

Queen Mary Academy

Impact Report

2024/25

Strategic | Collaborative | Inspiring

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The Queen Mary Academy

We support the institution in the delivery of Queen Mary’s Strategy 2030 in everything that we do. We contribute to and advise on key initiatives harnessing the expertise of the Academy’s staff.

We collaborate with Faculties, Schools and Institutes to address their priorities for education and research. We enable these teams to enhance their practice and improve outcomes through a range of resources, consultancy, and workshops.

We empower individual educators and researchers to grow, enabling them to achieve their full potential within a supportive environment. Our experienced team provides professional development opportunities to build academic skills and develop leadership capabilities, inspiring individuals on their career journey.

Introduction from the Director



Since joining Queen Mary in April, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with so many inspiring colleagues across the University. It is evident that the University has a thriving, world-class and inclusive community of educators supported by the excellent Queen Mary Academy.

It has been another exciting and important year for the Academy, and the University more generally, with a number of highlights, some of which are listed below.

We were proud to see so many of our world-class educators receiving national and international recognition this year, enhancing our reputation for excellence in education. Professor Louise Younie, former Queen Mary Academy Fellow, won a silver QS Global Education Award for her ‘Flourishing Spaces’ programme, Professor Ishani Chandrasekara was shortlisted for the Most Innovative Teacher of the Year at the THE Awards and, to round off a fantastic year, Advance HE awarded the Peer-Led Team Learning team a Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence, and Dr Michael Page a National Teaching Fellowship.

This year also saw a record-breaking number of educational leaders gaining recognition from Advance HE. Nine new Principal Fellowships were awarded, including three members of the Queen Mary Academy team, demonstrating sustained records of strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development.

Our Teaching Recognition Programme and Taught Programmes were successfully reaccredited by Advance HE, which commended our inclusive approach and alignment of programmes to strategic priorities. Accreditation provides important external recognition of the quality of our provision.

The annual Postdoc Congress ran for the third time in June, with the theme this year being “Postdoc Identity”. There was a vibrant programme, including an inspiring panel session involving Queen Mary postdoc alumni reflecting on their career journeys, lessons learned, and words of advice for our current postdoc community.

In December, Queen Mary co-hosted the 2024 annual Global MOOC and Online Education Conference where the new Centre for Excellence in AI in Education, based in the Queen Mary Academy, was launched. The Centre will provide educators with resources and professional development to help them to develop our students’ critical AI literacy.

We continue our work to foster innovation through educational scholarship. I was really impressed with the range of excellent practice showcased at this year’s energising Festival of Education, including a record-breaking showcase and share session with 87 posters presented in the Octagon. The growing number of speakers, presenters and delegates is an indicator of our shared commitment to enhancing our students’ education and student experience.

Thank you to everyone who worked with us this year. Our work is made possible by the efforts of our collaborators and all of the educators, researchers and students who engage with our programmes.

**Professor Alastair Robertson, Interim Director,
Queen Mary Academy**

Our impact

The work of the Queen Mary Academy supports the delivery of Queen Mary’s Strategy 2030 and is guided by the associated Enabling Plans.

The Academy’s Director provides strategic leadership to the achievement of the Student Experience and Education Enabling Plan Priority 1 “World-class education, delivered consistently by professionally developed, world-class educators”.

We support the delivery of the three priorities of the Research and Innovation Enabling Plan: Talent and Leadership, Research Culture and Impact, Innovation and Partnerships.

Our work contributes to the achievement of a range of Strategic Key Performance Indicators, in particular:

- KPI 1. Greater student satisfaction
- KPI 2. Improving staff engagement
- KPI 3. Increasing staff equality and inclusion
- KPI 4. Reduce student attainment gap
- KPI 7. Improved progression
- KPI 8. Improved career outcomes
- KPI 9. Increased research volume
- KPI 10. Increase research quality
- KPI 13. Improved academic reputation



**Key engagement data
is included in the appendices,
which are available online**



Empowering individual educators and researchers

Recognising world-class educators

National and International Recognition

We provide extensive support for members of staff going forward for national and international recognition alongside our support for educators applying for Fellowship with Advance HE.

This includes a comprehensive programme of support for educators to apply for Advance HE's prestigious teaching excellence awards. This year Dr Michael Page was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship, the fifth new National Teaching Fellow from the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry during the past four years, and the Queen Mary Peer-Led Team Learning team, led by Professor Tony Michael, were awarded a CATE, one of only 17 awards made this year.

This year we supported four team applications to the QS Reimagine Education Awards. These awards celebrate innovative teaching approaches that enhance learning outcomes and employability. We are proud that all four were shortlisted, with Professor Louise Younie winning a silver award for her "Flourishing Spaces" program in the Nurturing Wellbeing and Purpose" category.

The four shortlisted projects were:

- The art of curating flourishing spaces: higher education and beyond : shortlisted for the **Nurturing Wellbeing and Purpose Award**.
- Haptic Dental Trainers – Revolutionising Dental Training for students : shortlisted for the **Immersive Experiential Learning Award**.
- Flying Start programme in partnership with PwC and the ICAEW : shortlisted for the **Power of Partnerships Award**.
- Building Bridges in AI: Enhancing AI Literacy Across Disciplines at Queen Mary University of London : shortlisted for the **AI in Education Award**.



