload their work include time for uploading within the exam duration. After the scheduled end time there is a ten-minute period during which submissions are still accepted, but they will be marked as late and receive a penalty of 10% of the total marks available (eg ten marks deducted from a total of 100). After that point, the submission portal closes, and no further uploads are allowed; the assessment will be recorded as a non-submission and given a mark of zero.

2. Other assessments

- a. For assessments other than exams, students may submit up to seven calendar days after the deadline but a penalty of 5% of the total marks available will be applied to the assessment for each 24-hour period (or part of it) that the work is late (eg five marks deducted each day from a total of 100). After seven calendar days the assessment will be recorded as a non-submission and given a mark of zero.
- b. In some cases, assessments may no longer be accepted once feedback has been given to the class. If feedback is released before the seven-day limit, any submissions made after the feedback point will also receive a mark of zero. Students will be informed in advance if this applies.

3. General provisions

- a. A student may receive a passing mark on an assessment but still fail the module due to late penalties. If they are eligible for a resit, the original (pre-penalty) mark will be used for the resit attempt. This does not apply where the student is not eligible for a resit.
- b. Extensions may be granted by the school or institute if a student has valid extenuating circumstances. Students must apply before the deadline and include supporting evidence. Extensions cannot go beyond the next meeting of the relevant Subject Examination Board. If more time is needed, the Board may instead consider offering a first sit.
- c. If a late submission is due to approved extenuating circumstances, the late submission penalty may be removed. For this to be considered, a student must submit a formal claim with supporting evidence.



Recommendation for the awarding of the Queen Mary Medal

Outcome requested	Senate is asked to recommend to Council for approval the awarding of the Queen Mary Medal to Kate McFarlane.
Executive summary	<p>Senate is being asked to recommend to Council for approval the awarding of the Queen Mary Medal to Kate McFarlane.</p> <p>The Queen Mary Medal may be awarded to any employee of the University on or following retirement who has made an exceptional, sustained contribution to the University beyond the normal requirements of their role.</p> <p>Kate has played a vital role in student well-being for MBBS students for nearly 30 years. Kate is an employee of Queen Mary with sustained contribution (pre-dating the mergers back to when she was just based at the London Hospital Medical College) in an exceptional manner (being one of the last single-person departments, holding the key to the school's finances). She was instrumental during the COVID-19 pandemic, when international electives and flights were cancelled, at guaranteeing that students would not have to return their grants and have one less thing to worry about. She has met, listened to, known and understood our students so that she has touched the lives of many of them in a way that they will never forget. The nomination is supported by the faculty leadership in FMD and several supportive statements from students have been received. Kate is due to retire summer 2025.</p> <p>The nomination is being recommended by the Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee.</p> <p>Senate members are reminded of the need for confidentiality until the nomination has been approved and the nominee is formally invited to receive her award by the Principal's Office.</p>
Regulatory/statutory reference points and links to QMUL strategy	QMUL Ordinance 11
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	<p>Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Working Group 06 May 2025</p> <p>Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee by email circulation May 2025</p> <p>Senate and Council by email circulation</p>
Timing	Part of the governance process for Queen Mary honorary awards. The nomination has been expedited so that it can be conferred at graduation in July.
Authors	Dr Nadine Lewycky, Head of Secretariat

Sponsor (if applicable)	Jonathan Morgan, Chief Governance Officer and University Secretary
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Queen Mary Medal Nomination

Please refer to the criteria for the award of the Queen Mary Medal before completing the nomination form. All staff and students of Queen Mary are invited to submit a nomination.

Nominations are strictly confidential and should not be mentioned in any circumstances to the nominees.

Please return the completed form via email to the Council Secretariat councilsecretariat@qmul.ac.uk.

1. Details of the nominee

Title:	Ms
Forename(s):	Kate
Surname:	McFarlane
Postal address:	2.43 Garrod Building, Turner Street, Whitechapel, London E1 2AD
Email address:	k.mcfarlane@qmul.ac.uk
Telephone number:	+44 20 7882 2124

2. Details of other distinctions (if any):

3. Supporting statement (up to 400 words highlighting how the nominee's contribution to Queen Mary fits the award criteria).