I am incredibly proud that the dedication and hard work of our peer-led team learning colleagues, led by Professor Tony Michael over the past seven years, and the individual drive and commitment to innovation and best practice as demonstrated by Dr Michael Page, have been recognised by Advance HE. Their commitment – and the commitment of countless others at Queen Mary – to developing and delivering an outstanding education, leading to enhanced learning outcomes for our students, is to be commended.”

**Professor Stephanie Marshall,
Vice Principal (Education)**



Advance HE Fellowship

This year we held four fellowship panels and a total of 92 Advance HE Fellowships were awarded in all categories, including nine new Principal Fellows (an increase from five in 2023-24). We are very proud that three members of our team, Dr Steph Fuller, Shoshi Ish-Horowicz and Dr Emily Salines were recognised with PFHEA this year.

Queen Mary has now aligned to the new Professional Standards Framework (PSF 2023). We fully supported applicants, mentors and reviewers from across the University during the transition with standardisation events led by Advance HE and relevant CPD activities.

Our practical support for applicants included 19 application workshops with 240 participants attending, including Accelerator sessions and writing retreats for applicants at all levels.

After attending our workshops, Accelerators and retreats, applicants are provided with mentoring support to help them progress their draft applications to successful completion. We continue to offer a range of other support provisions including bespoke sessions, bi-weekly drop-ins and one-to-one support sessions.



It was a treat to have a bit of time 1:1 with an expert who doesn't know me personally and who can help me reflect. It really got me thinking.”

PFHEA applicant

Professional development for educators

CILT and PGCAP

This year saw continued high demand for our credit-bearing provision, with 163 colleagues joining the CILT and PGCAP programmes. Participants include new academic staff in London and those working on Joint Programmes, PGR educators, professional services educators and staff from our Malta medical school. A total of 188 educators graduated from our programmes; 59 completed CILT (gaining Advance HE Associate Fellowship) and 129 completed PGCAP (gaining Advance HE Fellowship).

The programmes received strong feedback from participants once again. Highlights noted by participants included collaboration and interaction with peers, the opportunity to belong to a community of learners, and the modelling of practice through the programmes. Key areas in which the programmes are impacting on participant practice include embedding active learning into education, and the development of reflective practice. By the end of their programme, participants are confident educators with enhanced skills in teaching practice, curriculum design, inclusive education practice, and critical reflection.

In 2025/26 we launch an updated and refreshed CILT and PGCAP. Our revised programmes will offer a streamlined participant experience, pass/fail assessment and further focus on the enhancement of education practice.



It is always useful to incorporate others' ideas into your own practice but also to get feedback about your way of teaching as they can both help you improving your current practice"

ADP7216 participant

MEd

During 2024-25 we progressed the design of the new Master of Education Academic Practice which launches in September 2025. The option to complete Level 7 for the award of MEd is a rich opportunity to expand exploration and development of education practices and scholarship.

It includes modules on facilitating change through mentoring, coaching, and undergraduate and postgraduate supervision; on methodologies and methods in education research; and enables participants to specialise in an area of need/interest through educational research.



Postgraduate Researcher

Educator Programme (PREP)

PREP, our programme of support and development for postgraduate researchers who teach or support learning continues to expand. The programme is a series of dedicated workshops including 'Teach Your First Session', 'Effective Feedback for Summative Assessment', and 'How Students Learn', designed to equip PGR Students who are new to teaching for their roles as educators. PREP participants also benefit from a dedicated AFHEA Accelerator.

In 2024-25, 124 participants from all disciplines attended 'Teach Your First Session', while 75 attended 'Effective Feedback' (an increase from 59 the previous year) and 40 attended our new 'How Students Learn' session (an increase from nine the previous year).

Our provision has been recognised by the UKHE GTA Developers network for leading the integration of EDI into best practice with its representation on a new UK-wide GTA Development EDI Working Group further reflecting the ambition of its provision and alignment with the university's commitment to ethics and social justice. Our influence on sector practice was outlined in a recent SEDA blog.



One of the most beneficial aspects of the PGR Educator training for me was the introduction to different pedagogical approaches and theories. It was an invaluable space for Teaching Associates to critically reflect and discuss together how students learn and how we can provide the best education to them.

This kind of support gave me more confidence in my teaching methods, and it has been the baseline for my development as an educator at Queen Mary."

Pedro Perez Rothstein, Teaching Assistant, Creative Arts and Mental Health MSc





Fostering educational scholarship

Educational scholarship continues to be a key focus, aligned with Queen Mary's strategic priorities in educational excellence and student experience. We continue to build scholarship capacity through targeted development and support, delivering six workshops on evidencing the impact of educational scholarship projects, alongside three Faculty-specific sessions on developing effective applications for scholarship funding.

We have also expanded opportunities for educators to share their educational scholarship, with a significant increase in the number of poster presentations at the Festival of Education and the publication of impact case studies on our website. Together, these initiatives support a growing culture of educational scholarship across the institution. We were delighted that 57 members of academic staff on Teaching and Scholarship contracts were promoted in 2024.

Festival of Education 2025

This year the Festival of Education welcomed 357 delegates across two days and included a record-breaking 87 poster presentations in the closing exhibition. The event delivered a dynamic programme combining panel discussions, practice-sharing sessions and interactive workshops designed to enhance educational excellence.

Day One featured a panel on embedding employability in the curriculum, the launch of Queen Mary's new Graduate Attributes Tool, and hands-on workshops exploring practical approaches to employability. The afternoon sessions explored scholarship and educational excellence through participant-led activities that encouraged active engagement and knowledge exchange.

Day Two adopted an energetic, interactive format with lightning talks and a World Café on assessment and feedback followed by a series of mini keynotes and table discussions focussing on AI in education, highlighting both staff and student-led innovations. The event concluded with an engaging poster exhibition and competition, featuring scholarship from across the institution. Attendees reported gaining valuable practical insights from the rich discussions and expressed enthusiasm for implementing their learning in their own practice.

“

As someone actively engaged in integrating AI into education, attending the Festival has provided me with valuable new perspectives, particularly through several thought-provoking talks. My key takeaway is the importance of embedding AI not only as a tool but as a catalyst for pedagogical transformation.”

Professor Yue Chen, Professor of Telecommunications Engineering & Director of Education, School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science



Learner Intern Programme (LIP)

The LIP supports the University in gathering feedback from students on their educational experiences. In the 2024–25 academic year, ten interns were selected to join the Programme, where they gathered peer feedback on four strategic research themes: learner engagement, AI in Education, inclusive teaching, and sustainability.

Collaborating with six dedicated project leads alongside the Race Equality Action Group, and the Sustainability Working Group, the interns co-created research projects that engaged over 115 students from across Queen Mary.

All interns presented their research posters at the Faculty of Education event in June, with the AI group leading a session for educators – a strong example of the excellence that can emerge through co-creation. Additional outputs included presentations at national education conferences and the submission of two journal articles, as well as three SEED Awards.



Immersive Learning

This year, the Immersive Community explored how the metaverse can foster online teamwork and belonging. Eight student interns from London and Beijing co-designed and led metaverse-based sessions, showcasing innovative pedagogy in action.

A strong 96% of survey respondents rated their experience as good or very good, and 85% believed the metaverse could positively transform teamwork. Students found the space more engaging and relaxed than conventional platforms, which encouraged more frequent and productive meetings.

Popular features included multi-screen sharing, document display, polls, whiteboards, avatars, and customisable environments. The project won a CODE award and was featured at the Queen Mary Night of Science and Engineering. Marie-Luce Bourguet (EECS) and Elise Gasser (Queen Mary Academy) showcased the work at the iLRN conference in Chicago.



The metaverse became a great morale booster for our team. Having these fun interactions before serious work sessions created a more collaborative atmosphere. When everyone enjoys themselves together, it naturally leads to better teamwork.”

Masters’ student



Supporting postdocs and research staff to thrive, progress and build their careers

Core Researcher Development Programme

We continue to run our core programme of provision supporting postdocs and research staff to develop the skills they need to thrive, progress and build their careers. The core programme covers career development, funding, writing and presentation skills, productivity, networking and leadership. During the 2024-25 academic year we built on and added to our core provision.

Career Steps Beyond Academia is a new programme supporting postdocs to reflect on skills, interests and job market realities, and to plan concrete steps towards a non-academic career.

Navigating Professional Relationships in Higher Education Research ran as a pilot, supporting postdocs, fellows, and new lecturers to build confidence in growing their networks and establishing themselves, counteract imposter phenomenon, build negotiation and conflict resolution skills, and help understand and manage power and hierarchical dynamics in their professional networks. It received glowing feedback from all of those attending the pilot and will run again in 2025/26.



This approach not only made the session more interactive but also allowed participants to share their personal experiences and insights, fostering a deeper understanding of the concepts. By creating a space for open dialogue, Sarah enabled participants to learn from each other and apply the principles of negotiation and conflict resolution to real-life scenarios, making the session highly practical and relatable. This method of delivery was effective in promoting active learning and collaboration.”

Dr Emmanuel Chibuike Nwankwo, postdoc SBBS, participant on Navigating Professional Relationship In Higher Education Research

Postdoc Mentoring Programme

The Postdoc Mentoring Programme built on last year's pilot by recruiting a cohort twice the size, pairing mentors with 27 postdocs from 10 Schools and Institutes who met from February to July 2025.

New support sessions for participants covered making the best of mentoring relationships, networking, managing professional connections, building confidence, and prioritising workload. Mentees highlighted benefits for career planning and increased confidence about their next steps. As one shared: "[we] made plans for my career development, and [my mentor] commented on grant drafts and CVs. Meeting with her regularly gave me accountability and made it easier to find time to focus on development." Mentors noted that the programme was valuable both for them and for the postdocs, with many stating it gave them a chance to reflect on their own development.

The mentoring pool now includes over 60 academic staff, and the next cohort will open recruitment for 2026 in September.

Collaborations and Networking Opportunities

Several of our Researcher Development programmes provide Queen Mary postdocs with opportunities to learn and network with researchers based in other Universities across the UK. Postdocs welcome opportunities to meet and exchange ideas with their peers.