Student Support and Guidance is a crucial task in universities, especially in medicine and dentistry, where courses are long and the stresses of undergraduate life are enhanced in so many ways. Academic support is important but there is special place for other staff who are close to the student body and who understand and cater for their needs.

Since I became Assistant Warden (later Dean) for Student Affairs in 1998, Kate McFarlane has played a vital role in the well-being of our students because she has fulfilled this pastoral role.

It is true that she has performed her task as a Finance and Bursaries Manager with great dedication and skill and she has been key to the successful allocation and distribution of many funds, including those available to Barts and The London Alumni Association. She will be very hard to replace.

It has also been my personal observation that, for nearly 30 years, she has met, listened to, known and understood our students so that she has touched the lives of many of them in a way that they will never forget.

It is this contribution to the life and health of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry and its student body which richly deserves the award of the College Medal, the proposal for which I wholeheartedly support.

4. Nomination submitted by:

Title:	Professor MA FRCP FRCPATH
Forename(s):	Brian
Surname:	Colvin

Department/School/ Faculty	WHRI, FMD
Email address:	b.t.colvin@qmul.ac.uk
Telephone number:	
Relationship to nominee:	Dean for Student Affairs 1998-2008 Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Queen Mary University of London Vice President Barts and The London Alumni Association (BATLAA)

Date of nomination:	30 th April 2025
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Further information regarding the process for awarding the Queen Mary Medal can be found [here](#).

Student testimonial

Even though most students emailing Kate are in the worst financial predicaments of their life, she doesn't let it get her down, and instead you feel from the start that everything is going to be okay. When I had to move back home to look after my family this year, it was Kate who steered me towards bursaries and scholarships so that I could afford to do so. When I emailed saying I may not be able to afford an elective, she worked with me to make an application so good that it could not be rejected by the trust I was applying to.

What really put it into perspective though - I wasn't unique. So many students have their own stories of interacting with Kate and the finance office, and how their elective was saved, or they were able to take time away from work for a personal emergency, or just helping them through a tricky Cost-of-Living situation. Kate has worked with students in any predicament and does it with a smile on her face.

Once again, because I really can't stress it enough. Without Kate helping me find financial assistance, I would have dropped out of Medicine this year.

Nominations for Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal:
Guidance and Eligibility Criteria

Queen Mary bestows honorary awards to outstanding individuals who are distinguished in their chosen career or field. Recipients of Honorary Degrees and Fellowships should exemplify Queen Mary values, and provide an inspiring example to students, especially graduates. An important role of Honorary Degree holders and Fellows is to actively promote Queen Mary's reputation and profile on a national and international level, thereby contributing to the university's mission.

Queen Mary awards the following honours to distinguished persons:

- Honorary Degrees
- Fellowships
- Queen Mary Medal

Honorary Degrees

The categories of persons who are normally considered for the award of Honorary Degrees include:

- i. Outstanding individuals who have distinguished themselves in their chosen field, are of national or international standing, and have the potential and the interest to actively promote Queen Mary;
- ii. Individuals who have given distinguished service to the local community of Queen Mary and/or wider London;
- iii. Individuals who have given distinguished service or brought distinction to Queen Mary;
- iv. Former students of Queen Mary who have risen to the heights of their chosen career or field of service.

While it is expected that most Honorary Graduates will fall into one or more of these criteria, they are not exclusive. An existing personal connection with Queen Mary and/or its local community is not required. These awards may be used to help establish valuable relationships as much as celebrate existing ones.

These awards seek to build the profile and reputation of Queen Mary, to engage with individuals who can enrich the lives of students and staff, and to honour those who have made a significant contribution to their chosen field and have achieved national or international standing. It is expected that Honorary Graduates will enter into a mutually-beneficial relationship with Queen Mary and actively contribute to the life of the Queen Mary community. Nominators are asked to describe the ways in which the nominee and Queen Mary might work together to these ends.

An honorary degree will not normally be conferred on a person who has already been awarded an honorary degree of the University of London or Queen Mary, on a serving Chair of the governing body of a college of the University of London, or on a person currently employed by Queen Mary. A serving politician, in the UK or other country, will not normally be eligible.

An honorary degree will not, save in exceptional circumstances, be conferred *in absentia*.