Resilient Leadership in Action guides researchers through hands-on leadership exercises and 360-feedback alongside peers from 5-10 institutions across the country. UNique provides professional and career development support for women and non-binary researchers from Queen Mary, King's College London, and Imperial. Networking and Profile Building is a Queen Mary led collaboration of over 15 UK research intensive Universities. This course supports over 75 researchers per run to reflect on their research networks and career profile and strategise on how to develop these, whilst also providing structured opportunities to practice their networking skills and form connections with prospective future collaborators at different universities.



Funding Programme

Our multi-session research funding programme provides guidance on the UK research funding landscape and supports researchers to produce competitive funding applications. The programme includes a session on writing narrative CVs such as the Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI), and sessions with guest contributors from teams such as Research Services, Public Engagement, Academic Leadership Development, and Equality Diversity and Inclusion. Faculty colleagues identify former awardees across different funding schemes to share their experiences and insights. Sessions include advice and insights, writing time and feedback, as well as individual follow-up.

In addition to writing support, we provide mock interview coaching for applicants shortlisted for interviews for major funding streams such as FLF. The structure ensures that applicants have access to practical guidance, feedback, and relevant expertise as they prepare their submissions and for their interviews. This is supported by a QMplus funding module, which can also be used as a standalone resource.

Postdoc Appreciation Week

Postdoc Appreciation Week (PAW) is an international celebration held in September. Our 2024 PAW programme included an appreciation campaign, a visibility campaign, Postdoc Comedy Night, a pilot Welcome Event for Researchers, and a special run of "10 Days to Change the World (for You)."

The appreciation campaign saw 80 personal messages of appreciation sent to postdocs from academic staff, peers, and colleagues, which were also shared on social media to raise the visibility of the academic and community contributions made by Queen Mary postdocs.



One postdoc from each Faculty was featured in a special PAW edition of 'Our People', raising their professional profiles and helping colleagues from across Queen Mary understand what the day-to-day life of a researcher is like in different disciplines. Postdoc Comedy Night featured four new postdoc comedians and two returning performers, filling the Neuron Pod venue with laughter at the realities of postdoc life.

Researcher Welcome Events

The Research Welcome Event is a new addition to our provision to support postdocs, research fellows, and early-career academics who are new to Queen Mary.

This half-day event was designed for postdoctoral and early-career academic staff joining within the last year, offering them an opportunity to meet and network with fellow newcomers and other members of the Queen Mary research community. The event featured information seminars and taster workshops communicating information on research support services, staff benefits programmes, and career and professional development opportunities available to them as Queen Mary research staff.

New starters were also offered the option to have a profile photo taken for their professional web and networking profiles. Piloting during PAW2024, the Researcher Welcome Event ran twice last year.

Collaborating with Faculties, Schools and Institutes

Enabling the delivery of world-class education

One of this year's key priorities has been to enable colleagues in Schools and Institutes to embed the Principles of Programme Design and Assessment Design into their curricula. These Principles underpin our work in supporting curriculum design and enhancement across the University and have been integrated into our taught programmes, workshops and resources.

Continuing Professional Development offer

This year we offered a wide range of CPD workshops and online courses to support educators in their practice. These sessions, bookable by individual staff via the CPD Training platform, offered support on assessment and feedback, co-creation, curriculum design, education practice, educational scholarship, and teaching recognition.

Resources and toolkits

2024-25 saw the design and launch of a new SharePoint Hub, a rich educator-focussed supportive resource of practice ideas for enhancement of teaching and learning in the areas of:

- Curriculum Design (Embedding employability and Graduate Attributes; ACE learning design for modules; Sustainability in the curriculum).

- Assessment and Feedback (NSS navigation tool to guide educators in best use of Queen Mary Academy resources to enhance their practices; Enhancing feedback design and practice; Embedding the Principles of Assessment Design; Enhancing marking practices).
- Teaching Lab (this part will be launched in Sept 26).
- A new toolkit 'Promoting positive debate and interaction' was launched to help educators to support interacting well and freedom of speech.

Bespoke support

We continue to offer bespoke support on all aspects of the Principles of Academic Degree Programme Design and the Principles of Assessment Design, through one-to-one discussions with education leaders, bespoke workshops and presentations at school away days.

We also support the embedding of the Principles through dedicated sessions within our Educational Leadership Programmes. Sixty individual bespoke support events, from consultancy to workshops and discussions, were designed and delivered this year to over 800 educators, relating to the themes of curriculum design, education practice, assessment and feedback, educational scholarship, and teaching recognition.



Pedagogic approaches which improve students' engagement with learning

Active Curriculum for Excellence (ACE)

ACE is the core of Queen Mary's Education Approach and a key component of the University's Principles of Academic Degree Programme Design (Principle 5).

We continue to offer support to individual educators and programme teams on strategies to implement ACE within programmes and modules. Our bespoke programme and module design sessions support teams to embed ACE in their design, while our CPD workshops support educators in the ACE techniques. In 2025 we added 'Flip to engage', 'Designing effective group work', and 'Putting active learning into practice' to our education practice CPD offer. We also facilitated bespoke sessions on those themes within Schools and Institutes. We are currently developing a 'Teaching Lab' as part of our enhancement hub, which will provide additional guidance and support for educators across the Institution.

Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL)

PLTL is an approach used to deliver Small Active Learning Groups, one of the five interrelated components of ACE. This year we continued to support the PLTL team, through contributing to peer-leader training, encouraging students to engage with the SEED Award and explore co-creation in the curriculum, and supporting the Advisory Group.

The team showcased its work at the PLTLIS conference in the USA. Professor Lesley Howell published a case study highlighting the positive impact of PLTL on student outcomes in Chemistry. Both Lesley Howell and Sally Faulkner, former Queen Mary Academy Fellows and members of the PLTL Advisory Group, received SEED Educator Prizes for their contributions to student support and curriculum co-creation.

Co-creation

The SEED Award, which recognises our students' contribution to the enhancement of teaching and learning across Queen Mary, continues to grow. Since the scheme was founded in June 2021, 266 Queen Mary students have been recognised with an award. This year we saw a significant increase in applications, with over 90 new recipients from across all three Faculties. We also supported two SEED Award Prize winners to gain international recognition from SEDA/JISC through the Student Partnership Impact Award.

We created new roles for students and staff to contribute to the enhancement of the Award as SEED Award Ambassadors and Mentors. We recently opened a call for applications on our 2025/26 thematic priorities - Curriculum design, Assessment, AI, Employability, and Sustainability – whilst still welcoming more general applications.

Queen Mary is now a reference in the sector in terms of recognising co-creation. Based on our experience with SEED, we created a framework to guide institutions in creating their own recognition schemes. This framework has recently been published in the Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change.

“

I think the value applying for SEED gave me was a sense of self-accomplishment and pride that my contributions to the university and the projects I've done have been recognised. It showed me that the hard work has paid off and made a big impact on the school and its people.”

SEED Award recipient

Inclusive curriculum

Student Voice

We incorporate the student voice into our work through the Learner Intern Programme (LIP), and one of this year's four projects focused on students' lived experiences with inclusive teaching. This student co-led study explored inclusive teaching practices, which were found to enhance students' sense of belonging, building academic confidence and boosting achievement. The work was presented to the Race Equality Action Group and shared in a poster at the Festival of Education.

Awarding gaps

We offered discussions and support to programme teams working to reduce awarding gaps through the lenses of assessment, education practice and programme design. From 2025-26, supporting material will be included in the Enhancement Hub.

Neurodiversity

In addition to the regular webinars and bespoke workshops delivered to faculties and professional services, this year we organised an event to share best practice from across the university. The event was co-delivered with the Disability and Dyslexia Services and students from the Neurodivergent Society.

Colleagues from SBBS, the Institute of Dentistry, TELT and the Careers and Enterprise team shared examples of best and innovative practices to better support neurodivergent students.

Sustainability in the curriculum

This year we contributed to the development of Queen Mary's new Sustainability Action Statement. We developed and supported the Sustainability in the Curriculum Action Network (SCAN) to offer a space where colleagues who are already embedding sustainability in the curriculum, or who are interested in doing so, can come together to collaborate, share best practice and initiatives.

There are now 90 members of the SCAN MS Teams site, which is an active and vibrant space for communication and community. Through the Network, we supported the planning, co-design and co-creation of a new non-credit course Foundations in SustainAbility, funded by the President and Principal's Fund for Educational Excellence, which launches in September 2025. This course introduces sustainability essentials for students, staff, and the local community.

This work continues to incorporate the student voice. A group of Learner Interns completed a project entitled 'How can Queen Mary best support students to learn about sustainability?'. This student-led research found that students want to see more integration of sustainability into their education

alongside more sustainability action on campus. Students who engaged with the research reported that they felt more connected to sustainability and more motivated to be part of ongoing improvements at the university. The findings were shared in a poster at the Festival of Education.

Our leadership has ensured that the integration of sustainability to the curriculum is fully connected with existing Queen Mary strategies, policies, and principles. For example, promoting sustainability is one of the Queen Mary Graduate Attributes. We have developed detailed guidance to support staff to embed sustainability within their curricula, including a framework for progressive development of sustainability knowledge and skills throughout a programme.

We delivered staff workshops to support colleagues to embed sustainability in their curricula and developed new online guidance materials. Our workshops and online guidance positions sustainability as an integral element of wider curriculum and education enhancement work for educators.



Embedding Employability

Over the past academic year we continued to support the embedding of employability and the Queen Mary Graduate Attributes in the curriculum. At the start of the year, we led the updating of the attributes to include the new attribute 'Be AI and digitally literate,' which supports the integration of AI skills across the university. We also made a significant contribution to the development of the new Employability and Skills Framework, which was approved by EQSB in February 2025. Academy staff and three Academy Fellows supported the development of the Framework, and we are now working with Careers and Enterprise to lead its implementation.

The Framework builds on existing work to identify and surface Graduate Attributes in the curriculum and brings this together with integrated employer engagement and experiential learning, career management skills, and reflective practice. It is grounded in academic research as well as current best practice at Queen Mary. It aims to provide all students with a holistic employability journey tailored to their specific discipline, which builds progressively throughout their degree and is fully integrated to the core curriculum. This integration is vital for ensuring inclusivity and equity of access to employability and skills development for all students. As this work is piloted, we are working with Faculties, Schools and Institutes to evaluate the impact of the Framework and continue its iterative development.

In support of the Framework implementation, we delivered workshops and training to over 100 colleagues within HSS and supported the Employability and Skills Framework Implementation Group in Science and Engineering with regular information, resources and workshops. We launched a new Curriculum Enhancement Sharepoint site with resources to support the roll out of the Framework and embedding of Graduate Attributes.