Fellowships of Queen Mary University of London

Fellowships of Queen Mary University of London are conferred on persons of distinction or persons who have, in the opinion of Council and Senate, rendered significant service to Queen Mary or to the community, or with a demonstrable connection or affiliation to Queen Mary. A Fellowship will not be conferred on a person currently employed by Queen Mary or a member of Council.

'Persons of distinction' includes individuals who have become distinguished in their chosen field and are of national or international standing, and who have the potential and interest to engage with Queen Mary to enrich the lives of staff and students. It is expected that the Fellow will enter into a mutually-beneficial relationship with Queen Mary and actively contribute to the life of the Queen Mary community. Nominators are asked to describe the ways in which the nominee and Queen Mary might work together to these ends.

Queen Mary Medal

The Queen Mary Medal may be awarded on or following retirement to any employee of Queen Mary, who in the opinion of Council has made an exceptional, sustained contribution to Queen Mary. For this purpose, Council will judge an exceptional and sustained contribution as being more than long service alone, and will look for performance and commitment beyond the normal requirements of the post held by the individual.

Nomination rights of Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal

All members of the Queen Mary community, including students, staff, alumni and Council members are invited to submit nominations for Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal.

Procedures for awarding Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal

Nominations for Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal go through Queen Mary's governance processes. Nominations are reviewed by an advisory panel before being considered by the Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee. The Committee's recommendations are considered by Senate and approved by Council.

Successful nominees will be invited by the President and Principal to receive their awards at the next graduation ceremonies. Nominators will also be expected to help prepare the oration should the nomination be successful.

Nominations for Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal are **strictly confidential** and nominations should not be mentioned in any circumstances to the nominees.

A list of previous recipients of Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and the Queen Mary Medal can be found [here](#).

ORDINANCE 11

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORARY DEGREES AND THE QUEEN MARY MEDAL

1. The Council may confer and revoke Fellowships and Honorary Degrees of the University, and issue the Queen Mary Medal, on the proposal or recommendation of the Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee and after consulting the Senate. The Honorary Degrees that may be conferred are:
 - (a) Doctor of Laws honoris causa (LLD);
 - (b) Doctor of Letters honoris causa (DLitt);
 - (c) Doctor of Sciences honoris causa (DSc).
2. Fellows of the University shall be persons of distinction, or persons who have in the opinion of the Council rendered significant service to the University or to the community, or with a demonstrable connection or affiliation to the University. A Fellowship shall not be conferred on a current employee of the University or member of the Council.
3. Honorary Degrees shall be reserved for persons of significant standing who have distinguished themselves in their chosen field, or for their service, and whose recognition with an Honorary Degree brings distinction to the University. An Honorary Degree shall not be conferred on a current employee of the University or member of the Council, a serving politician or a person who has previously received an Honorary Degree of the University or the University of London.
4. The Queen Mary Medal may be issued on or following retirement to any employee of the University who, in the opinion of the Council, has made an exceptional, sustained contribution to the University beyond long service alone and fulfilment of the normal requirements of their role.
5. Council may revoke a Fellowship or Honorary Degree if evidence comes to light that the recipient has at any time:
 - (a) been convicted of a criminal offence;
 - (b) been censured or struck off by a relevant regulatory or professional body;
 - (c) displayed any behaviour that is deemed to be inconsistent with the values of the University or to bring the University into disrepute.
6. Concerns or complaints about Fellows and recipients of Honorary Degrees shall be raised with the Chair of Council or the Secretary to Council. In the case of a concern or complaint containing one or more of the grounds listed in paragraph 5 of this Ordinance, the Secretary to Council shall ask the Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee to consider the concern or complaint and make a recommendation to the Council. Where a recommendation is made to revoke a Fellowship or Honorary Degree, the subject of the concern or complaint shall be invited to comment on the reasons for the recommendation before Council is asked to decide.

Approved by the Council on 11 July 2024.



Senate

Paper Title	Reasonable Adjustment in Academic Assessment Policy
Outcome requested	Senate are asked to approve this policy. Owing to the need to have this in place for the start of the 2025/2026 academic year, we are asking for this to be approved electronically rather than wait until the next Senate meeting in October.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	This is a new policy, produced in the wake of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's note to the sector in June 2024 following the outcome of the Abrahart vs University of Bristol case. It explains how requests for reasonable adjustments in academic assessment are made and how our Schools and Institutes should react to applications for alternative assessments, including those made at very short notice. A separate student-facing guide will be published online once the policy has been agreed.
Questions for Senate to consider	Do Senate have any concerns or queries about this policy?
Regulatory/statutory reference points	The policy will help the university with its obligations under the Equality Act (2010). It will support our latest Access Participation Plan, which stated we would be fully engaged with the Disabled Student Commitment (Queen Mary are one of the first Russell Group institutions to sign up). The policy will also help us in the significant work associated with the University Mental Health Charter.
Strategy and risk	This policy underscores our overarching strategic aim of being the most inclusive university of its kind, as per the 2030 strategy.
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	The policy has been through the Policy Scrutiny Group and the Education Quality Standards Board.
Authors	Simon Jarvis, Head of Student Wellbeing, Student Experience
Sponsor	Jonathan Morgan, Chief Governance Officer & University Secretary

Reasonable Adjustments in Academic Assessment Policy

1. Introduction and values

- 1.1. Queen Mary University of London ('QMUL, 'the University', 'our') has an ambition to be 'the most inclusive university of its kind' and is committed to delivering deliver an outstanding, inclusive, world-class education and student experience.
- 1.2. Our values include being inclusive (for example, nurturing talented students, regardless of their background), ambitious (including aiming for excellence in everything we do and seeking out the best available evidence to inform sustainable, timely, robust decisions) and ethical (including acting with integrity and implementing good practice). These values should inform our actions in line with this policy.
- 1.3. Students with disabilities can apply for reasonable adjustments, although both the Equality Act (2010) and the Disabled Student Commitment (which Queen Mary has committed to as part of our 2025 Access Participation Plan) make it clear that this is an anticipatory duty for all Higher Education Providers.
- 1.4. The following is taken from the Disabled Student Commitment and explains that the duty to make reasonable adjustments is made up of three requirements:

“The three requirements relate to changing how things are done, changing the built environment to avoid such a substantial disadvantage and providing auxiliary aids and services.”
- 1.5. This policy is aimed at covering requests for reasonable adjustments that relate to academic assessments.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy sets out how students can apply for reasonable adjustments related to academic assessments and how the University considers these applications.

3. Legislative context

- 3.1. The Equality Act (2010) requires Higher Education Institutions to anticipate the needs of disabled students and to implement support, including the provision of ‘reasonable adjustments’, for students in advance of their arrival at university.
- 3.2. More recently, AdvanceHE’s work on the Disabled Student Commitment calls upon providers to ensure that “Inclusive practice is embedded in curriculum design. This will help to ensure that **anticipatory reasonable adjustments** are provided with consistency and certainty in the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment.”¹
- 3.3. The Equality Human Rights Commission advice note to the Higher Education sector, published in July 2024, has very clear advice about reasonable adjustment policies:
- 3.4. “Amend reasonable adjustments policies to ensure that staff and students are aware that reasonable adjustments must be made even where a student has not engaged with the Disability Service if there is an urgent or severe need to do so or the circumstances of the case demand it.
- 3.5. Amend reasonable adjustment policies to set out the process to follow in such a situation. This should include who, if anyone, needs to sign off a reasonable adjustment, and the process for communicating that such an adjustment has been made, including to the student.”²

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy is applicable to students with a disability and their requests for reasonable adjustments that relate to academic assessments.
- 4.2. The definition of disability is a “physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ (i.e. longer than 12 months) negative effect on... normal day-to-day activities”.³

5. Principles

- 5.1. The Disabled Student Commitment recommends that methods of assessment, “will rarely, if ever, amount to a competence standard. They will therefore rarely, if ever, be outside the duty to make reasonable adjustments. A competence standard

¹ The Disabled Student Commitment, published by the Disabled Students’ Commission on 24/04/2023

² Advice note for the higher education sector from the legal case of University of Bristol vs Abrahart, 10/07/2024

³ <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

is an academic, medical or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability.