Degree Apprenticeships

During 2024-25 we collaborated with programme teams to develop new resources to support educators delivering Degree Apprenticeship Programmes.

These include comprehensive resources on our website and an e-learning course, which has now been completed by 35 staff. We were delighted that our degree apprenticeship provision was judged Outstanding by Ofsted in all four key areas: quality of education, behaviours and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management.

Supporting the delivery of Queen Mary Strategy 2030

The University's Strategic Enabling Plans set our shared priorities as we work to deliver our 2030 Strategy.

In education, we contribute to the achievement of the three key priorities:

1. World-class education, delivered by professional developed, world-class educators
2. Consistent advice and support for students
3. Graduate attributes and employability embedded in the curriculum

In research and innovation, we contribute to the achievement of the following three key aims:

1. Talent and leadership: Attract excellent people to join us and nurture existing and new talent
2. Research Culture: Developing a research culture that is a powerful lever for improvement
3. Impact, innovation and partnerships: Grow the scale and reach of our activities

Developing, empowering and supporting academic leaders

Supporting leaders to deliver the 2030 Strategy

Our leadership programmes are built around Queen Mary's Strategy 2030, giving leaders the skills, confidence and insight to deliver on our ambitions. Each programme is tailored to a specific audience, helping leaders navigate the higher education landscape, influence change, and make a difference in their roles. Many of our programmes require leaders to complete a strategic project, contributing to the personal leadership development of our participants and demonstrating impact beyond the programmes. Projects have been delivered across a range of themes from work on AI to diversity and inclusion and enhancing student experiences.

This year we held our first strategic project poster gallery walk, showcasing the achievements of our leaders and their commitment to enhancing student experiences and outcomes. Leaders also presented project posters at the Festival of Education, further sharing best practice and building leadership communities. The gallery walk is now a permanent part of both our Programme Directors and Directors in Education programmes.

We focus on developing our leaders as people as well as professionals, building self-awareness, strategic thinking, and inclusive leadership skills. Sessions are enriched by speakers from across the University, sharing their expertise and lived experience to ensure learning is relevant to leading at Queen Mary and that we are working toward a shared common purpose.

Module Organisers Leadership Development Programme

This year we launched a new leadership development programme for Module Organisers, designed to build confidence, peer connection and leadership capability. The programme begins with an engaging in-person workshop where MOs connect with others across the university, explore the expectations of the role, and share their unique challenges. This is followed by a flexible online learning pathway and ends with an action learning set, where participants reflect on their leadership journey and begin to shape a personal action plan for growth.

Across six cohorts, more than 100 colleagues have taken part in the programme so far. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with colleagues highlighting the value of peer learning, clearer understanding of their leadership role, and increased confidence in using data and feedback to improve modules. Confidence in key areas such as data use, the ACE approach, and giving and receiving feedback, increased significantly from the start to the end of the programme. Our participants also praised the hybrid format, with the in-person session boosting engagement and online elements offering much needed flexibility.



Programme Directors Leadership Development Programme

Following the success of last year's programme, we increased the number of cohorts for this year. We also made several changes to streamline the programme, giving it clearer direction and flow. The programme is now made up of three distinct core modules and three workshops with a close event.

The programme supports Programme Directors to navigate their role with clarity, confidence and strategic insight. It equips them to lead their programmes in alignment with Queen Mary's 2030 Strategy, understand the wider regulatory landscape, and take action that supports institutional goals.

Through peer learning and reflective practice, participants explore different leadership perspectives, consider their own impact, and identify ways to enhance their leadership approach for the benefit of their students, colleagues, and programmes.

We continually strive to increase accessibility to our programmes and to ensure that we are as inclusive as possible, in line with Queen Mary's mission to open the doors of opportunity. As a result, we are excited to have launched our first fully online Programme Directors cohort. This new method of delivery means that those who work in campuses abroad, or who struggle to attend campus in person, still have access to our offering.



It has been an inspiring journey, connecting with colleagues from across Schools and Faculties, exchanging ideas, and tackling shared challenges we face as Programme Directors."

Dr Spiros Batas, Senior Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, School of Business and Management

Directors in Education Leadership Development Programme

This programme is designed to support Directors of Education, and those in equivalent roles, to lead with strategic purpose and confidence. It deepens understanding of Queen Mary's 2030 Strategy and the higher education landscape, while encouraging leaders to reflect on their own impact and leadership style. Through peer learning and practical activities, participants explore their diverse leadership experiences, identify actions to drive educational excellence, and strengthen their ability to lead change across their schools and faculties.

Twelve Directors completed the programme this year, helping to make a positive impact to leadership within Queen Mary. The programme received positive feedback with a 100% satisfaction rate and 100% of our participating Directors saying that they would recommend the programme to a friend.

This year the programme was renamed from Directors 'of' Education to Directors 'in' Education, to recognise our colleagues who may be Directors in an educational capacity, but who fall outside of the DoE role.

Executive Leadership Development Programme

Previously the Heads of School programme, our new Executive programme focuses on leadership at the most senior levels across the university. This ranges from Heads of School to Deans and other equivalent roles. We made this change so that more of our leaders can benefit from the success of the programme.