- 5.2. The key questions for deciding if part of an assessment is a competence standard are:
 - a) What skill, competence, level of knowledge or ability is being measured?
 - b) What standards are being applied to decide whether a student has met the required level of that competence or ability?
 - c) What parts of the assessment are the method by which the student's ability to meet the standards at (b) is tested?"
- 5.3. Staff in Schools and Institutes should utilise the resources and expertise present in the Queen Mary Academy (QMA) for advice about making curricula, including assessment, as inclusive as possible. However, even with this advice and guidance is it likely that some students will still make requests for reasonable adjustments that relate to academic assessment.
- 5.4. The Office for Students Conditions of Registration Condition B4 requires Higher Education Providers to ensure that assessments are "valid and reliable" and that students are assessed effectively.
- 5.5. Some programmes are subject to external guidance that means certain learning outcomes are essential. These learning outcomes must be met in the way prescribed by this external guidance.
- 5.6. Students are encouraged to apply for other reasonable adjustments, including specialist support, directly through the Disability and Dyslexia Service, which is part of the Student Experience directorate.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. The university's Disability and Dyslexia Service is the principal vehicle for communicating details of disabled students' support, including any reasonable adjustments relating to academic assessment. As such, it is their responsibility to proactively offer support to students with disabilities and send on relevant information to Schools, Institutes and Professional Services departments. These will typically take the form of 'Student Support 'Summary' documents being produced by Disability Advisers that are sent to relevant contacts in each School / Institute, as well as being housed on MySIS on specific reports available to relevant staff in real time.
- 6.2. It is the responsibility of staff based in our Schools and Institutes to ensure that recommended adjustments relating to teaching, learning and assessment are

implemented. The responsibility lies with both student support contacts (usually known as Student Support Officers), as well as module organisers, programme leads and other academic staff responsible for delivering programmes.

In instances where requests for reasonable adjustments for assessment arrive directly with staff in our Schools and Institutes those staff should consider those requests as depicted in 8.6 – 8.9 ('Direct applications for academic reasonable adjustments to Schools and Institutes').

- 6.3. Professional Services staff based in central departments such as Registry Services also have a responsibility to ensure that recommended adjustments are implemented, e.g. staff responsible for the administration and deliver of our on-campus examinations, or Library Services staff handling applications for concessions.

7. Applying for reasonable adjustments in academic assessment

- 7.1. Queen Mary students are assessed through a variety of methods, both summative and formative. These assessments include examinations and coursework assessments, as well as group work, presentations, vivas and projects.

Examination Access Arrangements

- 7.2. Queen Mary students who wish to apply for what are known at the university as Examination Access Arrangements should do this via the Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS). Students can apply in person, or online via a specific 'task' on MySIS. Appropriate supporting documentation will be requested as part of the application process; the university is cognisant of the advice following the Abrahart case in terms of it having "constructive" knowledge of a student's disability and having a responsibility to implement adjustments on the basis of this knowledge.
- 7.3. More information on how to apply for these arrangements, are available on Queen Mary's [Examination Access Arrangements](#) page.
- 7.4. Where the DDS agrees on Examination Access Arrangements, it must notify the student, the student's school/institute and the Directorate of Registry Services (for in-person exams at the end of each semester).
- 7.5. Information on which students on a module or programme have agreed Examination Access Arrangements in place is available to relevant colleagues through a specific report on MySIS.
- 7.6. Examples of access arrangements include additional time in examinations, provision of assistive technology, separate seating arrangements, and consideration of conditions such as dyslexia and dyspraxia in the marking process via the provision of a 'Cover Note'.

- 7.7. If applications are made beyond the advertised deadline for end of semester exams they must be processed by the DDS and the university will make its best efforts to implement agreed arrangements. However, it may not always be possible to implement them in time for the next examination period. In this event, students should consider making an application for Extenuating Circumstances if they feel that they cannot take the assessment without the requested adjustments in place.

Alternative Assessments

- 7.8. All students should consider the full array of assessment methods – *both coursework and examinations* - on their chosen programme before enrolling. This information should be accessible to students through course handbooks and other literature, such as the webpages of the relevant School, Institute or Department, as available.
- 7.9. In the event that it is not possible to make an adjustment to an existing form of assessment – this would typically be after a consultative process involving the student, the School or Institute, and the Disability and Dyslexia Service - an alternative assessment request may be made by a student who feels that they are unable to undertake an academic assessment as a consequence of their disability or long-term condition.
- 7.10. The Office for Students Conditions of Registration Condition B4 requires Higher Education Providers to ensure that assessments are “valid and reliable” and that students are assessed effectively.
- 7.11. Some programmes are subject to external guidance that means certain learning outcomes are essential, i.e. the outcomes have to be met in the way prescribed. The General Medical Council’s professional capabilities for medical students would be one example ⁴. The Equality Act 2010 defines a competence standard as:
- ‘ An academic, medical or other standard applied for the purposes of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability.’⁵
- 7.12. AdvanceHE’s guidance on competence standards and reasonable adjustments says that while “HEIs are not required to make reasonable adjustments to competence standards themselves... they are required to make adjustments to the ways that competence standards are assessed so that disabled students are not disadvantaged in demonstrating their competence by the assessment method.”
- 7.13. As such, the final decision on whether an alternative assessment is reasonable, i.e. that it assesses the core competencies associated with a particular area of specialism, will always lay with the School or Institute. This ensures that any alternative assessment is credible and accurately assesses relevant competence

⁴ https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/outcomes-for-graduates-2020_pdf-84622587.pdf

⁵ <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/student-recruitment-retention-and-attainment/inclusive-learning-and-teaching/competence-standards-and-reasonable-adjustments>

standards.

8. Process for students requesting an alternative assessment

- 8.1. Students who would like to request an alternative assessment are advised to make an appointment with the Disability and Dyslexia Service to discuss why they feel unable to take the assessment as it is presented by the School or Institute, and what sort of alternative they would like to be considered. They can also make this request in writing; the Disability and Dyslexia Service have a specific form that students can use, but students can also make the request in writing ahead of their appointment.
- 8.2. The relevant member of staff in the DDS must then make contact with the School or Institute, typically including the following people:
 - a) Module organiser or programme director
 - b) Student Support Officer / Manager
 - c) Teaching Services Manager, or similar
- 8.3. The request can then be made to the School. If the requested alternative cannot be agreed over email communication, then the DDS member of staff can request a meeting with the School and, where necessary, the student.

Inputting details of alternative assessments

- 8.4. Staff in Schools and Institutes can enter details of the agreed assessments – and their marks – onto appropriate university systems (MySIS, at the time of writing). Upon agreement of any alternative assessment this would be carried out on behalf of the student who made the request for an alternative assessment by the School or Institute before it was taken to the Subject Examination Board (SEB).

This is covered by the university's Academic Regulations; see below

- 8.5. Exceptionally, Queen Mary may use its discretion to use assessment methods other than those detailed in the module specification for an individual student. This may occur as an adjustment for a student with a registered disability (on the advice of the Disability and Dyslexia Service) or when setting a resit or first sit assessment, subject to the following conditions:
 - a) the alternative assessment must involve some additional assessment activity that constitutes a justifiable and efficient assessment of the intended learning outcomes; and,
 - b) a full statement of the alternative assessment methods, and the justification for

their use, is approved by the Subject Examination Board Chair and submitted to the Directorate of Governance and Legal Services (DGLS).

Direct applications for academic reasonable adjustments to Schools and Institutes

8.6. The advice in the Equality Human Right Commission note to the sector published in July 2024 makes it clear that Schools and Institutes can implement reasonable adjustments without the input of either DDS or other staff working in Student Wellbeing. This is based on the scenario where a student does not engage with university disability services either because they are too unwell to, or else because those services have limited capacity to assess a student's needs prior to an upcoming assessment.

As with 8.4, any agreed alternative assessments would need to be entered onto appropriate university systems by the School or Institute on behalf of the student who has made the application.

8.7. Staff working in Schools and Institutes should consult with staff in our Student Experience Directorate before making a decision on a request from a student to agree a reasonable adjustment that relates to an academic assessment.

8.8. This is to ensure consistency of provision and to make sure that we make the most appropriate decisions that treat students sympathetically while safeguarding academic standards.

8.9. Amongst the staff that can be contacted are:

- Head of Disability & Dyslexia Service and Inclusive Practice
- Head of Student Wellbeing
- Co-Head of Advice & Counselling Service (Wellbeing)
- Co-Head of Advice & Counselling Service (Welfare)
- Mental Health Manager

8.10. The request for an alternative assessment to that advertised in the course literature may arrive too late for consideration by either the School or Institute, or relevant Professional Services staff.