With the support of both internal and external facilitators and speakers, our executive leaders built upon a range of leadership skills, including decision making, negotiation and influencing, leading change, and understanding their own personal leadership values.

Research and Innovation Leadership Programme

Following a wide-ranging consultation, this year we launched a new Research and Innovation Leadership Development Programme, designed to support our research leaders to elevate their leadership skills and gain a deeper understanding into leading research culture. The pilot was completed by 16 research leaders. Evaluation and feedback from participants will inform the development of the programme over the coming years.



Centre for Excellence in AI in Education

Launched in December 2024 at the Global MOOC and Online Education Conference, this new Centre has been established to lead the integration of critical AI literacy into teaching and learning at Queen Mary, supporting excellent outcomes for students, educators, and employers.

In its first year the Centre, which is based within the Queen Mary Academy, recruited 78 affiliate members and supported the creation of an active community of practice. A lively inaugural event in March 2025 saw Dr Xue Zhou and Dr Lilian Schofield present their framework for embedding AI across the curriculum.

The Centre hosted a session of interactive mini-keynotes at the Festival of Education where educators and students shared their practice. It also hosts a monthly blog featuring practice, reflections and insights from Queen Mary educators.

Two Centre affiliates, Dr Andrew Woon and Dr Lei Fang, supervised a LIP project which explored how students are using AI in their learning and gathered their perspectives on AI adoption in HE, including investigation of the disciplinary differences in usage. The learners shared their work at the Festival of Education, leading a mini-keynote and discussion with educators and presenting a poster.

In the Academy, we have been working to create a comprehensive new asynchronous online course on critical AI literacy for educators. Launching in September 2025, the course is underpinned by the UNESCO AI Competency Framework for Teachers and provides a foundational baseline to support educators in confident, responsible and pedagogically sound AI integration.



The LIP has given me valuable insight into students' perspectives, particularly those from different disciplines. Hearing their views on the usefulness and challenges of using AI has prompted me as a module leader to reflect on how I can better support students in developing AI literacy. This includes helping them use AI tools more confidently by providing clearer guidelines and more targeted support."

Dr Andrew Woon, Senior Lecturer in Strategic Management and the Programme Director for BSc Business Management (Year 3) in the School of Business and Management



President and Principal’s Fund for Educational Excellence

The President and Principal’s Fund for Educational Excellence was established in 2023 to encourage a culture of educational innovation and exploration at Queen Mary.

It awards £120k each year to support a small number of impactful projects which align to 2030 Strategy priorities. Seven projects were selected for funding in 2024/25, exploring themes including AI literacy, using AI for feedback, data science education, entrepreneurial skills, sustainability through co-created resources, and diversifying the curriculum using Virtual Reality.

Project leads showcased their progress at the Festival of Education, on our website as case studies, at conferences and through publications. Dissemination of this innovative work is helping to raise the profile of Queen Mary and enhance our reputation for excellence in education.

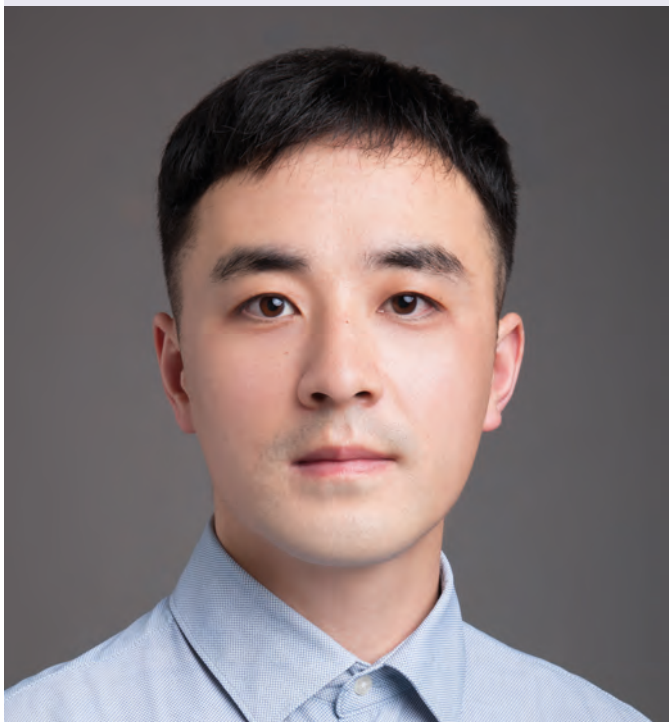
Dr Xue Zhou and Dr Lilian Schofield’s paper "Developing a conceptual framework for Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy in higher education" was nominated for the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education’s 2025 Article of the Year Award. This work was presented at Advance HE’s Teaching and Learning Conference and has generated strong interest from across the sector.

“

The funding enabled us to pilot an innovative, competition-based learning model in the Data Science curriculum – a thoughtfully designed approach that responds to the changing nature of assessment in the age of AI. It allowed us to co-create authentic learning experiences with students that blend human elements such as collaboration and competition to balance the increasing influence of automation.

On a personal level, the project significantly enhanced my skills in project management and team coordination, while deepening my understanding of pedagogy and curriculum innovation.”

Dr Pengfei Fan, Lecturer in Data Science and AI, School of Physical and Chemical Sciences



Queen Mary Academy Fellows

Queen Mary Academy Fellowships are flexible part-time fixed-term secondments which provide educators with an opportunity to develop, share and promote their educational and scholarship practice.