While the university will use its best efforts to implement appropriate support, it may be that the case that students are advised to apply for Extenuating Circumstances so that their request can be considered properly ahead of a future assessment period.

9. Appeals and complaints

- 9.1. Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of their application for reasonable adjustments can request review via the Administrative Appeals Policy, the latest version of which will be available on the Policy Zone web pages. This policy and the appeals process is managed by the Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Office.

10. Review

- 10.1. This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.
- 10.2. Minor updates to this policy that do not affect the rules, principles or intent of this policy may be approved by the Director of Student Experience on behalf of the Senate.

Policy Information and Document Control

Policy title	Reasonable Adjustments in Academic Assessment Policy
Version number	Version 1
Related policies and procedures	Academic Regulations Administrative Appeals Policy Extenuating Circumstances Policy All the above policies are accessible on the Policy Zone webpages . Queen Mary Academy (Assessment and Feedback Resources)
Superseded policies	N/A
Approval level	Education Quality and Standards Board (EQSB)
Approval date	<i>Date approved by the above person or body.</i>
Effective date	<i>TBC – September 2025? Yes, for the start of AY 25/26</i>
Next review due	June 2028
Policy owner	Simon Jarvis, Head of Student Wellbeing, Student Experience Directorate
Policy contact	Simon Jarvis, Head of Student Wellbeing, Student Experience Directorate

Version Control

Version	Date	Reason for updates/Summary of key changes
1	June 2025	Development of this new policy.

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Reasonable Adjustments Policy – Senate approval/comments by email.

Senate approved the Reasonable Adjustments Policy in August 2025. The number of approvals was 27, with the quorum being 24. There was 1 rejection.

Senate members were asked by way of email circulation, to consider for approval and/or comment on the Reasonable Adjustments Policy which had been approved by the Policy Scrutiny Group and Education Quality and Standards Board. The policy was considered out of cycle so that it could be approved prior to the start of the academic year for implementation.

During the consultation, Senate members provided the following comments. Responses are given below.

1. One member commented on the ambiguity in Clause 3.4 regarding students not registered with the Disability Service, and suggested clarifying Clause 6.2 to include Student Support Officers and key academic roles. Issues with Clause 7.6 were raised, recommending that responsibility for Cover Notes be clearly designated as administrative.
2. One member noted that references to ‘School’ and ‘Institute’ staff may not reflect the new structure in the School of S&E, where faculty-based PS teams support multiple Schools.
3. One member expressed the need for clearer guidance on what constitutes an unreasonable adjustment, and how to balance legal obligations with assessment reliability, especially in light of generative AI.
4. One member highlighted a mismatch between the Policy and assessment regulations, suggesting greater optionality in assessment formats to better support students with undeclared needs, referencing the Abrahart ruling.



Senate Chair's action request

Approval of Professional Capability Committee Membership

Summary

This is a request for the approval of new members of the Professional Capability Committee by Chair's Action.

Background

The remit of the Professional Capability Committee has been changed as a result of the updated Fitness to Practise and Professional Capability Policy approved by Senate for the 25-26 academic year. As a result, the committee will now meet more regularly to consider student professionalism concerns and requires members with both the appropriate expertise and the capacity to engage consistently with its work.

We are therefore seeking approval for the revised membership (please see below), which is intended to replace all previous versions.

We are seeking approval via Chair's Action due to the time-sensitive nature of this request and the need to convene a PCC meeting in October to consider new cases

Name	Role	Membership
Dr Brenda Manoharan	Senior Clinical Lecturer	PCC Chair (existing Chair)
Dr Rohini Sabherwal	Senior Clinical Lecturer	PCC Chair (existing Chair)
Professor Bruce Kidd	Professionalism Lead	PCC Member
Dr Ruth Gailer	Clinical Lecturer	PCC Member
Dr Radhika Desai	Senior Clinical Lecturer (IoD representative)	PCC Member
Rozina Hashmi	Head of Quality and Governance (IHSE)	PCC Member
Eshwinder Singh	VP Student Welfare	PCC Member (Student Representative)

Approval from the Chair of the Senate

Colin Bailey
29th September 2025