This flagship initiative empowers our academic staff to lead strategically aligned, high-impact projects that enhance education across the university. This year our Fellows focused on strategic priorities such as Employability, AI in Education, Curriculum Design, and the Active Curriculum for Excellence - supporting pedagogical innovation and scholarship across Faculties.

Since its launch in 2020, the programme has appointed 28 Fellows, including 17 in post during the 2024–25 academic year. This year’s targeted call for three Fellows, one from each Faculty, to support the development of the Employability and Skills Framework under Education and Student Experience Priority 2 was a notable success. This work was delivered in partnership with the Employability Curriculum Lead from Careers and Enterprise. A full list of Fellows is available in the appendices.

“

The Fellowship has been a transformative experience. It provided time and space to think creatively, challenge established norms and work collaboratively with students and colleagues. It has reaffirmed my commitment to educational leadership and embedding compassionate, student-informed design in every aspect of our curriculum.”

Dr Radhika Desai, Queen Mary Academy Fellow 24-25, Senior Clinical Lecturer in Restorative Dentistry and Director of Education for Undergraduate Taught Programmes, Institute of Dentistry



Learner Engagement Analytics (LEA)

Dr Usman Naeem, Queen Mary Academy Fellow and Academic Lead for LEA, was joined this year by new Academy Fellow Dr Jo Elliott. They worked together to update our suite of resources, including extensive consultation with peers and student support staff to ensure the relevance and usability of the guidance.

A key feature of our updated resources is a co-created section with Queen Mary students on how to discuss LEA with learners. Two learner interns worked with Usman and Jo as part of the LIP programme to investigate student perspectives on engagement, including learner understanding, motivation, and barriers.

The LEA Fellows shared their work internally and externally, including at this year’s Research in Distance Education and e-Learning (RIDE) Conference, where Learner Intern Nora Hoffmann co-presented on how engagement can be meaningfully measured through analytics.

Usman and Jo played an active role in shaping Queen Mary’s new Student Learning Engagement Policy and worked with the Academy team to embed LEA content into the revised CILT and PGCAP programmes.

A significant new initiative is an exploration of how Level Up, a QMplus plug-in, can support student engagement and learning through gamification. This approach maps weekly experience points to key engagement markers, offering students a personalised view of their own engagement data. This is a novel approach, which will be extended to modules across the institution in 2025/26.



Nurturing a world-class research and innovation culture

Postdoc Congress

The annual Postdoc Congress ran for the third time on 17 June 2025, convening 80 colleagues from across Queen Mary to build community, amplify postdoc voice, and inspire future leaders.

This year’s theme - “Postdoc Identity” – built on discussions started at the 2024 Congress. Postdocs hold multiple, intersecting identities, but tend not to identify strongly as members of staff or as part of the Queen Mary community – thinking of themselves as subject specialists and identifying as members of their

disciplinary communities. The enlightening discussions at this year’s Congress will form the basis of actions to support postdocs, strengthen their identities as Queen Mary staff members, and will be summarised as a postdoc authored paper to research leaders.

Our pioneering work in developing the Postdoc Congress over the years has been recognised through shortlisting for international awards and invited presentations at multiple international Researcher Development conferences.



Collaborating with learner interns on our project provided us with valuable insights into the authentic student perspective. This occurred through co-creation and in shaping our understanding of how students perceive Learner Engagement Analytics.

Their involvement was essential, adding a real sense of authenticity to our work. Our protocols and analysis were directly informed by the learner interns, making sure the student voice was both represented and actively integrated throughout the project.”

Dr Usman Naeem, Reader in Computer Science Education, Queen Mary Academy Fellow, Deputy Director of Education in EECS, School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science

Dr Jo Elliott, Reader in Learning Design, Queen Mary Academy Fellow, Digital Education Studio, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry



Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS)

Queen Mary ran CEDARS in March and April of 2025, receiving 637 responses, representing approximately 23% of postdoctoral research staff and fellows, and 27% of academic staff. The survey asks questions about researchers’ experience of our employment policy and practice, opportunities for career and professional development, and researchers’ experience of our institutional and research cultures and environment.

Currently being analysed, the results will be reported later this year to the Research and Innovation Board (chaired by the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation), and to Faculty research leaders. CEDARS data inform our progress in implementation of institutional and research culture action planning processes, like the Researcher Development Concordat, Athena Swan, and the Race Equality Charter Mark and can provide insights for REF PCE.

Contributions to Higher Education Sector-wide Initiatives

The Researcher Development (RD) team leads University wide implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, supported by the Concordat Implementation Steering Group (RDCIG). The annual Concordat report summarises Queen Mary’s progress on the 23 actions the University has committed to. The team also supports other external initiatives through our work with groups such as REG PCE group, GEAG and REAG.

The RD team represent the needs of Queen Mary and our researchers at a national level by contributing to national projects and consultations on REF PCE indicators, HREiR and CEDARS.

As members of Researchers 14 (R14) – a network of Russell Group researcher development, culture, and career support professionals – the RD team have led projects such as our collaborative Networking and Profile Building course and collaborated on initiatives such as the Resources for Principal Investigator and Research Team Development, available at researchers14.ac.uk.



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